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The Political Nuances of Narratives and an Urban Educator's Response

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Capstone Essay

Abstract

In recent years, theorists have begun to explore the ways in which the narratives our children read influence the democratic ideals we wish to impart. In a nation so stratified along both racial and socioeconomic lines with a long history of various forms of systemic oppression, this issue is particularly relevant to how children in the most inequitable learning environments, situated in the most marginalized communities, come to see and know how to effect social change. In order to begin an investigation into the ways in which our democracy is conveyed through various forms of storytelling, this paper will interrogate the narrative space of children's literature with particular focus on the American civil rights movement. The question that will guide this examination will concern the implicit and explicit ways that differing narrative types promote or hinder central ideals of democracy. Based on Bell's (2009) story type framework, I will conceptualize different types of stories as integrated pedagogical, philosophical, and curricular extensions that are produced, consumed, and regulated with specific political purposes in mind. My framework will be grounded in principles of democratic education, social justice education, critical pedagogy, and critical race theory. I will utilize the philosophical underpinnings that constitute this theoretical framework to iteratively insert empirical data to interrogate the thematic composition and narrative structure of the children's literature discussed. Thus, the central aim of this paper is to explore a conceptual framework from which to illuminate the foundation, purpose, and definition of alternative forms of narratives. Additionally, standards-based exercises that combat and build upon narrative types will be discussed.

Keywords: democratic education, curriculum, children's literature, civil rights movement

The Political Nuances of Narratives and an Urban Educator's Response

Researchers have begun to explore the ways that democratically-grounded literature connects justice to what it means to be an educated person in a democracy. For example, Bell (2009) explores the roles that storytelling plays in either reproducing or challenging the status quo through “exploring both the power in stories and the power dynamics around stories as they shape learning about race and racism...thus, stories can be a powerful vehicle to connect individual experience with systemic analysis in ways that are perhaps more accessible than abstract analysis alone” (p. 27). Considering the importance of a critically informed citizenry to a healthy democracy, storytelling can thus be seen as a negotiated space comprised of explicit and implicit ideologies that influence the attainment of a robust democratic process. And as I will argue, the democratic value of systemic analysis, or *social literacy*, is at the root of a healthy democracy.¹

Accordingly, the health of our democracy, as democratic educational theorists argue, is contingent on the health of our classrooms. Yet, as Jonathon Kozol reminds us in *Savage Inequalities*, the health of many of our urban schools is on life support. What I will argue throughout this paper is that, for the children of historically-disenfranchised communities, the means by which we convey the evolution of our democracy—in the form of narratives—will have a lasting impact on the role these individuals play *in* our democracy.

¹ A major contribution of Westheimer and Khane's 2004 seminal article entitled “What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy,” is that it reminds those of us writing about democracy and education to be explicit about the type of democratic values we are espousing. Drawing from the work of John Dewey (1916/2007) and Cornel West (2005), I argue that a healthy and vibrant democracy is based on virtues of responsibility, collectivity, equal access, critical analysis and expression that must be promoted within the learning experiences of *all* children.

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There are two central aims of this paper: (1) to provide in-service urban educators a lens from which they can gauge and contextualize the varying representations of particular narratives found within curriculum and amidst the daily experiences of their students, and (2) provide these same educators with standards-based activities that can combat the deleterious effects of certain narrative types. My focus will center on primary school language arts classrooms with particular attention to how civil rights literature is represented.²

For democratic theorists, justice is viewed as a fundamental human right inherent within the purposes of education. Yet perceptions of what justice is and how to best pursue justice as a community have contentiously been debated for years. For the purpose of this paper, I will be advancing a notion of justice broadly conceptualized as “social justice.”

Social Justice Education

The definition of “social justice,” regarding educational theory and practice, is a bit nebulous in modern day discourse. Often used to articulate and substantiate a wide array of educational reforms aimed to create more equitable learning environments, “social justice” has become a bit of a “catch-all” phrase for educational theorists, practitioners, and teacher educators. Indeed, citing Rizvi (1998), Zajida et. al. (2006) note the semantic ambiguity concerning the term:

² I chose to focus on the American civil rights movements since it provides a defining period of American history in which the fight for justice and equality had an explicit impact on the operation of the American democratic process. I focus on children’s literature (primarily grades 3-5) since this time-period provides foundational understandings that contribute to what Wiggins and McTighe (2005) refer to as the “prior knowledge” that will presuppose the exploration of the American civil rights movement during students’ secondary years. In 2011, The National Assessment of Educational progress offered an alarming statistic: Only 2% of high school seniors could answer a basic question about the U.S. Supreme Court’s landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. While this statistic is certainly indicting of a curriculum that does not emphasize the civil rights movements, it also offers additional problem space from which we can explore the foundational role that primary schools play in this dilemma.

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...the immediate difficulty one confronts when examining the idea of social justice is the fact that it does not have a single essential meaning—it is embedded within discourses that are historically constituted and that are sites of conflicting and divergent political endeavors. (p. 5)

In attempting to conceptualize the diverse, and in some cases, divergent, explanations of social justice, Hytten and Bettez (2011) identified five broad strands of social justice in education literature: theoretically specific, ethnographic/narrative, democratically grounded, philosophical/conceptual, and practical. Considering this papers focus on curricular issues, we will briefly unpack the literature within the practical strand of social justice education.

The majority of this literature considered the comprehensive and interconnected nature of effective practice while others examined the “mindsets” related to teaching for social justice. For example, Carlisle, Jackson, and George (2006) identified a fivefold framework for the practice of social justice education: inclusion and equity; high expectations; reciprocal community; system-wide approach; and direct social justice education and intervention. Contrastingly, Hackman (2005) presents five essential knowledge-based components that are necessary for educators teaching for social justice: mastery of content (which includes historically contextualized information), tools for critical thinking and analysis, tools for social change and activism, tools for personal reflection, and tools for awareness of multicultural group dynamics (p.104-108). While offering an adequate overview, Hackman’s last principle of “tools for awareness of multicultural group dynamics” falls short of an extensive theory that can account for the

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nuances and difficulties related to the cultural inconsistencies between teachers and students that often plague urban schools.

Grant and Gillette (2006) attempt to rectify this inadequacy by extended the essential knowledge base advanced by Hackman (2005) to include components for effectively teaching all children regardless of their academic ability, race, socioeconomic status, family structure, sexual orientation, and native language. These include being culturally responsive in the classroom, knowing oneself and an openness to change, having a well-constructed philosophy of education, having significant pedagogical content knowledge, and maintaining an educational psychology that is multicultural.

While the previous discussion reveals the evolutionary, albeit in some cases, inconsistent, nature of the practice of teaching for social justice, the authoritative *Handbook of Social Justice in Education* offers a definitive ground from which we can situate our understanding of teaching for social justice. In this text, Ayers, Quinn, Stovall (2009) articulate that social justice education rests upon three principles: (1) Equity: the principle of fairness, equal access; the notion that what the most privileged are able to provide for their children must be available to all children; (2) Activism: the principle of agency, full participation, and preparing students to see, understand, and when necessary, change the world in which they live; (3) Social literacy: the principle of relevance, resisting the numbing effects of materialism and consumerism as well as overarching social evils of white supremacy, patriarchy, and homophobia while reminding us of the link between ideas and the concentric circles of context—economic condition, historical flow, and cultural context.

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Building off of this authoritative handbook, for the purpose of this paper, I define social justice as consistent with Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 2007; Bell, 2007 as the attempt to rectify the unequal ways in which social hierarchies sort difference to the benefit of some groups over others. A social justice framework recognizes that patterns of domination and subordination are manifest throughout and across all social institutions and in order for students to feel empowered, they need particular knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will allow them to reshape these institutions.

Within this frame, schools play a particularly unique role as not only reflecting these inequitable relationships but also reproducing them through curricular access, content, and pedagogy (Adams & Love, 2005). As such, schools also provide a unique opportunity to empower students with the necessary tools to disrupt these stratified relationships (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 2007).

In addition to the political factors influencing the use and implementation of a social justice oriented focus in the classroom, aspects of teaching for social justice have been linked to positive academic (Lucas, et. al., 1990; Goddard et. al. 2004; Irvine, 1990; Marschall, 2006; McGlone and Aronson, 2007); behavioral/motivational (Hanze and Berger, 2007; Hughes et al., 2004), and attitudinal student outcomes (Cammaroto, 2007; Rodriguez et al., 2004). And despite teacher concern over whether the material may be “too controversial” (Niето, 1999), research indicates that students and families support socially just content and policy.

For example, Rose and Gallup’s (2000) random telephone survey of 1092 adults indicated that 76 percent felt that schools should place more emphasis on “racial and ethnic understanding and tolerance.” In a subsequent study (Rose and Gallup, 2006) found

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that between 2002 and 2006, 88 to 96 percent of respondents felt that closing the achievement gap was “very” or “somewhat” important and over half believed that it is the schools’ responsibility to do so.

Correspondingly, we will look specifically at how different strands of narratives can accomplish these same objectives. For students who have been marginalized from our society, these stories can prove to be either a powerful inspiration to reform their world or repressive instruments to reinforce an unjust status quo. Lee Ann Bell (2009) offers a theoretical and conceptual framework for three story types: stock stories, concealed stories, and resistance stories.³ While this framework is highly informative, there is an absence of an important category that pertains specifically to urban educators concerned with curriculum reform: stories included in dominant canons that are robbed of their radical elements to be perceived as more “conservative.” Thus, within the following discussion of these categories, I insert a fourth story type that is a product of multicultural education: additive stories.⁴

³ She offers an additional story type, the emerging/transforming story, which does not pertain to identifying a particular type of story but rather to the creation of a particular type of story. This will be discussed later.

⁴ Many scholars trace the roots of multicultural education to the social action of African-Americans and other minority groups who challenged discriminatory practices in social institutions during the civil rights movement of the 1960s (Davidman & Davidman, 1997). During the Civil Rights era, minority groups began to demand that schools more accurately respond to their needs and aspirations. Due to the changing demographics of the United States, desegregation, and the fact that the majority of teachers were middle-class and white (Ladson-Billings, 1994), there was a growing discrepancy between the home and school environments for students. Banks (1993) argues that the image of multicultural education as simply being an entitlement program for the ‘other’ remains as a stumbling block for an accurate understanding of the movements aims: that *every* ethnicity, gender, and race acquire the skills, knowledge, and perspectives that will allow them to function effectively in an diverse country and globalized world (Banks, 1994; Banks & Banks 1993). Another misunderstanding of multicultural education is that it is essentially opposed to the Western tradition. Rather, multicultural education is an outgrowth of western democratic values of freedom, justice, and equality. Banks argues that this misunderstanding is rooted in the fact that multicultural education emphasizes reflective social action that challenges unarticulated assumptions within the current social structure. Dominant culture oftentimes sees this reflective social action as opposition to established norms, therefore anti-west. Therefore, a multicultural agenda is bent on realigning this misconception and highlighting the importance of a nationwide multicultural approach to education. Banks (2006) categorizes the broad concept of multicultural education into five successive dimensions: 1) content integration; 2) the

Stock Stories

Bell (2009) defines “stock stories” as those told by the dominant group to justify and maintain the status quo. These stories are passed down through historical and literary documents and promulgated through public rituals, law, the arts, education, and media representations. Because stock stories tell us a lot about what society deems important, they also provide a starting point to analyze how racism and oppression operate.

For example, in 2009 Americans were swept away by a novel (later adapted into a major Hollywood film) about an aspiring young author during the civil rights movement who, despite criticism and fear, decides to write a book from the perspective of the maids of the community. What gave this book a certain “catch flare” was that the young author was white, and, of course, the devoted maids were black. The young protagonist, Skeeter, as the narrative is told, overcomes insurmountable obstacles, like being ostracized by her family and losing a boyfriend, to tell the stories of their poor maids. In the Mississippi of the 60s, an African American who did much of anything to “step out-of-line” and openly criticize the benevolent hand of whites risked much more than losing a boyfriend; indeed their very lives were jeopardized. Yet the story glosses over much of these risk factors while valorizing the efforts of a young white girl who does everything she can to help “the help.”

As stock stories function to support a status quo, the representations of the black maids in *The Help* serve to support an artless conception of black women, and black people in general, that is best illuminated in *An Open Statement to the Fans of The Help*. In this

knowledge construction process; 3) prejudice reduction; 4) an equity pedagogy; 5) an empowering school culture and social structure.

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letter, Ida E. Wells, the national director of the Association of Black Women Historians, states:

Despite efforts to market the book and film as a progressive story of triumph over racial injustice, *The Help's* representation of these [black] women is a disappointing resurrection of Mammy—a mythical stereotype of black women who were compelled, either by slavery or segregation, to serve white families. Portrayed as asexual, loyal, and content caretakers of whites, the caricature of Mammy allowed mainstream American to ignore the systemic racism that bound Black women to backbreaking, low-paying jobs where employers routinely exploited them. The popularity of this recent iteration is troubling because it reveals a contemporary nostalgia for the days when a black woman could only hope to clean the White House rather than reside in it.

Furthermore, the group accused the book's nearly uniform depiction of Black men as drunkards, abusive or absent; the book's silence on the collective efforts of Blacks in Mississippi to resist forms of oppression by concluding, "The Association of Black Women Historians finds it unacceptable for either this book or this film to strip black women's lives of historical accuracy for the sake of entertainment."

While stock stories are certainly found in literature and film, it is also important to note that stock stories can be present within common discourse. For example, a current stock story may be that of the shiftless "welfare queen" who despite the "equality of opportunity" that permeates the American social landscape, chooses rather to live on someone else's dollar. What is interesting about the welfare queen narrative in particular and stock stories in general is that they are often conflated with racist and sexist

undertones, which, in this particular case, denotes an ostensible message of decrying laziness while promoting an implicit ideology of white male superiority.

This should not be a surprise since the presence of any stock narrative in our modern society is based upon a status quo that was largely established through years of chauvinism and racial discrimination. Indeed, the presence of such stock stories is nearly ubiquitous in a society so stratified along both racial and economic lines, and can contribute to what Balibar and Wallerstein (1991) refer to as ‘cultural racism’ in so far as culture difference being presented as a permanent, irreconcilable, and innate fact from which individuals consequently essentialize the experiences of “the other” (Thangaraj, 2012, 2010).⁵ Stock stories function, in a Freirean sense, as examples of “banking-model” instruments whereby marginalized students are effectively barred not only from critical awareness but also from learning the skills necessary to be effective participants in a healthy democratic process.⁶

Concealed Stories

While stock stories represent the explicit stories that are used and transferred through social, textual, and technological mediums, concealed stories represent the narratives that are *not* imparted through these same channels. Concealed stories exist alongside stock stories, yet their popular understanding is hidden from the mainstream. Concealed stories include silenced narratives from marginalized communities that would, potentially, counterpoise stock stories by revealing immanent strengths and potentials.

⁵ Balibar and Wallerstein came up with the term ‘cultural racism’ in response to anti-immigrant attacks in Europe and the rise of nationalism. Rather than racism being based solely on genotype, phenotype or biology as some argued, they show that cultural artifacts and symbols can be given permanency just like biological conceptions of race.

⁶ According to Freire (1970), “the banking model of education” turns students into “receptacles” to be “filled” by teachers. Since students “receive” the world as passive entities, education, in this form, makes students acquiescent and fatalistic “spectators” of the world and not “re-creators.”

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These stories can either be uncovered by critical analysis of statistics or social science data about the varying ways that race and poverty shape experiences in our society, or simply revealed in, to borrow another Freirean construct, a “dialogical conversation.”⁷

Using the keyword “civil rights movement,” I conducted a search in the “kid’s section” of several popular websites that sell children’s literature—Scholastic.com, Barnes&Noble.com, and Amazon.com. I limited my search to grades 3-5 in Scholastic.com and ages 9-12 in Barnes&Noble.com and Amazon.com. The search with the descriptors “civil rights movement” revealed 26 books in scholastic, 104 books in Barnes&Noble.com, and 823 books in Amazon.com. Due to sufficient and manageable results from my first two searches, and the limited scope of this brief overview, the Amazon.com results proved to be too extensive for timely review.

I grouped the results in six categories: Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, general, specific event, other individuals, and omissions. The general category included overviews of the civil rights movement as well as fictional accounts that took place during the movement. The specific event category included stories that focused on a particular issue such as the sit-ins or the March on Washington. I omitted books that did not deal specifically with the American civil rights movement (such as books about slavery) as well as books that appeared more than once. I attempt to summarize my results in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Summary of Results: Scholastic.com

⁷ A dialogical conversation describes an instance of honest communication in which both parties—aware of issues of power, privilege, and status—seek to understand one another’s viewpoint and positionality. (Freire, 1970 p. 76-81)

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Martin Luther King Jr.	Rosa Parks	Other Individual	General	Specific Event	Omitted
4	8	6	4	3	1

Table 2: Summary of Results: Barnes&Noble.com

Martin Luther King Jr.	Rosa Parks	Other Individual	General	Specific Event	Omitted
17	4	14	18	17	18

The important finding is that the combined number of books about Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks is double the number of books about *all other individuals affiliated with the movement* in Scholastic.com and 50 percent more in Barnes&Noble.com. While the contribution of Dr. King and Rosa Parks to the civil rights movement is immeasurable, the sheer comparative absence of books about all other individuals indicates a preponderance of what we now know of as “concealed stories.” For every story not told about an Angela Davis or a Medger Evers, there is a legacy suppressed and a potential inspiration not ignited.

Nonetheless, the decisions teachers make regarding what stories to include are often directed or reflective, to some extent, of curriculum mandates. Thus, within classrooms, the curriculum often serves as a story-concealing device. This process is best understood within the framework of the “null curriculum.”

Eisner (1985) describes the null curriculum as “the options students are not afforded, the perspectives they may never know about, much less able to use, the concepts and skills that are not part of the intellectual repertoire” (p.107). Elsewhere, Eisner suggests that by not teaching something, you are teaching that it isn’t important (1985, p.97). Indeed, we see that concealed stories are not only “stories untold,” but, as I will argue

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later, they have a lasting social and psychological impact on marginalized communities which is often reinforced by the null curriculum. Nevertheless, when these stories *are* included within the curriculum, there is an overabundance of what Banks (2006) refers to as “additive stories.”

Additive Stories

Stories in mainstream curriculum or discourse that advance a “positive” image of marginalized persons or communities without challenging overarching issues of oppression and injustice are described as “additive stories”. In dealing specifically with curriculum, Banks (2006) refers the “additive approach” as the addition of content, concepts, themes, and perspectives without changing the basic structure, purpose, and characteristics of the dominant curriculum (p.60).

The most important shortcoming of this approach is that it often tells the stories of ethnic heroes from non-threatening perspective that “fails to address issues of racism, poverty, and oppression” (Banks, 2006 p. 59). Jenks, Lee, & Kanpol (2001) argue that the additive model settles for a kind of “cosmetic multiculturalism—one that allows administrators and teachers to say, ‘We’ve taken care of that issue’ when questioned by activist community groups.

For an example of this “whitewashing” of popular dissenters, Herbert Kohl, in his 2004 article aptly entitled, “What’s Wrong with the Rosa Parks Myth,” outlines the misperceptions and downright lies that are promulgated in popular narratives about Rosa Parks. Several of the inaccuracies include:

- Rosa Parks being portrayed as a poor and tired old seamstress when, in fact, her work as a seamstress was secondary to her role as a community activist. Indeed,

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Parks was an active member of the NAACP—as well as its first female member.

She also attended Highland Folk School in Tennessee that was “known throughout the south as a radical education center that was overtly trying to desegregate the south.”

- Presenting the social environment as merely “separated” without accurately delineating the fact that the legal segregation that existed in the South was the direct result of moral corruption and fear of many Southern Whites.
- Distorting the story by writing that when Rosa Parks got on the bus she sat in the front, when in actuality she sat in the front of the “colored” section of the bus.⁸
- Describing the boycott that ensued as led by Martin Luther King Jr. when the boycott was, in fact, planned by the Women’s Political Council, members of the NAACP, and others in the Montgomery community.
- In other words, contrary to popular acclaim, Dr. King became the elected leader to popularize the boycott.

These issues are illuminating regarding the extent to which historical narratives can be altered in such subtle ways as to change the inherent meaning and influence that the story can have.

It is important to note that I am not arguing, nor do I believe the aforementioned theorists would argue, that *all* literature about historically disenfranchised communities must necessarily deal with issue of oppression. For example, the Harlem Renaissance of the

⁸ This is important since it alters the motivation for her refusal to give up her seat—or more particularly, the way that her motivation is portrayed. As the story is often told, it was her exhaustion that motivated her to sit in the front of the bus, yet she was intentional about where she sat which indicates that her initial motivation was not to challenge the status quo, but when the bus driver asked her to move, it was indignation that prompted her to resist—not exhaustion.

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1920s, which consisted of many of the individuals who influenced members of American civil rights movement several decades later, had numerous artists who didn't directly confront issues of oppression in overt forms of political resistance per se, but rather their most significant contributions were to the "black aesthetic," and in turn, the interpretation of this work contributed to far-reaching social movements.⁹ Thus, we should not expect stories about Louis Armstrong to be considered insufficient if they do not focus on issues of injustice. Nevertheless, as Bell (2009) adds, "Too often, iconic stories of heroic individuals simplify resistance, sanitizing the collective struggles that drive social change, and thus fail to pass on necessary lessons about how social change actually comes about" (p.34).

Resistance Stories

In contrast to additive stories, resistance stories can function as the realization of much of the aforementioned tension between an obdurate status quo and the democratic process that enables individual voices to oppose various forms of injustice. Resistance stories relate how people resist forms of oppression (racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ageism, and religious intolerance), challenge the stock stories that support it, and fight for more equal and inclusive social arrangements. According to Bell (2009), these are stories comprised of individuals who have struggled against various forms of oppression, but who have nonetheless been excluded or vilified in dominant historical texts. I will add an additional category: individuals who have struggled against various forms of oppression and have been "sanitized" by dominant historical texts.

It is true that many of the individuals whose beliefs and pursuits were antithetical to the aims and ideals of the status quo are banned from dominant texts (ie. Paul Robeson) or

⁹ In the introduction to his edited text, *The Black Aesthetic* (1971), Addison Gayle Jr. conceptualizes the black aesthetic as a corrective—a means of helping black people out of the polluted mainstream of Americanism.

vilified (ie. Fred Shuttlesworth), and that the telling of their stories can prove to be a fruitful addition to an already parched narrative collection. Yet it is also true that certain individuals, whose lives are equally as radical, and who fight oppression with the same courageous virility, have stories that are told, albeit told in a more “tolerable” way that obscures the personal motivations, inter-personal influences, and lasting impact of their lives. If these stories are told in their truest form, sort of a “restored additive story,” I argue that these can be categorized as resistance stories.

As a function of their thematic aim, resistance stories need not venture into the heroification process by which heroes and heroines are “transformed into pious, perfect creatures without conflicts, pain, credibility, or human interest” (Loeman, 2007 p. 11). Rather the primary focus of these stories is to present the actual lived experiences of imperfect individuals who by virtue of courage and ideals, transformed an inequitably obdurate status quo into a more just society. In this way, resistance stories become an honest, instructive, and accessible modality for individual and collective action against injustice and oppression, and thus for the advancement of democracy. In other words, they serve as “problem-posing” mechanisms from which children can learn to effectively change their worlds for the better.¹⁰

Yet the literature is silent on whether there are varying *types* of resistance that are contained in resistance stories. Is it safe to assume that all resistance stories align with democratic principles of equality of opportunity? Is it possible that certain resistance

¹⁰ For Freire (1970), “problem-posing education” poses to students their lives’ condition not as fixed facts but as challenges upon which they can act and change. Thus, problem-posing education takes our current historical society and culture, with all of its inadequacies and injustices, as a starting point from which to critique. Freire posits, “Only by starting from this situation can they [students] begin to move. To do this authentically they must perceive their state not as fated or unalterable, but merely as limiting, and therefore challenging.”

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stories can be antithetical towards the democratic process? How about children's literature covering the civil rights movement, arguably the most democratic movement of our time?¹¹

Using the results from the Barnes&Noble.com search previously discussed, I conducted an additional analysis of the character selection of the 35 non-fiction biographical books available.¹² I grouped individuals in two broad categories: The first category was for ecclesiastical and/or political leaders while the second category was loosely composed of those individuals whose primary occupations during the movement were unaffiliated to any dominant institutions. Since the movement had such a strong foundation in the spiritual teachings of Jesus and Mahatma Gandhi, the vast majority of individuals associated with the movement were involved, to some capacity, with the church. Yet here I make a distinction between those involved with the church and those in leadership positions within the church. For example, a book on Coretta Scott King, the wife

¹¹ Following in a method of narrative structure analysis initially inspired by Propp (1968) and advanced most recently by Silverman (2006), I conducted an analysis of the "element" selection within the civil rights stories identified from the Barnes&Noble.com search discussed earlier. Within narrative structures, Propp (1968) helps to distinguish between "elements" which refer to "appearances" or the massive details and complexity contained within texts; and "functions" which refer to "reality" or a simple underlying structure repeated in different ways. According to Silverman (2006), narratives are often not structured by the nature of the characters (or elements) that appear in it; rather they are structured by the function of the plot. Correspondingly, each plot will contain specific "types" of elements that contribute to the philosophy advanced by the story. Therefore, if we hold the function of the plot more or less consistent (in this case, civil rights stories about the fight for equality), the "type" of element chosen as the protagonist can tell us much about the implicit ideology that the text is advancing. For example, if we were to create a series of stories with the basic function of overcoming adversity, the two primary elements might be a "person" and some sort of "trial." Yet if all of our stories are about men, the implicit message being delivered is that it is men who overcome adversity, not women. I will approach this analysis from a constructionist viewpoint¹¹ in which my interpretation of each text will not be based on its representation of reality, but rather the realities the text itself reveals. In other words, this sort of internal analysis will seek to establish the realities the text itself brings into play (Silverman, 2006 p.167).

¹² It should be noted that this brief survey is making the broad assumption that all of these stories are example of "resistance stories." This decision was based on the fact that despite having access to comprehensive library resources, all of the books on the website were unavailable for a closer analysis of particular thematic and compositional makeup. Yet I do not believe this should distract from the interpretation. If anything, aggregating the books by resistance would *intensify* the results of this survey, as conceptually, dominant curriculums would have more of an interest in "sanitizing" the story of say, a Martin Luther King Jr., since his influence as a popular culture icon is much more pronounced than a John Lewis. Thus, by assuming resistance stories for all, it is my belief that I have *overestimated* the relative number of "unaffiliated lay persons."

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of Dr. Martin Luther King, was categorized as “unaffiliated.” I summarize my results in table 3 below:

Table 3: Summary of Results: Character Investigation

Ecclesiastical & Political Leaders	Unaffiliated Lay Persons
25	10

Here we see that more than double of the individuals chronicled in this sample were ecclesiastical and political leaders. This sort of “top-down” narrative is a direct threat to the democratic ideals of equal access that permeated the movement throughout its existence. The dominant narrative being represented is that it was the political and ecclesiastical elites, organized by existing institutions, that initiated and fulfilled the pursuits of the civil rights movement; and even more insidious, that if you want to make an impact on the world in which you live, you must have a certain “status” before this change occurs. This sort of “elitist” doctrine is a direct affront to the democratic process by which the movement came to be, and came to pass. As John Dewey (1937) reminds us:

The key-note of democracy as a way of life may be expressed, it seems to me, as the necessity for the participation of every mature human being in formation of the values that regulate the living of men together: which is necessary from the standpoint of both the general social welfare and the full development of human beings as individuals. (p. 457)

Since this sort of elitist doctrine is inconsistent with the reality of the civil rights movement, collections of “resistance stories” that promote this sort of ideology are best categorized as additive stories. Accordingly, it is the job of the urban educator to ensure, to the best of their abilities, that a balanced representation of the movement is included

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within class discussions and course readings. In other words, simply including resistance stories of Dr. King and Thurgood Marshall would not suffice.

The “crippling potential” that a narrative can have on the advancement of democratic ideals is not restricted to stories based on political and ecclesiastical elites. Indeed, in his article critiquing the reductionist way in which Rosa Parks is presented in many children’s books, Herbert Kohl (2004) concludes:

When the story of the Montgomery bus boycott is told merely as a tale of a single heroic person, it leaves children hanging. Not everyone is a hero or heroine. Of course, the idea that only special people can create change is useful if you want to prevent mass movements and keep change from happening. Not every child can be a Rosa Parks, but everyone can imagine herself or himself as a participant in the boycott. As a tale of social movement and community effort to overthrow injustice, the Rosa Parks story opens up the possibility of every child identifying herself or himself as an activist, as someone who can make justice happen. (p.6)

So here we see that resistance stories can function as a dynamic form of oppositional expression that can contribute to the betterment of democracy by providing marginalized voices a cathartic space from which to inspire readers to become active participants in the democratic process by questioning, and indeed fighting, various forms of oppression; while at the same time providing a space that, if not handled with care and intentionality, may have the opposite effect by contributing to the continued disaffiliation that so many youth have with their understanding of an elitist, unresponsive, and unrepentant democratic process.

Classroom Implications

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As urban educators we must be willing and able to name and respond to the stories our children face both within the curriculum as well as in their daily lives. As educators who are concerned with empowering historically disenfranchised students, it should be reiterated that an aim of teaching for social justice is to promote social and educational reform within and despite current educational standards and mandates (Dover, 2010 p. vi). In this case, teaching for social justice would require teachers to identify and implement effective additions and reforms to their classroom practices in light of the differentiated story types in which their students are exposed. And effectively doing so will have broad implications for how our children will participate in the American democratic process. This section will outline several classroom responses to the identification of each story type. The broad framework is tabularized in figure 4 below:

Figure 4: Typology of Story Type Implications

Story Type	Definition	Example	Democratic Participatory Implications	Classroom Response
Stock Story	Stories justify and maintain the status quo. These stories are passed down through historical and literary documents and promulgated through public rituals, law, the arts, education, and media representations.	Welfare Queen Discourse. Advertisements that essentialize black males as aggressive hyper-sexualized subjects (Lebron James and Giselle Bundchen on the cover of Vogue Magazine).	Sees oneself as subjugated and disenfranchised. Disaffiliation with traditional as well as progressive political practices.	Collective naming exercises. Common Core Standards: SL.5.1; SL.5.3; SL.5.5; W.5.1; W.5.1
Concealed Story	Concealed stories are the silenced narratives from marginalized communities that would, potentially, counterpoise stock stories by revealing immanent strengths and potentials.	The absence of "other" civil rights activists.	Unable to see oneself in the lens of historical process. Disaffiliation with traditional as well as progressive political practices.	Recovery Exercises. Common Core Standards: W.5.7; W.5.3; W.5.9

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Additive Story	Stories in mainstream curriculum or discourse that advance a “positive” image of marginalized persons or communities without challenging overarching issues of oppression and injustice.	<p>Stories of Martin Luther King Jr. that portray him as a loving assimilationist.</p> <p>Stories of Rosa Parks that portray her as a tired seamstress.</p> <p>“Resistance stories” that maintain an elitist ideology.</p>	Involvement with more traditional forms of political process. Emphasis on personal responsibility, lack of critical awareness.	<p>Comparative exercises.</p> <p>Common Core Standards: W.5.7; W.5.8; W.5.9</p>
Resistance Story	Relate how people resist forms of oppression, challenge the stock stories that support it, and fight for more equal and inclusive social arrangements.	<p>Stories of Rosa Parks that include her background in community activism.</p> <p>Stories that focus on the importance of collective action (as opposed to simply heroic individual effort) in affecting to social change.</p>	Critical awareness, active political involvement in progressive political causes, responsibility for actions.	<p>Emergent/transf orming exercises</p> <p>Common Core Standards: W.5.3; W.5.4; W.5.5</p>

As mentioned previously, the role stock stories function to justify and perpetuate the status quo and our students come in contact with them in varying contexts—both within school and out of school. As educators we must do our best to combat the implicit ideologies that are advanced in these multiple arenas—many of which are found out-of-school—during in-school classroom time. While teachers are encouraged to rethink and creatively come up with their own plans to counter these stories, one such activity might be a “collective naming” exercise.

In a collective naming activity, representations of people of color or people from poverty would be brought into class for group discussions on the implicit messages that are promoted within the narrative. These representations could include stories, songs, advertisement, newspaper articles, ect. Students and/or teachers could be responsible to

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bring these in. An example that would likely spark lively student engagement and response might include the 2008 Vogue Cover that included basketball star LeBron James and supermodel Giselle Bundchen. See Appendix A.

Discussion questions might include:

- What is the context in which the representation was produced?
- What is the explicit purpose behind the creation of the representation?
- What hidden messages do you see in the representation?
- In what ways is this representation offensive?
- Why do you believe this representation was produced?

Potential Common Core Standards used in *collective-naming exercises* might include:

- **SL.5.1.** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.5.3.** Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.
- **SL.5.4.** Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

While these questions are not exhaustive, they should provide parameters from which to build context specific questions to engage students. In addition to the class discussion, students can be asked to write responses based on representations. For example, writings could be based on summarizing discussion, discussing additional or relevant issues, or writing about personal responses.

Potential Common Core Standards used in *collective-naming response writing exercise* might include:

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- **W.5.1.** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- **W.5.2.** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Such exercises will provide students an opportunity to learn the social literacy necessary to combat stock stories and become more engaged democratic participants. Since “concealed stories” represent the silenced narratives of marginalized communities that would counterpoise stock stories, teachers can employ various “recovery exercises” to address the absence of these narratives.

In a recovery exercise, teachers can have students research and write about historical figures that were not included in a particular course unit. The explicit purpose of this exercise is to provide students the opportunity to understand the role of the “storyteller” in choosing what information is included in a story, while offering them an enlightening exercise from which they can learn the historical significance of silenced voices. To ensure that their stories would in fact be categorized as resistance stories as opposed to additive stories, students can be provided a composition template. See Figure 5 below.¹³

Figure 5:

Composition Template for Students Recovery Stories
1. Historical context
2. Family life
3. Work environment and/or responsibilities
4. Explicit details of types and forms of adversity/oppression
5. “Defining moment”
6. Additional individuals who played a role in the accomplishment of “defining moment”
7. Historical impact of defining moment.

¹³ I have largely based this template of the story structure of Rosa by Nikki Giovanni, which, in my mind, represents an ideal example of a resistance story.

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Based on this template, I have included an example of a “recovery story” based on the life of Fred Shuttlesworth; who, despite being a leading figure in the civil rights movement is surprisingly absent from children’s literature about the civil rights movement. See Appendix B.

Potential Common Core Standards used in *recovery exercises* might include:

- **W.5.7.** Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- **W.5.3.** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- **W.5.9.** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

While effectively addressing concealed stories will likely involve the creation of “recovered resistance stories,” dealing with the preponderance of additive stories will require the use of “comparative exercises” to expand upon and build students’ general knowledge about historical figures as well as enhance students’ critical understanding of how certain narratives conform to a particular ideology or substantiate the status quo.

Comparative exercises would require students to research additional information about particular figures discussed in a unit or textbook chapter. For example, working in groups or individually, the class could research one historical figure at a time and compare research with one another. Discussions should address what details not included in the canon came up most and what details were most distinct. Additionally, the discussion should address why students believe certain details were left out and how the new information changes the way they perceive the historical figure. The conversation should be “dialogical” in that a growing awareness of issues of power, privilege, and status should

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permit honest, open, and empathetic communication between and amongst teachers and students (Freire, 1970).

Potential Common Core Standards used in *comparative exercises* might include:

- **W.5.7.** Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- **W.5.8.** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.
- **W.5.9.** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Comparative stories allow students to refine their understandings and form a critical lens from which they can more readily question the assumptions made by additive stories they will encounter in the future. With regards to encountering resistance stories, teachers can substantiate a resistance story's impact by implementing "emerging/transforming stories" to build upon the principles established in the identified resistance story. "Emerging/transforming stories" are the last story type identified by Bell (2009) in her story type framework. Whereas the other three addressed identifying stories based upon certain features embedded within the story, this type deals with the creation of "personalized" resistance stories.

Bell (2009) defines "emerging/transformative stories" as stories that are "deliberately constructed to challenge stock stories. These stories enact continuing critique and resistance to the stock stories, subvert taken-for-ranted racial patterns, and enable the imagination of new possibilities for an inclusive human community." Therefore, based on the story of, say, Huey Newton, students could be prompted to write their own personalized, fictional account of fighting oppression that can be contextualized in modern

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times. This sort of creative writing experience would require students to identify key elements in the identified resistance story, and transfer the generalized principles to their daily experiences. This high-order thinking skill would also allow students to internalize many of the transformative qualities inherent within the resistant story while offering them a creative space for a “counter-narrative.”

Maintaining that social reality is constructed by the exchange of stories, Critical Race Theorists introduced the concept “counter-narrative” to explicate the process by which marginalized groups give voice to their own narratives. Delgado (1989) and Lawson (1995) argue that counter-narratives can serve at least four theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical functions:

- (1) Build community for those on the margins of society;
- (2) Challenge the perceived wisdom of mainstream society by providing a context to understand and transform established beliefs;
- (3) Open new windows into the reality of those at the margins of society by showing the possibilities of life beyond those that they live;
- (4) Teach others that by combining elements of both the story and the current reality, one can be in a position to construct a more meaningful and richer world.

Moreover, CRT emphasizes that stories provide members of marginalized groups a means for psychic self-preservation and the telling of stories can help overcome ethnocentrism and the unconscious need to view the world in one particular way (Ladson-Billings 2004). As urban educators, we must be willing and open to provide spaces for children to express their own counter-narratives and basing them on specific resistance

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stories can provide students the needed framework from which to build these personal expressions.

Potential Common Core Standards used in *emerging/transforming exercises* might include:

- **W.5.3.** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- **W.5.4.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.5.5.** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

In a world full of stock stories, and a curriculum often ripe with additive stories, resistance stories are often the most difficult to uncover, yet when they are identified, teachers should be ready to build upon the democratic principles inherent within. Accordingly, emerging/transforming stories can provide one possible avenue in which teachers can do just that. Like all of the aforementioned exercises, this activity should be seen as one of many possibilities that a teacher who is committed to the empowerment of his or her students could implement.

Along with each of these exercises—collective naming exercises, recovery exercises, comparative exercises, and emerging/transforming exercises—I have included additional exercises (Appendix C) that teachers can utilize to unpack each story type. The questions are based on the “recovered resistance story” about Fred Shuttlesworth that is found in Appendix B, but can be generally applied across the story type spectrum. This list of activities provides additional dialogical spaces from which teachers and students can actively engage in issues of power, privilege, and oppression while challenging students to become active democratic participants who can shape a more just world.

Summary

Teaching for social justice is explicit in naming the various issues plaguing the American educational systems by “developing critical habits of the mind, understanding and sorting out multiple perspectives, and learning to participate in and contribute to a democratic society by developing both the skill and inclination for civic engagement” (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p.159). Through this process, narratives play a vital role based on implicit ideologies advanced by such stories. It is our role as educators to empower our students to recognize and name the varying representations that they see in curriculum and in their daily lives. Correspondingly, the narratives that are read, heard, and experienced within schools are dependant upon curricular decisions that are philosophically based and contextually specific. Resistance stories are the most explicit story type about confronting and altering issues of oppression and, likely, inspiring social change. Activities and exercises can be used to building upon the democratizing potential of resistance stories while combating the social, psychological, and political effects of stock stories, concealed stories, and additive stories. In so doing, our fight for democracy need not interfere with common core standards. Indeed, as urban educators, the very process of identifying and challenging the existing forms of narrative type may very well create a more informed and engaged classroom of students who can rewrite their own stories.

Appendix A:



Appendix B:

Righteous Agitation: A Fred Shuttlesworth Story

By F. Alvin Pearman II

Mr. Shuttlesworth was enjoying a warm cup of hot chocolate with his family when one his daughters, asked him, “How come I can’t go to school with the white kids?”

In Birmingham, black children weren’t allowed to go to school with white children. Even though the American law said that it was wrong, many cruel southerners believed that Blacks shouldn’t have the same opportunities as whites.

Mr. Shuttlesworth replied, “Sweetie, we can’t wait for change to happen. We have to go out and make the change ourselves.”

During this time, Mr. Shuttlesworth was the pastor of Bethel Baptist Church, which was one of the greatest churches in all of Birmingham. During his sermons, he preached about love, non-violence, and persisting in the face of trials. He preached with passion and

conviction and made sure his congregation knew that it was important to stand up for what was right. “A person who can’t stand for something will fall for anything,” he would often tell his congregation.

He believed that in hard times, God raises up certain communities to speak truth against injustice. Reverend Shuttlesworth believed his church was one of these places.

Shuttlesworth loved his church dearly and appreciated the congregation’s devotion to ending racial injustices which made them an important part of the civil rights movement.

Noting that black teenagers in his neighborhood, including his own children, were bused past the better-resourced Phillips High School to attend a lower quality school for “colored” children, Mr. Shuttlesworth decided that if there was going to be any desegregation of Phillips High School, he and his family must make it happen.

He told his family that it was important for them to set the example for other families in Birmingham—that the oppressive force of white supremacy was unraveling and that people of color must be active in challenging injustices.

Members of his community tried to discourage him: “Mr. Shuttlesworth, you don’t have to go down there. It will be dangerous. There will be a mob of angry white people who will be waiting for you. Besides, we already have a case in court which will eventually change things here in town.”

“Yeah,” Mr. Shuttlesworth replied, “but y’all take too long. I’m going to get it desegregated.”

Despite personal threats, and growing mob violence surrounding school integration efforts, Mr. Shuttlesworth’s family agreed. With wife in hand, and dutiful daughters at his side, the family headed straight to the lions den.

As they travelled to school, he thought back to Christmas Eve, 1956. On that day, the Ku Klux Klan, in a cowardly act of violence, bombed his home. As Mr. Shuttlesworth laid on his bed, the explosion erupted, tearing apart the roof of the house, shattering the windows, ripping large holes through the walls and splintering the floor beneath his bed. The mattress that Mr. Shuttlesworth laid on was lifted into the air like a magic carpet and served as a cushion from falling debris. Mr. Shuttlesworth and his family were miraculously unharmed.

When the news came to interview him that night he said, “Once the bomb went off, God told me, “Underneath you are everlasting arms.” At that point, Mr. Shuttlesworth realized that God’s presence would protect him from harm. So after this bomb, he was never afraid again.

While they drove, one of Mr. Shuttlesworth’s daughters made a wish that everyone at the school be blind so that they wouldn’t know what color she was. As car pulled up to the school, unfortunately everyone knew exactly what color the Shuttlesworth’s were.

Mr. Shuttlesworth saw a gang of hostile white people, even larger than he anticipated. As the car approached, he could hear people yelling, “Niggers go home!” Another group angry of whites, carrying baseball bats, brass knuckles, and chains approached the car.

As he saw the mob approaching, Mr. Shuttlesworth immediately thought of his family. Were they going to be ok? He could turn around at this point and no one would know the difference.

He looked at his beautiful wife, whose determined eyes convinced him to press on.

He looked at his daughters whose bright futures were dimmed by the very people they were looking at.

Mr. Shuttlesworth thought of all of the courageous men and woman who stood bravely in the face of hatred and oppression.

He thought of the courageous civil rights lawyer, Thurgood Marshall, whose efforts and sacrifice in the 1954 Brown versus Board of Education case led to the Supreme Court ruling that separate schools were inherently unequal.

He thought of Rosa Parks, who, in a bold move of righteous defiance, had sparked a movement which ended bus segregation in Montgomery, AL.

He thought of Fannie Lou Hamer who in the face of racist Jim Crow laws, declared, "I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired."

He knew that a bold move was needed to challenge this unconstitutional school segregation. He decided to step out of the car.

As soon as Mr. Shuttlesworth stepped out of the car, the angry mob attacked him with brass knuckles, clubs, fists and chains. As they beat him, they yelled, "It's all over today! Kill that nigger!"

Feeling as though he was close to death, something told Mr. Shuttlesworth, "You can't die here. You have a job to do." With the little strength he had left, Shuttlesworth staggered back to the car only to realize that the mob had smashed the windows and attacked his helpless wife and daughters.

When he finally stumbled into the car, they were able to escape to a local hospital where Mr. Shuttlesworth and his family were treated for multiple injuries.

Considering his extensive injuries, the doctor was surprised to find out that Mr. Shuttlesworth didn't have a concussion. Mr. Shuttlesworth told the him, "Doctor, the Lord knew I lived in a hard town, so he gave me a hard head."

For many years, Mr. Shuttlesworth had been a civil rights activist. He was once described as "the man most feared by southern racists and the voice of the new militancy among Birmingham Negroes". He was co-founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference which was a prominent civil rights organization throughout the era. He was committed to ending segregation and racial injustice, and despite his confrontational nature, he vehemently advocated non-violence.

"If you really want to do the Lord's work, you have to put yourself on the line and be willing to suffer in the right way, not retaliating. You have to be ready to not only give of yourself, you have to really offer everything you have on the altar of sacrifice."

Despite the doctors request for him to stay the night in the hospital, Mr. Shuttlesworth thought it best that he head home so he could address his church regarding the attack.

Word had spread quickly enough such that many African-Americans were angry and ready to retaliate the brutal beating of their spiritual leader.

Wearing the same suit that had holes in it where his knees had scraped the cement earlier that morning, Mr. Shuttlesworth stepped to the stage to speak to the congregation.

Mr. Shuttlesworth began, "Well, everybody in here is mad, huh? A matter of fact, I bet everyone here is downright angry. Well let me tell you, I was beaten up today and I'm not angry. I'm not even mad at the people who did it."

There were noticeable gasps in the audience. How could this be? How could this

man who just hours earlier was beaten ruthlessly by racist thugs, proclaim a message of peace?

Mr. Shuttlesworth continued, " I forgive them because that's the way the Lord wants us to live. We are doing a special thing here in Birmingham, and we must go through the darkness in order that the light may come. We must show people by our actions that we are stronger than their hate. Not one brick will be thrown, not one windowpane will be broken by us. I came tonight to tell you that this is what non-violence looks like."

Under Mr. Shuttlesworth's leadership, the civil rights movement in Birmingham flourished. Within several hard-fought years, the racist customs that Mr. Shuttlesworth despised were outlawed and the segregation that he so adamantly opposed was prohibited. Mr. Shuttlesworth was unmatched in his courage, and unwavering in his commitment to radical non-violence that demanded social change. Mr. Shuttlesworth continued to fight and eventually opened the door to any school in the city for all African-American children.

Appendix C:

Spread of Opinion Exercise:

The teacher should divide the class into several groups and give each group a piece of paper with one of these issues written on it:

- Racially mixed schools
- Non-violence as a means of protest
- Self-segregated churches
- Conflict avoidance versus conflict agitation
- Fear of violence

Each group should identify a number of positions that can be taken on its issue. Each group member should write a statement defending one position, whether in agreement or not. When the statements have been completed, the students should discuss each issue and state their own opinion on it.

Adapted from techniques developed by Simon, Howe, Kirschenbaum (1978) and Banks (2006)

Unfinished Sentences Exercise:

The teacher will ask students to complete the following sentences with the first word or phrase that comes to mind. Once completed, students will be broken into small groups and asked to discuss their sentences together. Then groups will be asked to share with the rest of the class themes that emerged from their discussion.

- A racist is a person who...
- If I were assaulted by a group of mean people because of the color of my skin, the first thing I would do would be...
- If I were forced to go to an inferior school because of the color of my skin, I would...
- People of other races make me feel...

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•If I had to ride a bus across town to desegregate a school, I would...

Adapted from techniques developed by Simon, Howe, Kirschenbaum (1978) and Banks (2006)

Strongly Agree/Strongly Disagree Exercise:

Ask the students the extent to which they agree or disagree with the following statements. Tell the students to use the letter combinations: SA (strongly agree), AS (agree somewhat), DS (disagree somewhat), SD (strongly disagree). Once completed have the students break into small groups and discuss responses.

- Non-violence was the best way to respond to Mr. Shuttlesworth's beating.
- It was fine that Mr. Shuttlesworth brought his wife and daughters into a hostile environment.
- If I want to see something changed, it is up to me to make it happen.
- I am better off if I go to school with kids from different races.

Adapted from techniques developed by Simon, Howe, Kirschenbaum (1978) and Banks (2006)

Values Grid Exercise:

List the following questions on the board (Simon et al., 1978):

- 1.Are you proud of your position?
- 2.Have you publicly affirmed your position?
- 3.Have you chosen your position from alternatives?
- 4.Have you chosen your opinion after thoughtful consideration of the pros and cons and consequences?
- 5.Have you chosen your position freely?
- 6.Have you acted on or done anything about your beliefs?
- 7.Have you acted with repetition, pattern or consistency on this issue?

Ask students to write yes or no in each square in the chart to indicate their responses to the seven questions for each issue. Once completed, have the students break into small groups to discuss their responses.

ISSUE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Non-violence							
Autonomous social change							

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Self-segregated churches							
Conflict agitation							
Forced desegregation							
Racism							
Diversity							
Racially mixed schools							
Protecting loved ones							

(1) Are you proud of your position? (2) Have you publicly affirmed your position? (3) Have you chosen your position from alternatives? (4) Have you chosen your opinion after thoughtful consideration of the pros and cons and consequences? (5) Have you chosen your position freely? (6) Have you acted on or done anything about your beliefs? (7) Have you acted with repetition, pattern or consistency on this issue?

Adapted from techniques developed by Simon, Howe, Kirschenbaum (1978) and Banks (2006)

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