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Educating for Empowerment: Race, Socialization, and Reimagining Civic Education

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Abstract

This dissertation examines how one pervasive state institution—schools—shapes the political behavior of young people along the lines of race and ethnicity. I make four primary claims. First, I show that the content of traditional civic education courses privileges the political experiences of white political actors. Second, I argue that this phenomenon contributes to divergent political attitudes and behaviors across racial and ethnic groups – most notably contributing to a racial gap in political engagement across a range of measures. Third, rather than viewing traditional civic education courses as a way to jumpstart youth political engagement, I find that other educational approaches that have been advocated for, but not widely used, can close the aforementioned gaps. The approach I focus on is critical pedagogy, an educational philosophy that centers the agency and grassroots political action of marginalized groups. Fourth, I highlight the agency of teachers in processes of political socialization, examining how their attitudes and lived experiences shape their pedagogy.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Reimaging Civic Education in the United States

> *"I think every teacher should be able to argue that their subject is the most important subject. I think the case could easily be made that social studies is the most important because it teaches young people how to be good citizens… learning history, learning psychology, it's all important. At its core, social studies is about preparing young people to be active participants in their community and in their country. That's an enormous responsibility that I don't take lightly."*
>
> -Donald Miller (U.S. History Teacher in Chicago, 24 Years in the Classroom)

Perhaps more than any institution, schools embody America's most deeply cherished civic aspirations. Generations of Americans dating back to the nation's founding have looked to educational spaces to develop the knowledge, skills, and values deemed necessary to build and sustain the vitality of democracy (Du Bois 1903, Dewey 1916). Civic education and American history courses have been a major part of that charge. For Donald Miller, the History teacher quoted above, similar beliefs inform his educational practice. Yet, as his students, the majority of whom are young people of color, file out of school for summer vacation he shares his doubts: "I'm actually pretty pessimistic that my students are going to get involved…I mean, that's the goal of all of this, but quite frankly, I don't know that civics is working for these kids." Donald's skepticism is well-founded: traditional approaches to civic education are not living up to their promise and could do more to provide empowering civic learning experiences that better prepare young people for full participation in public life.

Active and equitable participation is an essential component of a well-functioning democracy. Yet, across multiple forms of participation, white Americans tend to be more politically active than people of color, calling the vitality of participatory democracy into question (Verba et al. 1995; 2012, APSA Task Force on Inequality and American Democracy 2004). A number of studies attribute racial gaps in political participation to unequal resources such as money

(Verba et al 1995; 2012), political efficacy (Verba et al 1995;2012), or weak affiliations to political parties (Hajnal and Lee 2011). These factors undoubtedly play an important role. However, another critical factor concerns socialization experiences.

Political socialization is the process through which individuals come to develop their political beliefs and practices. To some extent, this is a life-long process (e.g. Erickson and Stoker 2011). However, a large literature demonstrates that beliefs about politics emerge quite early in life as children begin to model their political behaviors after those of their parents and guardians (Berelson et al. 1954; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Jennings et al. 2009; Healy and Malhorta 2013). Political socialization encompasses both micro- and macro-level processes (Sapiro 2005, 2). At the micro-level, individuals engage in political development and learning at home, in neighborhoods, and within civic and religious institutions (Hyman 1959; Sapiro 2015, 3). Hyman (1959) provides a useful micro-level conception of political socialization, defining it as an individual's "learning of social patterns corresponding to [their] societal positions as mediated through various agencies of society" (Sapiro 2015, 3). Contrastingly, studies of macro-level political socialization characterize it as a mechanism through which a nation is able to forge a political culture which, in turn, fosters democratic functions and institutions (Almond and Verba 1963; Easton 1965; 1967; Sapiro 2015, 3). While examining micro-level sources of political socialization such as families, neighborhoods, and community organizations is crucial, such an approach risks overlooking the role of *state institutions* in shaping political behavior. I argue that examining the development of civic education policy and its subsequent effects on the political behavior of young people allows for both a macro- and micro-level account of political socialization. These courses enable institutions to forge a political culture (macro-level) through state-mandated instruction in schools (micro-level). Given that American political institutions

have historically underwritten and reproduced social inequalities (Mettler 1998, Burch 2013), the role of such institutions in socialization processes raises major normative concerns regarding equitable outcomes.

High school is understood to play an important role in processes of political socialization (Prior 2019). For example, young people enrolled in classes defined by an open classroom environment where they are encouraged to talk about politics and current events express greater political interest and greater intent to vote (Niemi and Junn 1998, Torney-Purta 2002, Campbell 2008, Hess 2009, Gainous and Martens 2012, Dassonneville et al. 2012, Martens and Gainous 2013, Hess and McAvoy 2014, Persson 2015). Contrastingly, those who attend schools with punitive and authoritarian disciplinary policies tend to be less trusting of government and less likely to vote during adulthood (Bruch and Soss 2018). Moreover, young people of color are more likely to be exposed to policies of this kind (2018). However, less is known about how the *precise content of these courses contributes to democratic outcomes, especially along the lines of race and ethnicity.* This is an important point for consideration given the role of local, state, and federal agencies in regulating what is taught in schools, and the aforementioned racial gaps in participation.

Surprisingly, some of the most widely cited civic education research concludes that course content has little to no effect on political socialization. This would suggest that the long-standing policy debates about civic education are less consequential than we might expect. Indeed, Langton and Jennings famously conclude that civic education curriculum is "not even a minor source of political socialization" (1968, 865). However, the authors oddly ignore their own finding that these courses matter considerably for Black students, especially those from families with lower rates of educational attainment (866). Nonetheless, echoing the lack of interest in studying content,

Campbell more recently suggests that "there seems to be little empirical traction to the study of formal curriculum" (2006, 153). While handful of studies demonstrate that curriculum does, in fact, matter (Torney-Purta 2002, Green et al. 2011), these studies do not consider whether these courses yield divergent effects across racial and ethnic groups. Can curricula play a part in closing racial gaps in participation? And, if so, what are the barriers preventing the use of such curricula?

At its core, this dissertation explores how to make civic education more equitable for young people of color. [1] In the process, I make four primary claims. First, I show that the content of traditional civic education courses privileges the political experiences of white political actors. Second, I argue that this phenomenon contributes to divergent political attitudes and behaviors across racial and ethnic groups – most notably contributing to inequities across a number of participatory outcomes. Third, rather than viewing traditional civic education courses as a way to jumpstart youth political engagement, I find that other educational approaches, particularly critical pedagogy, can close the aforementioned gaps by fostering greater feelings of empowerment among young people of color (Freire 1968, bell hooks 1994, Giroux 2011, Apple 2011, Seider et al. 2017). This approach to civics is different in that centers the grassroots political action of marginalized groups. Finally, I highlight the agency of teachers in using critical pedagogy, exploring how their attitudes and lived experiences drive the creation and implementation of more empowering civic learning experiences.

In this introductory chapter, I first provide a brief history of civic education in the United States, highlighting the centrality of race in policy debates about this issue. By focusing on race,

[1] To be clear, transforming civic education in the United States is not only about empowering young people of color, but also pushing white kids to think about racism. Both of these tasks are essential. However, educational spaces have historically served the needs of white students before considering how to make them more inclusive and empowering for young people of color. For this reason, this dissertation intentionally focuses on the former.

my intent is not to downplay inequities in civic learning that emerge along other dimensions—gender, class, and citizenship status certainly play a role and are discussed throughout this text. However, I work from the understanding that race must play a central role in any comprehensive account of American politics (Omi and Winant 2015, 3) and is essential in framing our understanding of both the limitations and possibilities of civic education in the United States. In the process, I argue that the longevity of debates over civic education reflect the importance of educational spaces in processes of political socialization. While the rhetoric of these debates is often presented in symbolic terms, this dissertation demonstrates that civic education also has very real effects on political behavior. I conclude the chapter by providing an overview of the data and methods utilized throughout the dissertation and a summary for each of the four subsequent chapters.

A Brief History of Civic Education in the United States

I define civic education as any course that that aims to equip young people with the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors that prepare them for democratic citizenship.[2] This includes a number of social studies courses including history, civics, and government (Merriam 1934, Niemi and Junn 1999, Levinson 2012).[3] While many states have distinct civic education courses, citizenship standards are frequently embedded into these other social studies classes. These state-by-state variations reflect a long history in which government agencies, social commentators, and powerful textbook publishers wrestled for control over what gets taught within these courses.

[2] By citizenship, I refer to the act of participating rather than formal legal status.
[3] While many states have distinct civic education courses, citizenship standards are frequently embedded into other social studies courses, especially American history and American government (see CIRCLE).

Debates over civic learning have always been about political power. Early in the development of the United States, political elites, including George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, recognized the enormous potential of civic learning in schools.[4] However, like many of America's founding principles, they never intended for these spaces to be used to empower women and people of color. After all, they designed a system where political processes were legally reserved for white men. During Jefferson's presidency, education became so strongly associated with preparation for citizenship that barriers were put in place to exclude all non-citizens regardless of race (Smith, 189). However, by the 1860s, restrictions had started to ease, allowing public schools to become a widespread institution that explicitly set out to prepare young people for active participation in public life.[5] Increased access to educational institutions also came to be associated with notable shifts in America's political structures. Following the Civil War, Reconstruction governments comprised of African Americans and white progressives created widespread systems of public schools in the South. (Smith 320-323; Du Bois 1935a). However, the era of increased access, inclusion, and representation was short-lived and civic learning quickly became a target of white backlash.

Political elites in the North and South fought to maintain control over schools as important sites for political socialization. In the post-Reconstruction South, textbook writers, including the former Vice President of the Confederacy Alexander Stephens, characterized the Civil War as perpetuated by the "lawlessness" of a "small, criminally inclined group of New Englanders who

[4] "Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." -George Washington (1796); "Educate and inform the whole mass of the people. They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty."-Thomas Jefferson (1787)

[5] In Illinois, the winning case for the establishment of public schools in 1862 stressed that "the chief end [of public schools] is to make good citizens" (Smith, 217).

were, inexplicably, opposed to the Southern way of life" (Moreau 2004, 65). Meanwhile, textbook adoption boards throughout the South espoused concern that the agenda of Northern textbook writers would prevent white students from learning about the "golden era of the Confederacy along with its most important legacy—racial pride" (Moreau 2004, 86). By the turn of the 20th century, white children throughout the American South were reading historical content that provided ideological justification for the enaction of Jim Crow and reaffirmed romantic accounts of the Antebellum (65). At the same time, political elites aimed to restrict African Americans from accessing not only schools, but free textbooks that mentioned democratic rights and duties that "might awaken black political aspirations" (Mickey 2015, 110; Nakano Glenn 2004).

In the North, civic education initiatives also maintained the centrality of whiteness. While the Progressive Era witnessed an expansion in public education and led to the development of America's first formal civic education initiatives, these courses focused on assimilation rather than inclusion (Clark 2016). Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, media coverage of civic education courses touted the ability of civics to "change the views" of individuals, including immigrants and prisoners (*The New York Times,* 1929). By this point, the political agency exercised by African Americans during Reconstruction had also given way to the "Confederate Myth" in historical texts used throughout the United States, painting an "unappealing portrait of oppressive Republican rule" following the Civil War (Loewen 1996, 156). Recognizing that white educational institutions were denying Black children from learning about their own history, scholars and social commentators, including W.E.B. Du Bois, implored those teaching Black students to utilize textbooks and course content that accurately captured the agency of Black Americans (Du Bois 1935b, 333-334). Again, for Du Bois, advocating for the inclusion of this content was not merely

symbolic, but reflected his understanding that schools were important sites for political socialization (Du Bois 1903).

By the mid-Twentieth Century, formalized civic education reached an apex, with the majority of high school students receiving three separate courses in civics and government (Litvinov 2017). However, Black activists and educators stressed that the content of these courses frequently described African Americans in extremely negative terms. For example, in November 1966, the *New York Times* summarized a 47-page report about the treatment of African Americans in textbooks published by Irving Sloan, a high school social studies teacher in New York City. Sloan argued that these texts characterized Black people as "nothing more than slaves before the Civil War and as a problem ever since" (Farber 1966). Meanwhile, nearly all the textbooks characterized the emergence of the Ku Klux Klan as a "morally justified" response to Reconstruction with only "rare expressions of disapproval" regarding the Klan's activities (1966). In response, civil rights groups such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), organized Freedom Schools throughout Mississippi to provide empowering civic learning opportunities that centered the lived experiences, history, and culture of Black people in the United States (Chilcoat and Ligon 1998, 165).

Initiatives such as the Freedom Schools corresponded with the establishment of the first ethnic studies departments on college campuses throughout the United States (Murch 2010; Sleeter 2011). Like the Freedom Schools, ethnic studies courses emerged during the 1960s and 1970s as a response to more traditional, Euro-centric curricula (2011, vii). Instead, these courses drew from theories of critical pedagogy to provide Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native American youth with units of study that centered the histories, lived experiences, and intellectual scholarship of their own racial/ethnic group (2011, vii; Freire 1968).

The increased public interest (and critique) of social studies curricula fueled claims that America had lost an undisputed and "fairly simple" account of its history (Fitzgerald 1980, 73; 102-103), a narrative that a number of scholars have demonstrated to be unequivocally false (Loewen 1996, Moreau 2004). Attempts to make social studies standards more inclusive following the 1960s led to prominent and highly partisan policy debates about civic education. Amid the 1994 midterm elections, the release of the National Standards for United States History was met with public backlash after attempting to make the standards more inclusive of women and people of color (Nash, Dunn, and Crabtree 1994). In prominent rebukes, conservatives Newt Gingrich and Lynn Cheney argued that cultural elites were replacing a "common understanding we share about who we are and how we came to be…[with] the notion that every group is entitled to its own version of the past" (Gingrich 1995, 7; 30-33; see also Cheney 1994). In 2009, "experts" hired by the Texas Board of Education questioned whether Cesar Chavez and Thurgood Marshall had made enough of an impact on United States history to warrant inclusion in the state's revised social studies standards (Levinson 2012,139). Again, in 2010, conservative politicians in Arizona passed legislation that banned the teaching of ethnic studies courses on the basis that they portrayed whites as oppressors and Latinxs as the oppressed (Arizona HB 2281, 2010). The law remained in effect for seven years until a judge determined that the ban was motivated by racial animus (Depenbrock, 2017). And yet again, in 2014, the College Board's attempt to revise Advanced Placement United States History standards to push students to more critically examine the nation's founding narratives was met with intense backlash. In one response, 2016 presidential candidate Ben Carson claimed that high schoolers "would be ready to go sign up for ISIS" upon finishing the course (Lerner 2015).

These are just a handful of the hundreds of stories that highlight the centrality of race in debates about civic education in the United States. Thus, when Donald Miller, the U.S. History teacher introduced at the beginning of this chapter, expresses skepticism about the ability of civics to "work" for young people of color, his concern is a legitimate one. Decades of compromises have determined who has access to civic education and whose stories are represented within the content. I argue that debates over civic education are not merely symbolic; they reflect a deep understanding that schools, and civic education courses specifically, hold immense power in processes of political socialization.

My Approach

The research presented in this dissertation was conducted over the course of four years in the Chicago metropolitan area. Over this period, I built relationships with teachers, school and district administrators, and parents in order to gain access to dozens of high schools throughout Chicago and its surrounding suburbs. I spent 100 hours observing classrooms, talking to students and teachers, and navigating four separate institutional review boards. While grassroots research of this kind is time consuming, I believe that it is the most powerful approach for addressing the kinds of questions I have posed in this project.

Socialization studies are held to high methodological standards as they are required to demonstrate both causality and longevity (Campbell 2019, 41). The data and methods utilized in this dissertation are able to accomplish both. Using an experiment distributed to nearly 700 14-18-year-olds spanning nine high schools and 12 classrooms in the Chicago area, I am able to show a causal relationship between course content and rates of intended participation. Moreover, I draw from hours of classroom observations and content analyses of course syllabi to show that the

effects of this experiment are moderated by the teacher's pre-existing practices. Focus groups with 24 additional high school students allow me to clarify why course content that critically engages with race and collective action narratives triggers a psychological response that yields higher rates of intended participation. Finally, I draw from 26 in-depth interviews and a survey of 300 Chicago area high school teachers to demonstrate that a teacher's attitudes and lived experiences shape the ways in which they select course content and develop civic learning opportunities for their students. During this process, I discovered that some of the teachers I interviewed had actually been the students of other teachers included in this project. These serendipitous findings allow me to speak to the ways in which students internalize the messages they are taught in their social studies courses and carry those messages into their own pedagogical practices years down the line.

While this dissertation is unapologetically a story about Chicago, the implications of this research span far beyond the city limits. Chicago Public Schools represents one of the largest and most racially diverse school districts in the United States (Nelsen 2019a), making it an ideal case for understanding the potential for civic education as it relates to racial equity. Furthermore, given the strong relationship between Chicago Public Schools and number of external political organizations (e.g. Mikvah Challenge), Chicago serves as a rigorous test for whether new approaches to civic learning are capable of offering students something not already provided through an already extensive network of community partnerships. I follow in the footsteps of those who have used Chicago as an important case study for understanding the ways in which educational institutions in the United States can simultaneously serve as sites for immense inequality as well as political agency (Shedd 2015, Nuamah 2016, Todd-Berland 2018, Ewing 2018)

Chapter Outlines

In the chapters that follow, I demonstrate that the content of traditional civic education courses privileges the political experiences of white Americans. I show that this is not merely a symbolic phenomenon, but one that contributes to stark inequities in several democratic outcomes. With these inequities in mind, I further show how emancipatory teaching practices, including critical pedagogy, offer a path forward for those looking for ways to make civic education more empowering for young people of color (Freire 1968, bell hooks 1994, Giroux 2011, Apple 2011, Seider et al. 2017).

Chapter 2 demonstrates that civic education courses and their curricula are associated with distinct attitudes and behaviors across racial groups using statistical analyses of a nationally representative sample of 15-25-year-olds. Using data from the Black Youth Project (Cohen 2005), I find that civic education courses are associated with higher rates of external efficacy among white youth, but not among Black and Latinx youth. Rather, civic education courses appear to increase acts of public voice (i.e., protests and boycotts) among Black and Latinx respondents, but not for their white peers. In other words, civic education does affect political outcomes, but a standardized approach to civics courses should not be assumed to yield consistent outcomes across diverse student populations. Most importantly, it suggests that traditional civic education courses may actually contribute to racial gaps in political efficacy and in multiple forms of political participation, demonstrating that visions for civic education reform must move beyond the notion that increased access alone will yield more equitable outcomes.

Chapter 3 presents results from an experiment that examines the causal effects of alternate educational approaches. This study was distributed to nearly 700 high schoolers (14-18-years-old) in the Chicago area during the 2017-2018 academic year. The results of the experiment

demonstrate that content which critically engages with race and collective action narratives leads both Black and Latinx youth to report greater willingness to participate in multiple forms of politics, relative to those who are exposed to more traditional course content. The intervention has no negative effects on the willingness of white youth to participate in the same activities. Most importantly, the more critical content appears to narrow gaps in participation between white youth and young people of color across multiple participatory domains. This finding challenges accounts of political socialization that downplay the importance of educational content (Langton and Jennings 1968, Campbell 2006, Bruch and Soss 2018). Instead, I find that the content of civic education courses can play a formative role in processes of political socialization, especially for young people of color, even when presented in a brief intervention. I believe this to be the first causal demonstration of an educational intervention that can close racial gaps in political participation. Interestingly, I find that the effects of the treatment are most pronounced among participants attending schools where teachers do not already use critical pedagogy; in short, there is a discernable pre-treatment effect.

Chapter 4 uses student focus groups to explore links between social studies content and greater feelings of empowerment. Analyses of students' own understanding and interpretation of social studies content enables me to more comprehensively examine the mechanisms that connect course content to intended participation. Drawing from the insights of young people, this chapter demonstrates that collective action narratives that highlight movements (rather than a few widely discussed "great American heroes") are particularly empowering for young people of color. The complexity of their responses also highlights challenges that teachers and policymakers will have to overcome in order to achieve more equitable democratic outcomes for young people.

Chapter 5 centers the agency of teachers in processes of political socialization. Drawing from 26 in-depth interviews and a survey of 300 Chicago area high school teachers, I argue that the lived experiences and attitudes of teachers figure prominently in their practice. Namely, I find that teachers who use critical pedagogy hold more liberal racial views, are less authoritarian in the ways in which they manage their classrooms and possess more positive attitudes towards the neighborhoods where they teach. Moreover, the chapter offers important insights for policymakers and practitioners hoping to make civic education more effective and inclusive for an increasingly diverse generation of young people.

The concluding chapter synthesizes the dissertation's findings. Overall, this project aims to reframe the political socialization literature, clarifying the important role that civic education courses and teachers play in shaping political behavior. While my research highlights ways in which civic education courses can be adapted to prepare an increasingly diverse generation of young people for active participation within American democracy, it also identifies institutional hurdles that would need to be surmounted for these changes to become a reality.

Coda: A Note to Policymakers and Practitioners

When examining democratic outcomes in this dissertation, I focus on political participation. While a number of non-profit organizations utilize metrics such as political knowledge and political trust to gauge the success of civic learning opportunities, I do not adopt this approach for three reasons. First, traditional measures of political knowledge used in the social sciences frequently overlook forms of information that are particularly relevant to marginalized communities (Cohen and Luttig 2019; see also Niemi and Junn 1998, 111). In order to make civic education more equitable, it is important for students to develop forms of political knowledge that

allow them to address their unique circumstances. By presuming what they need to know, traditional measures do not capture these forms of political knowledge. Second, civic education scholars and policymakers oftentimes neglect that the acquisition of political knowledge is meaningful specifically because it *decreases* the costs of participation (Downs 1957). In attempts to be appear less partisan, many within civic education spaces suggest that the role of civics is *not* to encourage young people to participate in politics. I am always surprised by this assertion because it would seem to suggest that the only purpose of civic education is to provide young people with a set of facts that are never meant to be used. I strongly disagree with this position simply because participation is a central tenant of democratic societies (Dahl 1961). Finally, as it relates to trust, I do not believe that the purpose of civic education courses is to convince anyone, and marginalized communities of people in particular, to be more trusting of government when they may have legitimate reasons not to do so (Junn 2004).

I argue that a comprehensive civic education provides young people with the opportunity to explore their own agency, so they are better able to determine whether they want to participate in politics and on what terms. To do this, I employ a broad definition of political participation that expands beyond traditional measures such as voting and volunteerism (see Zukin et al. 2006). As I argue throughout the text, such an approach is essential in order to understand the ways in which young people, including those who have yet to reach voting age, are not United States citizens, or feel marginalized by formal political processes, come to understand their own agency. I may, at times, invoke the term "citizenship" to talk about these participatory acts, but do not use it as a way to describe activities that are available exclusively to United States citizens.

While centering participation, it is also important to acknowledge the risks associated with engaging in politics. Indeed, many young people of color, and Black youth in particular, participate

in a politics of invisibility, avoiding "officials who possibly could provide assistance but [are] more likely to impose greater surveillance and regulations on their lives" (Cohen 2012, 196). Thus, by focusing on participation, my intent is not to trivialize the associated risks, but to highlight its importance within democratic systems and to center the profound political insights young people have to offer.

Chapter 2

Race and the Behavioral Effects of Civic Education[6]

In the wake of the 2016 Presidential Election, social commentators took an increased interest in civic education. A wave of think pieces suggested that simply increasing access to civics courses had the ability to revitalize American democracy: "In the Age of Trump, Civics Courses Make a Comeback;" "Trump's Victory is the Jump Start Civic Education Needed;" "The Lack of Civic Education Has Shaped the Election" (Cole 2016; Kahlenberg and Janey 2016; Tugend 2018). While well-intentioned, these articles (as well as many advocates for civic education) frequently talk about increasing access before considering whether these courses are actually living up to their full potential at present. Indeed, a number of civic education scholars have cautioned that it is first necessary to understand whether these courses are ensuring equitable democratic outcomes along the lines of race and ethnicity (Junn 2004, 253; Levinson 2012).

This chapter explores how civic education courses affect political participation across racial and ethnic groups. While a handful of studies touch upon this topic, they are constrained by limited measures of political participation (Niemi and Junn 1998; Levinson 2012) or by ignoring the heterogeneous effects of civic education courses along racial and ethnic lines (Langton and Jennings 1968, Campbell 2008, Martens and Gainous 2012; 2013).

This chapter addresses these concerns in two ways. First, I argue that a wide range of participatory activities must be analyzed in order to understand the ways in which young people across racial and ethnic groups come to participate in politics. Relevant activities range from traditional acts of political engagement such as voting to acts of public voice such as protests.

[6] This chapter was previously published in *The Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics.*

Second, I develop a theory that explores the ways in which the curricula utilized in civic education courses contribute to heterogeneous participatory effects among Black, Latinx, and white youth. Given that civic education courses tend to place greater emphasis on the political experiences of white Americans, I predict that young people of color experience these courses differently than their white peers.

I utilize the Black Youth Project's *Youth Culture Survey* (Cohen 2005) and archival data from the Texas State Board of Education to test this theory. Notably, I find that civic education courses are associated with higher rates of external efficacy among white youth, but not for Black and Latinx youth. Rather than fostering a belief in the responsiveness of government, civic education courses are associated with acts of public voice for young people of color, which span beyond traditional forms of participation such as voting. While varied forms of participation are important for the function of a healthy democracy, the racialized dimension of the results presented in this chapter should give us pause. While expanding access to civic education courses may increase rates of youth participation, the nature of these courses must first be reconsidered if these effects are to be experienced in ways that enhance representation for racial and ethnic minorities.[7]

An Expanded Approach to Political Participation

Scholarship examining political participation in the United States typically focuses on acts of *political engagement,* defined as activities with "the intent or effect of influencing government action either directly affecting the making of implementation of public policy or indirectly

[7] The goal of this chapter is not to provide an exhaustive account of the quality of civic education courses. School type (Dill 2009; Carbonaro and Covay 2010; Campbell 2012; Levine 2014), curriculum (Gamoran 1987; Torney-Purta 2002; Levinson 2012), and teacher instructional practices (Torney-Purta 2002; Levinson 2012; Kahne et. al 2013; Martens and Gainous 2013) undoubtedly contribute to mixed outcomes. While a comprehensive analysis of civic education in the United States should be undertaken, it is far beyond the scope of this study.

influencing the selection of people who make those policies" (Zukin et al. 2006, 7). A number of studies find that youth political engagement is consistently low using metrics such as voter turnout (e.g. Putnam 2000; Zukin 2006). However, Zukin et al. (2006) suggest that young people are more engaged when a larger battery of political behaviors are considered. I follow a similar approach; any study that aims to understand how young Americans participate in politics must examine a wider range of activities, especially because unequal access to resources, different socialization experiences, and barriers produced by public policy orient youth towards different kinds of participatory acts (Atkins and Hart 2003; Greenberg 1970; Kahne and Lee 2013; Lyons 1970; McIntosh, Hart, and Youniss 2007; Verba et al. 1995; Zukin 2006; Campbell 2006; Bruch and Soss 2018). Both traditional and non-traditional forms of political participation are components of mass politics in a healthy democracy and should be treated as such in any comprehensive account of political behavior (Zukin et al. 2006, 52).

Zukin et al. (2006) organize a battery of political and civic activities into four categories of engagement: political, civic, public voice, and cognitive. *Political engagement*, attempting to influence government policy or officials through voting and campaign activity, is distinct from *civic engagement*, which aims to enhance "public good" through "hands-on cooperation with others" by participating in activities such as volunteering, organizational membership, and attending community meetings (Zukin et al. 2006, 51). *Public voice* is defined as "the ways citizens give expression to their views on public issues" (i.e. contributing to political blogs or participating in a protest). Finally, *cognitive engagement* refers to "paying attention to public affairs and politics" by participating in activities such as following the news or talking to friends and family

about political issues (54).[8] A summary of the activities that fall within each category is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Indicators of Public Engagement

Political Engagement	Civic Engagement	Public Voice	Cognitive Engagement
• Voting • Joining a political group • Giving money to a candidate, party, or issue • Working or volunteering on a political campaign	• Volunteering or community service work • Neighborhood problem solving	• Boycotting and Buycotting • Participating in a protest, march, demonstration, or sit-in • Contacting public officials • Signing a paper or e-mail petition • Sending an email/writing a blog about a political issue • Writing a letter to the editor about a political issue or problem	• Talking to family or friends about a political issue, party, or candidate • Watching television news or reading a newspaper[9]

Adapted from Zukin et al. (2006) and Cohen (2010)

Given that access to political resources, socialization experiences, and differential effects of public policy vary across racial groups (e.g. Verba et al. 1995; Cohen 2010; Bruch and Soss 2018), the above approach allows for a more nuanced examination of cross-group differences in political behavior. The 2008 Mobilization, Change, and Political and Civic Engagement Project (MCPCE) finds that young people across racial and ethnic groups participate in politics differently (Cohen 2010, 180-185). For example, Latinx youth are less likely than white and Black youth to participate in acts of political engagement and public voice (Cohen 2010, 180-184).[10] This variation in participatory trends across groups warrants continued investigation. Thus, any study

[8] Verba and Nie (1972), Brady (1999), and Putnam (2000) also analyze participation across various categories. However, I utilize the Zukin et al. (2006) approach because it categorizes a wider variety of political activities.
[9] The data set utilized in this study did not ask respondents about their media consumption. Thus, for the sake of this paper, cognitive engagement is limited to talking to family or friends about political issues, parties, or candidates.
[10] For example, 25 percent of Black youth claimed to have participated in buycotting as opposed to 23 percent of white youth and 20 percent of Latinx youth (Cohen 2010, 181). Meanwhile, 9 percent of white youth and 8 percent of Black youth reported attending a protest, demonstration, or sit-in opposed to 7 percent of Latinx youth (Cohen 2010, 184).

analyzing youth political participation in the United States should analyze cross-racial differences. Additionally, there is reason to expect that civic education courses in particular have a racialized effect on political participation. A growing literature has shown how institutions and public policy generate racialized differences in political participation; for example, voter ID-laws (e.g. Sobel and Smith 2009), distance to polling locations (e.g. Brady and McNulty 2011), criminal convictions (e.g. Burch 2013), and authoritarian disciplinary structures within schools (e.g. Bruch and Soss 2018) all depress *political engagement* among communities of color. I suggest that the availability and content of citizenship education courses represent another institutional feature that generates divergent participatory trends across racial groups. In the next section, I discuss this theoretical expectation about the content of citizenship education in more detail.

Theorizing the Link between Civic Education and Political Participation

A number of political scientists have examined the impact of civic education courses on student outcomes. While these studies provide noteworthy insights regarding the acquisition of political knowledge (Martens and Gainous 2013; Niemi and Junn 1998; Niemi 2012), intent to vote and volunteer (Langton and Jennings 1968; Campbell 2006; Martens and Gainous 2013), and political efficacy (Langton and Jennings 1968; Martens and Gainous 2013), they are limited for two reasons. First, these studies do not consider how civic education courses impact a wider variety of participatory behaviors beyond acts of conventional political engagement. To the best of my knowledge, no existing work examines the impact of civic education courses on less traditional forms of participation such as acts of public voice.

Second, this literature overlooks the importance of race when considering how the content of civics courses contributes to divergent behavioral outcomes. For example, Langton and

Jennings (1968) conclude that civic education curriculum is "not even a minor source of political socialization" (865). However, the same study also finds that civic education courses do matter considerably for Black students, especially those from families with lower rates of educational attainment (1968, 866). Similarly, while Niemi and Junn (1998) find that Black students enrolled in civic education classes tend to possess greater political knowledge than their white peers regarding topics such as the Montgomery bus boycott (71 percent versus 43 percent) and the nonviolent tactics employed by the Civil Rights Movement (79 percent versus 68 percent), their data set is unable to gauge how this knowledge influences political behavior more broadly (111). Others suggest that it is not the curriculum utilized within these courses that shapes the political behavior of young people, but the overall climate of the school (Campbell 2006, 153; Bruch and Soss 2018, 49). The present study addresses these gaps by exploring how the content of civic education courses might shape various forms of political participation along racial and ethnic lines.

Potential Mechanisms Linking Civic Education Courses to Political Participation

Civic education courses may impact political participation in a number of ways. Some obvious mechanisms include the acquisition of civic and political knowledge and providing the language and communication skills associated with higher rates of political participation (Verba et al. 1995; Niemi and Junn 1998; Niemi 2012). Civic education courses can also be conceptualized as a socialization process that shapes students' attitudes towards the political system. Given that these attitudes are commonly associated with interactions with formal institutions (Verba et al. 1995), it makes sense to explore how a key institution such as schools contribute to the development of such attitudes. I theorize that civic education courses may be associated with the development of political efficacy among certain students.

Political efficacy—one's belief in the responsiveness of government and their own ability to influence public affairs—is commonly associated with higher rates of political participation (Verba et al. 1995). Political efficacy can be furthered distilled into two distinct attitudes: external efficacy and internal efficacy. *External efficacy* refers to one's belief in the responsiveness of government and one's own ability to influence public affairs (Cohen 2010; Rogowski and Cohen 2015). I argue that *external efficacy* is more likely to be associated with *political engagement.* If an individual believes in the responsiveness of political institutions, they are more likely to participate in activities such as voting that strengthen the legitimacy of those institutions.[11] Contrastingly, individuals who have less faith in the responsiveness of government will be more likely to look beyond institutionalized forms of politics, instead pursing acts of *public voice.* This relationship is summarized in column one of Table 2.

Internal Efficacy, on the other hand, reflects an individual's belief that they possess the knowledge and skills to address personal and social problems (Cohen 2010; Rogowski and Cohen 2015). I expect *internal efficacy* to be most strongly associated with one's ability to effectively identify and communicate solutions to problems. If one feels they have the knowledge and skills to participate in discourse surrounding political issues, they will be more likely to engage in acts of *cognitive engagement.* This relationship is summarized in the second column of Table 2. Cohen (2010) and Rogowski and Cohen (2015) note the varying salience of these attitudes across racial/ethnic group, raising the question as to whether civic education plays a role in developing

[11] The data utilized in this chapter are not structured in a way that allows me to test whether efficacy mediates the relationship between civic education and political participation (Bullock and Ha 2011). However, thinking through the ways in which internal and external efficacy are associated with certain political activities was a central component in generating the hypotheses presented below.

these attitudes. In the analysis below, I examine the relationship between civic education courses and both internal and external efficacy across racial groups.

Table 2: Political Attitudes and Behavior

External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
↑ External Efficacy → Political Engagement ↓ External Efficacy → Public Voice	↑ Internal Efficacy → Cognitive Engagement

Interrogating the Content of Civic Education

Civic education courses in the United States traditionally cover a narrow series of topics while promoting specific values and behaviors. Education scholars find that civics courses typically cover two overarching themes: political institutions and American heroes. Courses tend to emphasize the three branches of government, how bills become law, and other institutional structures that aim to provide a broad overview of how American government functions (Levinson 2012). Young people report this trend as well. A representative sample of 15-25-year-olds found that 45 percent of respondents associated their civic education course with the "constitution and how government in the United States works" (Levine and Lopez 2004, 2). In maintaining this focus, these courses emphasize traditional modes of civic and political participation such as volunteering, voting in elections, and contacting public officials while promoting narratives that emphasize the fairness of democratic forms of government (Levine and Lopez 2004; Levinson 2012). According to Levinson, emphasizing institutionalized mechanisms of America's democratic system privileges "traditional modes of civic action that are both increasingly outdated and unrepresentative of a range of actions and behaviors that have historically been important civic tools for members of disadvantaged, oppressed, and marginalized groups" (Levinson 2012, 45). Frequently these values and behaviors are explored through the invocation of American heroes.

While heroes are certainly not the only facet of civic education courses with the potential to shape the political attitudes and behaviors of young people, they do provide a unifying story (Peabody and Jenkins 2017) that convey important democratic ideals (Wrone 1979; Allison and Goethals 2011), "values associated with good character and responsible citizenship" (Sanchez 1998, 3), and a model for a democratic society (Klapp 1954).

How Heroes Shape Our Politics

According to Levinson, "A nation's heroes are often thought to provide a window into understanding its soul: what the nation values and emulates, and how it conceives itself-what it believes to stand for…Youth are explicitly taught the meaning they should ascribe to such heroes, and thus the values they should ascribe to their country" (2012, 143-144). Students are cognizant of this trend as well with 30 percent of 15-25-year-olds associating their civic education course with great American heroes and the virtues of the American system of government" (Levine and Lopez 2004).[12] These heroes are meant to provide young people with tangible examples for how to pursue effective civic and political action (2012). George Washington and Andrew Jackson, for example, are frequently employed to exemplify the virtue of military service while Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln are upheld as the embodiment of democratic ideals such as freedom and equality (Levinson 2012). While some suggest that such a conception of heroism no longer resonates with the American public (Peabody and Jenkins 2017), I argue that the invocation of heroes in civics courses is distinct for two reasons.

[12] While the data set utilized in this study does not allow for an explicit test of hero identification, the salience of heroes presented in these courses are evident in work by Levine and Lopez (2004). Furthermore, Peabody and Jenkins (2017) suggest that heroes provide a cohesive narrative that can be easily invoked by to convey certain ideas and values. I argue that curriculum and textbook writers invoke heroes in a similar way. However, future work should explore specific causal mechanisms in greater detail.

First, Peabody and Jenkins' analysis of the Harris Interactive "Heroes" Poll reveals that Americans consistently identify political figures when asked "who is deemed heroic," even when presented with open-ended questions (2017, 140). Most strikingly, many of these figures, including Martin Luther King and Abraham Lincoln, garner praise overtime and across generational groups (2017, 140). Thus, even at a moment when the American public is skeptical of the invocation of heroism by the media and political elites, there is something compelling about these narratives that continues to resonate with people that is worth exploring. Second, while one could argue that young people do not look to historical figures of such stature for tangible examples of role models, it is possible that these heroes come to mind when they think about how American politics and government *should* work and what participatory avenues are actually available for people like them (Klapp 1954, Sanchez, Wrone 1979; Allison and Goethals 2011).

Given that heroes are invoked in in order to teach young people ideas about democratic processes, exposure to traditional curricula should theoretically bolster external efficacy and political engagement by espousing a belief that individuals who participate can make difference. However, given that these narratives typically emphasize white political actors, I expect this to only be true for white students. Contrastingly, given that descriptive representation is shown to bolster efficacy among racial and ethnic minorities (West 2017; Marx et al. 2009), students of color who *do not* see themselves represented in traditional civic education curricula are unlikely to experience these effects.[13]

[13] Gender is also extremely important to take into consideration given the theoretical framework presented here. While gender effects are discussed in the results sections of this study, a comprehensive account of this topic is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, a more detailed discussion of gender effects is presented in the Appendix that should be viewed as a starting point for forthcoming research addressing the effects of civic education through an intersectional lens.

I also expect that the emphasis of civic education curricula on formal political institutions and (predominantly white) "American heroes" will have varying impacts on the political attitudes and behaviors of youth across racial groups. White students would come to believe in the responsiveness of America's governing institutions by examining the ways in which effective individuals made an impact through political action. These curricula may be intended to contribute to positive orientations towards political engagement for all students, but the narratives contained therein largely overlook people of color who have historically been denied access to formal political institutions or rely on "god-like" portrayals of a few prominent individuals (e.g. Martin Luther King) that are oftentimes difficult for students to relate to (Levinson 2012). This could potentially send a negative message that people of color are not worthy political leaders with the ability to shape American political institutions. Thus, I construct the following two hypotheses:

> **H_1**: Civic education courses will be associated with the development of *external efficacy* among white youth, but not Black and Latinx youth.
>
> **H_2**: Civic education courses will be associated with *political engagement* among white youth, but not for Black and Latinx youth.

While textbook writers have made a concerted effort to discuss white leaders alongside prominent people of color (Levinson 2012), the institutional focus of these courses promotes a narrative that places white political actors at the heart of institutionalized forms of political action while people of color, when mentioned at all, are relegated to extra-systemic forms of participation. Representation of this kind is an important factor in student outcomes. Freire (1968) suggests that seeing one's identity reflected in historical processes is an essential component of building critical

consciousness. Similarly, social psychologists find that salient role models hold the potential to reduce "race-based performance differences" among young people of color (Marx et al. 2009).

When people of color such as Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, and Cesar Chavez do emerge in these narratives, they are portrayed acting beyond the system, pushing government to respond to acts of *public voice* such as protests, marches, and sit-ins when institutional means are inaccessible or unresponsive. Contrastingly, there are fewer examples of white actors participating in acts of *public voice.* Thus, I expect:

> **H3**: Civic education courses will be associated with acts of *public voice* among Black and Latinx youth, but not for white youth

At the same time, civic education courses create opportunities for students to develop language and communication skills that are not inherently political. Because these courses are frequently discourse-oriented, students are given the space to develop ideas and share them with peers, bolstering internal efficacy (Callahan and Muller 2013; Martens and Gainous 2013). Civics courses are an especially important space for English language learners to absorb political information that can later be shared with family and friends (Callahan and Muller 2013; Campbell and Niemi 2016). While white and Black youth undoubtedly benefit from the communication skills embedded into civics curriculum, the impact on these courses on *internal efficacy* should be most pronounced among first and second-generation immigrants.[14] According to Pew, 55 percent of U.S.-born Latinxs are second generation immigrants and nearly 60 percent are age 33 or younger (2016). First and second-generation Latinx immigrants are more likely to speak a language other

[14] The subsequent hypotheses are limited to Latinxs due to data constraints, preventing an analysis of Asian Americans.

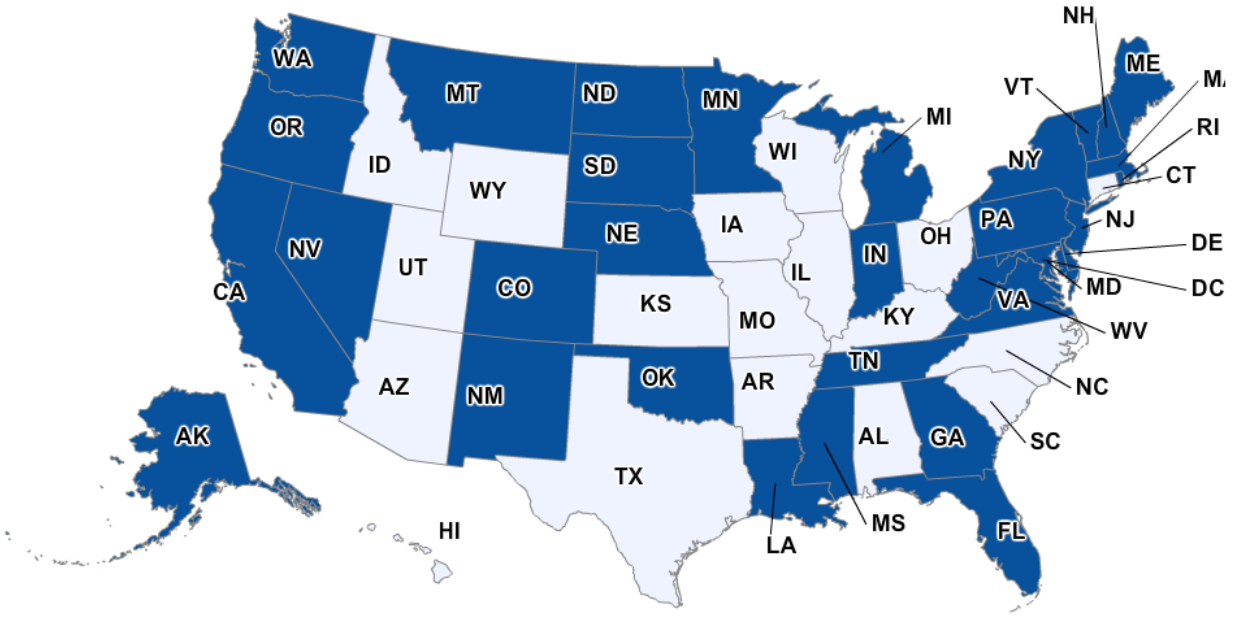
than English at home (Callahan and Muller 2013; Campbell and Niemi 2016), suggesting that the language skills gained from civic education courses at school may have a more pronounced impact on attitudes and behaviors associated with *cognitive engagement* for this group. Thus:

> **H_4** Civic education courses will be positively associated with the development of *internal efficacy* among Latinx youth, but not for white and Black youth.
>
> **H_5**: Civic education courses will be positively associated with *cognitive engagement* among Latinx youth, but not white and Black youth.

Other facets of civic education, however, are likely to be experienced more consistently across racial and ethnic groups. Though civic education is a requirement in 46 out of 50 states, there is a great deal of variation in learning standards across geographical contexts (CIRCLE 2014). However, a commitment to service learning (combining learning objectives with community service) is fairly consistent across states. As demonstrated below in Figure 1, service learning is required in 31 out of 50 states. While civic education may yield divergent outcomes in political behavior across racial and ethnic groups, I expect civic education to be associated with *civic engagement* across all groups given the salience of service learning across the United States. Thus:

> **H_6**: Civic education courses will be positively associated with *civic engagement* for white, Black, and Latinx youth

Figure 1: Service Learning Required in State Education Standards[15]



Data and Methods

I use the *Youth Culture Survey* made available through the Black Youth Project to test the hypotheses presented above. The first wave of the survey was conducted in 2005 by the National Organization of Research (NORC) at the University of Chicago and utilized a random digit dial (RDD) sample to explore the attitudes of young people ages 15-25. The survey addressed several topics including political participation and access to civic education (Cohen 2005). Questions addressing these topics specifically were retrospective in nature. The survey contains a nationally representative sample of 1,590 respondents, including an oversample of Black youth and a small oversample of Latinx youth. Respondents were first given the opportunity to identify with multiple racial and ethnic groups (Asian, Black, biracial, Latinx, Native American, Pacific Islander, or

[15] Source: Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE 2014)

white) before being asked to identify with a single group. I use the responses to the latter question to categorize respondents into racial groups in my models below.

The Black Youth Project's *Youth Culture Survey* is particularly useful for the purposes of this chapter, since it allows for an analysis of the political attitudes and behaviors of young people from across racial and ethnic groups. While three additional waves of the survey were conducted during 2012– 2014, the 2005 study was the only wave to ask respondents about their involvement in a variety of political activities as well as their access to civic education courses. The 2005 survey is admittedly constrained to the political context in which it was conducted. However, these constraints should not be the cause for excessive concern. Namely, the past fifteen years have not witnessed dramatic policy shifts pertaining to civic education, dispelling concern that access to these courses or the content taught within them has shifted considerably over this period (CIRCLE 2014). To confirm this, I conducted a content analysis of the historical figures explicitly referenced in the high school Social Studies standards in the state of Texas—a state whose education policies define textbook production and curricular standards for the nation due to its high concentration of school-age children (Williams 2013). This analysis reveals few substantial changes between 2005 and 2018. In fact, of the 59 figures explicitly referenced in the state's standards in 2018, 83 percent are white men. This is only slightly lower than 91 percent in 2005. A full summary and discussion of this analysis is located in Table 3.

Table 3: Historical Figures in Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for U.S. History and U.S. Government

	2005	2018
U.S. History	• Alfred Thayer Mahan • Charles Lindberg • Clarence Darrow • Douglas MacArthur • Dwight Eisenhauer • Eugene Debs • Franklin Roosevelt • George Marshall • George Patton • George Wallace • Harry Truman • Henry Cabot Lodge • Henry Ford • John J. Pershing • Joseph McCarthy • **Martin Luther King** • Omar Bradley • Robert LaFollette • Ross Perot • Susan B. Anthony* • Theodore Roosevelt • Upton Sinclair • **W.E.B. Du Bois** • William Jennings Bryan • Woodrow Wilson	• Alfred Thayer Mahan • **Barack Obama** • Benjamin Rush • Betty Friedan* • **Cesar Chavez** • Charles Carrol • Charles Lindberg • Chester Nimitz • Clarence Darrow • Douglas MacArthur • Eugene Debs • Franklin Roosevelt • George Marshall • George Patton • George Wallace • Glenn Curtiss • Harry Truman • **Hector Garcia** • Henry Cabot Lodge • Henry Ford • **Ida B. Welles*** • John F. Kennedy • John Hancock • John J. Pershing • John Jay • John P. Muhlenberg • John Witherspoon • Jonathan Trumbull • Joseph McCarthy • **Marcus Garvey** • **Martin Luther King** • Omar Bradley • Robert LaFollette • **Rosa Parks*** • Ross Perot • Sanford B. Dole • Susan B. Anthony* • Theodore Roosevelt • Upton Sinclair • **W.E.B. Du Bois** • William Jennings Bryan

U.S. Government	• Abraham Lincoln • Alexander Hamilton • Charles de Montesquieu • George Washington • James Madison • John Adams • John Locke • Thomas Hobbes • Thomas Jefferson	• Abraham Lincoln • Alexander Hamilton • Andrew Jackson • Charles de Montesquieu • Franklin D. Roosevelt • George Mason • James Madison • James Wilson • John Adams • John Jay • John Marshall • Moses[1] • Roger Sherman • Ronald Reagan • Theodore Roosevelt • Thomas Jefferson • William Blackstone
Totals by Race and Gender	• White Men: 31 • White Women: 1 • Black Men: 2 • Black Women: 0 • Latinos: 0 • Latinas: 0	• White Men: 49 • White Women: 2 • Black Men: 4 • Black Women: 2 • Latinos: 2 • Latinas: 0

Note: People of color are listed in bold. Women are listed with an asterisk. Curricular frameworks for each year are publicly available through the Texas Secretary of State's Office. The state administrative code can be accessed at http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/tacctx$.startup (Accessed October 13, 2018)
[1] Moses was not included in the racial and gender counts included at the end of this table.

In analyzing the 2005 data, I excluded respondents with missing data on key outcome variables, yielding a final count of 1,252 respondents. The same analysis was conducted using multiple imputations, which did not yield significantly different results. The results of the multiply imputed analyses are shown in Tables 10-15 of the Appendix.

The respondents' average age is 19 and slightly over half (53 percent) are female. T-tests confirm that there are no statistically significant differences between the respondents of the original data set and those included in the analysis in terms of age (p=0.59), gender (p=0.71), or race (p=0.71) (see Table 1 of the Appendix). While the *Black Youth Culture Survey* did collect information from Asian American, Native American, Pacific Islander, and biracial youth, it does

not include a sufficient sample size to conduct an analysis for these groups. A breakdown of the respondents' characteristics by racial/ethnic group is included in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Respondent Characteristics by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Respondents	Mean Age	Percent Female	Taken a Civics Course
White	491	19	52%	64%
Black	519	19	56%	60%
Hispanic/Latino	242	19	52%	55%
Asian/Asian American	16	20	56%	69%
Native American	13	19	38%	31%
Pacific Islander	5	19	60%	80%

Variables

Following the method put forth by Zukin et al. (2006), I create four indices of political participation (political engagement, civic engagement, public voice, and cognitive engagement) by combining the individual participation items. These variables and corresponding activities are summarized in Table 1. Question wording and corresponding alpha scores for each of these variables are shown in Tables 16 and 17 of the chapter Appendix. Drawing from the Civic Voluntarism Model put forth by Verba et. al (1995), six control variables are included in the models to account for other factors commonly associated with political participation: age, gender, group affiliation, religious affiliation, parental political interest, and citizenship status. While respondents were asked to report individual and family income, misreporting of this figure is common and may be especially pronounced among young respondents asked to report their parents' income (Zaller 1992). Thus, I utilize maternal educational attainment as a proxy for socioeconomic status (see Braveman et al. 2006; Lewis-Beck et al. 2008; Marianne and Mullainathan 2001).

Civic education is the key independent variable in this study and is measured by a question that asks whether respondents have "ever been enrolled in a high school civics or American government course" (Cohen 2005). While one may be surprised to find that only 59 percent of the respondents reported having access to a civics course, this low rate reflects the fact that 11 states did not require a course of this kind when the Black Youth Project's *Youth Culture Survey* was conducted in 2005. Two of those states, Illinois and New Jersey, account for nearly 10 percent of the survey's total respondents (see Table 2 of the chapter Appendix).[16] Additionally, the shift to high stakes testing in math, reading/language arts, and science has pushed teachers to cut back on the time allotted to social studies classes such as civics and American government (Kahne and Middaugh 2008). In fact, 71 percent of school districts reported "cutting back on other subjects to make room for math and reading...social studies was part of the curriculum most frequently cited as the place where these reductions took place" (2008, 33-34). In other words, the high percentage of "no" responses in states that do require a civic education course may reflect the very real possibility that a student was being taught a standardized test subject such as math, reading/language arts, and science during a class period officially devoted to civics or American government. In this case, the formality of having been in a civic education course may not have registered with many of the respondents. This does not pose a measurement error threat, since I am interested in cases where students have been exposed to civic education courses in a meaningful sense.

[16] 58 percent of respondents residing in Illinois and 75 percent of respondents residing in New Jersey reported that they had never taken a civics or American government course.

Models

I conduct regression analyses that fall into two categories. The first category examines the impact of civic education courses internal and external efficacy (**H_1** and **H_4**).[17] The second category tests the direct impact of civic education courses on the four categories of participation summarized in Table 1. This second series of models also includes the efficacy variables tested in the first model series as control variables because they are highly correlated with political participation (**H_2, H_3, H_5,** and **H_6**). [18] Because I expect to see heterogeneous effects across racial and ethnic groups, I conducted each of the analyses separately for white, Black, and Latinx respondents (see Masuoka and Junn 2013).[19]

Results

I first test **H_1** and **H_4**. The analyses in Tables 5-7 demonstrate that civic education courses are associated with the development of both external and internal efficacy. However, the impact of these courses varies across each racial/ethnic group. As demonstrated by the results reported in Table 5, civic education courses are associated with higher rates of external efficacy among white youth at levels of statistical significance ($p<0.01$). Specifically, having access to a civic education

[17] Following the work of Hope and Jagers (2015), I also tested the impact of civic education courses on political cynicism but found no significant results.

[18] The theory section previously presented implicitly suggested mediation through efficacy. However, the data utilized in this chapter are not structured in a way that allows me to test whether efficacy mediates the relationship between civic education and political participation (Bullock and Ha 2011).

[19] Each of these models is also presented in the Appendix with state fixed effects in order to account for policy variations across geographical contexts (see Tables 4-9). However, because the *Black Youth Culture Survey* did not ask respondents to report the state in which they attended high school, it is possible that the area codes used to apply state fixed effects do not correspond to the state in which a respondent was enrolled in a civic education course. For this reason, each of the models included above is presented without state fixed effects. In either case, little variation emerges between models that utilize state fixed effects versus those that do not. Any instance in which a significant change does emerge is presented in the text above.

course is associated with a 14.4 percentage point increase in external efficacy among white youth. There is no significant relationship between civic education and external efficacy among Black or Latinx youth. Civic education courses are associated with a 14.4 percentage point increase in internal efficacy among Latinx youth ($p<0.05$).[20] This is consistent with the work of Callahan and Muller (2013) who find that youth growing up in Spanish-speaking households benefit from such courses through an increased ability to share new information about politics with family members at home. These results are summarized in Table 7.

These results also reveal significant gender effects among whites and among Latinxs (see Tables 21-32 of the chapter Appendix for additional models that disaggregate by gender). Specifically, civic education courses are associated with higher rates of external efficacy among white men ($p<0.01$), but not women. Given that the historical figures in civic education courses are overwhelmingly white *men* (see Table 3), this finding is not particularly surprising. Among Latinx respondents, civic education courses are associated with higher rates of internal efficacy among Latinas, but not among Latinos ($p<0.01$). Consistent with existing work, young Latinas are most likely to use skills acquired in school to serve as language brokers, translating written and face-to-face communication for parents and other adults (Anguiano 2018; Weisskirch 2005 Burial et al 1998). These results are discussed more comprehensively in the Appendix.

As expected, the model in Table 6 shows that civic education courses are *not* associated with higher levels of either internal or external efficacy among Black youth. Rather, group affiliation ($p<0.05$) and parental political interest ($p<0.05$) are more strongly associated with external efficacy for this group. This first series of models supports both hypotheses $\mathbf{H_1}$ and $\mathbf{H_4}$:

[20] When state fixed effects are taken into consideration, this relationship is no longer statistically significant. See Table 6 of the Appendix.

Table 5: Political Attitudes-White Youth

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.144***	0.035
	(0.052)	(0.040)
Age	-0.023***	0.021***
	(0.008)	(0.006)
Gender	-0.002	-0.139***
	(0.049)	(0.038)
Religious Affiliation	0.018	-0.0005
	(0.016)	(0.013)
Group Affiliation	0.112**	0.038
	(0.052)	(0.040)
Maternal Education	0.007	0.004
	(0.014)	(0.011)
Parental Political Interest	0.145***	0.007
	(0.027)	(0.021)
Citizenship	0.160	-0.029
	(0.140)	(0.109)
Constant	2.459***	2.929***
	(0.222)	(0.173)
Observations	494	494
R^2	0.130	0.054
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 6: Political Attitudes-Black Youth

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.039	0.020
	(0.049)	(0.041)
Age	-0.001	0.024***
	(0.008)	(0.007)
Gender	0.032	-0.042
	(0.048)	(0.040)
Religious Affiliation	-0.005	-0.010
	(0.017)	(0.014)
Group Affiliation	0.123**	0.018
	(0.053)	(0.044)
Maternal Education	0.00001	-0.0004
	(0.013)	(0.011)
Parental Political Interest	0.104***	0.017
	(0.023)	(0.020)
Citizenship	-0.097	-0.076
	(0.108)	(0.090)
Constant	2.433***	2.774***
	(0.218)	(0.183)
Observations	523	523
R^2	0.062	0.030
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 7: Political Attitudes-Latinx Youth

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.121	0.144**
	(0.074)	(0.056)
Age	-0.014	0.037***
	(0.012)	(0.009)
Gender	0.016	-0.072
	(0.071)	(0.054)
Religious Affiliation	-0.022	-0.006
	(0.024)	(0.018)
Group Affiliation	0.155	0.075
	(0.082)	(0.062)
Maternal Education	-0.002	0.021
	(0.019)	(0.014)
Parental Political Interest	0.064	-0.002
	(0.034)	(0.026)
Citizenship	-0.044	0.021
	(0.096)	(0.073)
Constant	2.826***	2.400***
	(0.312)	(0.235)
Observations	252	252
R^2	0.054	0.127
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

civic education courses are associated with the development of external efficacy among white youth and internal efficacy among Latinx youth. Given that civic education courses are associated with distinct attitudes across racial and ethnic groups, we should also expect distinct impacts political participation across groups if the theoretical expectations about the relationship between efficacy and participation are true.

Next, I test **H_2**, where I expected that civic education will be associated with political engagement for white youth, but not for Black and Latinx youth. The results in Table 8 disconfirm this hypothesis: civic education courses are *not* associated with political engagement among white respondents. Even in models predicting individual acts, civic education courses are not associated with any of the four acts in the political engagement index for white youth (see Table 19 of the Appendix). Rather, group affiliation ($p<0.01$) and external efficacy ($p<0.01$) are more strongly associated with political engagement among this group. However, it is possible that civic education courses may still indirectly impact the political engagement of white youth through the development of external efficacy as shown above. In other words, these courses may still present narratives that bolster white respondents' belief in the responsiveness of government, which may have downstream effects on the political engagement of white youth as hypothesized. As expected, given the lack of representation in accounts of traditional forms of political participation, civic education courses are *not* associated with political engagement among young people of color.

Tables 9 and 10 lend support to **H_3**. Civic education courses are associated with acts of public voice among both Black ($p<0.01$) and Latinx ($p<0.05$) youth, but not white youth. This suggests that young people of color who have taken a civic education course are more likely to opt into extra-systemic forms of participation such as protests, marches, sit-ins, and petition signing even after controlling for other factors commonly associated with political participation.

Table 8: Political Behaviors-White Youth

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	-0.003	0.058**	0.015	-0.009
	(0.021)	(0.029)	(0.017)	(0.034)
Age	0.003	-0.008	0.002	0.013**
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.005)
Gender	-0.019	-0.006	-0.006	-0.038
	(0.020)	(0.027)	(0.016)	(0.032)
Religious Affiliation	0.0003	0.020**	-0.005	-0.004
	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.010)
Group Affiliation	0.082***	0.191***	0.066***	0.088***
	(0.021)	(0.028)	(0.017)	(0.033)
Maternal Education	0.004	0.027***	0.015***	0.025***
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.005)	(0.009)
Parental Political Interest	-0.012	0.012	-0.006	0.083***
	(0.011)	(0.015)	(0.009)	(0.018)
Citizenship	-0.005	0.044	0.052	0.038
	(0.056)	(0.077)	(0.046)	(0.090)
Internal Efficacy	0.030	-0.006	0.024	-0.020
	(0.024)	(0.032)	(0.019)	(0.038)
External Efficacy	0.093***	0.054**	0.084***	0.072**
	(0.018)	(0.025)	(0.015)	(0.030)
Constant	-0.292**	-0.012	-0.279***	-0.021
	(0.117)	(0.160)	(0.097)	(0.189)
Observations	494	494	494	494
R^2	0.108	0.220	0.153	--
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 9: Political Behaviors-Black Youth

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	0.018	0.045	0.051***	0.053
	(0.018)	(0.026)	(0.014)	(0.039)
Age	-0.003	0.0002	-0.001	0.002
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.007)
Gender	-0.030	-0.023	-0.011	0.006
	(0.018)	(0.026)	(0.014)	(0.039)
Religious Affiliation	0.011	0.022**	-0.005	-0.015
	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.013)
Group Affiliation	0.025	0.224***	0.062***	0.128***
	(0.019)	(0.028)	(0.015)	(0.042)
Maternal Education	0.002	0.001	0.001	0.014
	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.011)
Parental Political Interest	-0.001	0.028**	0.009	0.071***
	(0.009)	(0.013)	(0.007)	(0.019)
Citizenship	0.023	-0.048	-0.028	0.047
	(0.039)	(0.057)	(0.032)	(0.086)
Internal Efficacy	0.023	-0.017	0.004	0.022
	(0.020)	(0.029)	(0.016)	(0.044)
External Efficacy	0.012	0.082***	0.031**	0.144***
	(0.017)	(0.025)	(0.014)	(0.037)
Constant	0.009	-0.152	-0.018	-0.232
	(0.099)	(0.143)	(0.079)	(0.216)
Observations	523	523	523	523
R^2	0.032	0.222	0.091	--
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 10: Political Behaviors-Latinx Youth

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	0.016	0.125***	0.055***	0.182***
	(0.024)	(0.039)	(0.021)	(0.059)
Age	0.0003	-0.004	0.006	0.018
	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.003)	(0.010)
Gender	-0.049**	-0.002	-0.028	-0.103
	(0.023)	(0.037)	(0.020)	(0.056)
Religious Affiliation	0.003	0.031**	0.005	-0.004
	(0.008)	(0.013)	(0.007)	(0.019)
Group Affiliation	0.040	0.163***	0.028	0.088
	(0.026)	(0.043)	(0.023)	(0.065)
Maternal Education	0.011	0.012	0.012**	0.022
	(0.006)	(0.010)	(0.005)	(0.015)
Parental Political Interest	0.021	0.013	0.006	0.059**
	(0.011)	(0.018)	(0.010)	(0.027)
Citizenship	0.022	0.077	0.033	-0.006
	(0.030)	(0.050)	(0.027)	(0.075)
Internal Efficacy	0.024	-0.017	-0.005	-0.030
	(0.027)	(0.045)	(0.024)	(0.068)
External Efficacy	0.098***	0.061	0.049***	0.056
	(0.021)	(0.034)	(0.018)	(0.051)
Constant	-0.380***	-0.066	-0.205	-0.024
	(0.126)	(0.208)	(0.111)	(0.314)
Observations	252	252	252	252
R^2	0.191	0.191	0.133	--
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Specifically, civic education courses are associated with a five percent increase in acts of public voice among both Black and Latinx youth.[21] The impact of civic education on each of the seven measures of public voice are included in Tables 18-20 in the Appendix. As expected, because white political actors are infrequently portrayed acting beyond political institutions, civic education courses are *not* associated with acts of public voice among white youth (see Table 18 of the Appendix).

This second series of models also reveals a number of significant gender effects among young people of color (see Tables 27-32 of the Appendix for additional models disaggregated by gender). For example, civic education courses are significantly associated with higher rates of public voice among Black women, but not Black men. A number of scholars have discussed high rates of activism among Black women through an intersectional lens, emphasizing that the need to resist both gender and racial oppression spurs high rates of political participation (Davis 1981. Baxter and Lansing 1983; Collins 1991; Gay and Tate 1998). While formal hypotheses regarding gender were not presented for the purposes of this analysis, the Appendix provides a more comprehensive discussion of this topic to encourage others to explore possible mechanisms that link civic education courses to political participation through an intersectional lens (e.g. Bruch and Soss 2018).

Next, I test $\mathbf{H_5}$. Recall that I theorize that internal efficacy provides a mechanism through which individuals come to participate in acts of cognitive engagement. Since civic education courses are associated with the development of internal efficacy among Latinx youth, these courses

[21] The relationship between civic education and public voice is driven by protests and writing political blogs and emails among Black respondents and petition signing among Latinx respondents ($p<0.01$). Civic education courses are not associated with any of the six acts of public voice among white respondents (see Tables 19-21 in the Appendix).

should also be associated with acts of cognitive engagement among this same group of individuals. The results reported in Table 10 confirm this hypothesis. Civic education courses are associated with acts cognitive engagement among Latinx youth ($p<0.01$). Specifically, having access to a civic education course is associated with an 18.3 percent increase in cognitive engagement for this group.

Finally, I test $\mathbf{H_6}$: because service learning is a traditional component of citizenship education, civics courses should be associated with civic engagement among all youth. The analyses presented in Tables 8-10 partially confirm this hypothesis. Civic education courses are associated with civic engagement among white ($p<0.05$) and Latinx ($p<0.01$) youth at traditional levels of statistical significance. Specifically, white and Latinx youth with access to civic education courses are 5.8 and 11.8 percent more likely to participate in acts of civic engagement, respectively.[22] However, civic education courses are *not* associated with civic engagement among Black respondents. Rather, group affiliation ($p<0.01$), parental political interest ($p<0.05$), and external efficacy ($p<0.01$), are stronger predictors of civic engagement for this group. This finding raises a number of questions regarding access to service-learning opportunities in schools, specifically among Black youth. While service-learning requirements may be common at the state level (CIRCLE 2014), a more nuanced examination of how education policy is implemented at the district and school level must be taken into consideration to adequately address whether these programs are delivered to all students equitably. Additionally, given that group and religious affiliations outside of school are positively associated with this kind of participation among Black youth, those interested in reforming civic education should explore how such organizations

[22] Civic Engagement is driven by volunteerism for both White and Latinx respondents ($p<0.01$) (See Tables 19-21 in the Appendix).

cultivate youth participation. Studies of African American political participation have documented the role of Black institutions in shaping political behavior and should figure prominently in these discussions (Du Bois 1935a; McAdam 1982; Dawson 1994; Cohen 1999: Dawson 2001). Specifically, why are these groups better able to foster civic engagement among Black youth? A plausible explanation is that these organizations create spaces for young people of color to develop the attitudes and skills necessary to play an active role within their communities. In the context of this study, this begs the question of why civic education courses do *not* create such spaces.

Table 11: Significant Results by Dependent Variable and Corresponding Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Black Youth	White Youth	Latino Youth
H_1: External Efficacy		✓	
H_2: Political Engagement		--	
H_3: Public Voice	✓		✓
H_4: Internal Efficacy			✓
H_5: Cognitive Engagement			✓
H_6: Civic Engagement	--	✓	✓

The results discussed so far, summarized in Table 10, strongly support the claim that civic education courses are associated with distinct attitudinal and participatory outcomes across racial and ethnic groups. White youth with access to civic education courses report higher rates of external efficacy and civic engagement. This is distinct from Black and Latinx respondents who report greater willingness to participate in acts of public voice. Latinx respondents with access to these courses also report higher rates of internal efficacy and cognitive engagement, likely reflecting the residual benefits of the language and communication skills traditionally emphasized in these courses among Spanish-speaking students specifically. Though civic education courses are positively associated with youth political engagement, the divergent trends that emerge across racial and ethnic groups raise serious normative questions regarding how the curricula

implemented in these courses drive young people toward distinct and racialized roles within American democracy. If the intent of these courses is truly to foster active participation and promote equal representation, they are presently failing to live up to these aspirations.

Conclusion

Political scientists have questioned the impact of civic education courses on student outcomes for decades. However, these studies have frequently led to conflicting results. This chapter aims to make sense of this ambiguity by centering a large battery of participatory acts in the analysis and attending carefully to racial group differences. Given that young people across racial groups have unequal access to important political resources, undergo different socialization experiences, and are affected by policies differently, it is necessary to consider a broader range of civic and political activities that better reflect the diverse lived experiences of young people in America. In doing so, I find that civic education courses do play an important role in political socialization. However, the impact of these classes is different across racial and ethnic groups.

These findings serve as a note of caution to those who view an expansion in *traditional* forms of civic education as a panacea for lackluster rates of civic and political participation in the United States. Civic education does matter, but a standardized approach to civics courses should not be assumed to yield consistent outcomes across diverse student populations. The way in which schools teach these courses likely contributes to the racialized participatory trends highlighted in this chapter. Specifically, while acts of public voice and civic engagement play an important role in a well-functioning democracy, it also important to explore ways in which civic education courses can better equip young people from across racial and ethnic groups with the knowledge, skills, and resources to be more active participants across multiple participatory domains. Indeed,

it is unlikely that young people will be able to transform their communities through non-partisan acts of civic engagement alone (Westheimer and Kahne 2004) nor is it fair to expect young people of color to bear the burden of risker acts of public voice when political institutions fail to respond.

Given the extent to which white "heroes" are emphasized in civic education courses, Chapter 3 draws from theories of critical pedagogy to examine whether centering the grassroots political action of marginalized groups can yield more equitable outcomes. The experiment utilized in the forthcoming chapter also allows me to address the question of causality explicitly. While this chapter suggests that course content plays in an important role in shaping participatory outcomes along the lines of race and ethnicity, the next chapter allows me to assess the validity of this claim.

Chapter 3

Cultivating Youth Engagement: Race and the Behavioral Effects of Critical Pedagogy[23]

> *"Alright. I'm going to be honest with you. This textbook was kind of like an insult…I mean, this is just my personal opinion because I'm a Latino and, you know, I need to say something about it. All it talks about is Mexican food and then all of sudden it's like "oh and, by the way, Latinos don't vote.' It was just a lot…So, I don't know what the purpose of it is."*
>
> --(Marcos, 16 years old, Mexican American)

One might assume that young people view their civics or American history textbooks in one of a few ways: an authoritative account of the past, a reference used by their teachers to craft their lectures, or an object that simply collects dust at the bottom of their backpack. Yet, Marcos' response to *The American Pageant*, a widely *adopted* American history textbook, suggests that course content of this kind can also be a source of distrust. In fact, existing work suggests that by the time young people of color reach high school, they are already readily aware and (rightfully) distrustful towards the content they learn about within their civics and American History classes (Epstein 2009). Moreover, Marcos' response helps us better understand the results presented in previous chapter. Namely, the content traditionally presented within civic education courses likely contributes to divergent democratic outcomes across racial and ethnic groups. However, the results presented within Chapter 2 are unable to assess whether there is a casual relationship between course content and political participation. This chapter takes on this task by asking the following question: can critical pedagogy better empower young people of color to participate in politics?

I build a theory that examines how content informed by critical pedagogy (Freire 1968) affects intended political participation across racial groups. While traditional civics curricula emphasize white political actors and traditional forms of participation (e.g., voting), critical

[23] This chapter was previously published in *Political Behavior.*

content disrupts traditional narratives, emphasizing the agency and grassroots political action of marginalized groups. I theorize that young people of color are more likely to participate in politics when presented with narratives that address the ways in which marginalized groups resist systemic inequality, closing racial gaps in intended political participation.

I test my predictions with an experiment distributed to nearly 700 high school students across nine communities in Chicago. The experiment tests the effect of a critical pedagogy intervention on four types of political participation. Overall, I find that content informed by critical pedagogy leads Black and Latinx youth to report greater willingness to participate in multiple forms of politics relative to those who are exposed to traditional content. Most importantly, exposure to *content informed by critical pedagogy appears to close gaps in participation between white youth and young people of color across multiple participatory domains*. This suggests that the content of civic education courses can play a formative role in processes of political socialization. If one hopes to close the racial participation gap, critical pedagogy provides one way forward. This intervention, coupled with other teaching practices discussed in Chapter 5, may better equip schools to prepare an increasingly diverse generation of young people for active participation in American democracy.

Political Participation and Civic Education

As established in the previous chapter, political participation encompasses a variety of activities. Recall that the most studied are acts of *political engagement* – activities that intend to influence "government action by either directly affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies" (Zukin et al. 2006, 7). Common acts of political engagement include voting, campaigning, and contributing to

political candidates. This is distinct from *civic engagement* activities such as volunteering, joining a community organization, or attending community meetings, which aim to enhance the "public good" through "hands-on cooperation with others" (Zukin et al. 2006, 51). While distinctions between political and civic engagement are frequently invoked (Tocqueville 1835; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995, 38; Putnam 2000; Skocpol 2003), no consensus exists regarding how to best categorize these activities (see Verba and Nie 1972, Barnes and Kaase 1979, and Junn 1999).[24] When it comes to studying youth participation, however, one must also account for alternative activities that are more readily available for those who may be too young to vote or lack the financial resources to make contributions (Zukin et al. 2006, Cohen 2010, Sloam 2014). Alternatively, many young people may appear disengaged but are actually prepared for political action when an issue emerges that is relevant to their daily lives (Amna and Ekman 2014, 2; Han 2009).[25] Consistent with Chapter 2, I utilize the Zukin et al. (2006) approach because it categorizes a wider variety of political activities, including more passive ones, that are often overlooked as meaningful forms of participation. Furthermore Zukin, et al.'s (2006) study suggests that the activities categorized into their four participatory domains are particularly useful when examining the political participation of younger generations specifically. These other forms, summarized in Table 1, include public voice and cognitive engagement (Zukin et al. 2006). *Public voice*— defined as "the ways citizens give expression to their views on public issues"— includes activities such as protests and boycotts (Zukin et al 2006, 54). Finally, *cognitive engagement*— defined as paying attention to public affairs and politics"—refers to activities that enable individuals to pay attention

[24] For example, Verba and Nie (1972) suggest that contacting a public official is its own participatory dimension while Junn (1999) defines it as "systems-directed," attempting to sway government officials (1432). See Barnes and Kaase (1979), Brady (1999), and Junn (1999) for alternative approaches to categorization.
[25] See also Cohen (2010, 190-200) on "politics of invisibility."

to politics and public affairs, including watching the news or talking to family and friends about politics (Zukin et al 2006, 54).

Table 1: Four Categories of Participation

Political Engagement	Civic Engagement
Definition: • Activities with "the intent or effect of influencing government action either directly affecting the making of implementation of public policy or indirectly influencing the selection of people who make those policies" (Zukin et al. 2006, 7). Activities: • Voting, joining a political group, giving money to a candidate, party, or issue, working or volunteering on a political campaign	Definition: • "Organized voluntary activity focused on problem solving and helping others" (Zukin et al. 2006, 7). Activities: • Volunteering or community service work, neighborhood problem solving
Public Voice	**Cognitive Engagement**
Definition: • "The ways citizens give expression to their views on public issues" (Zukin et al. 2006, 7). Activities: • Boycotting and Buycotting, participating in a protest, march, demonstration, or sit-in, contacting public officials, signing a paper or e-mail petition, sending an email/writing a blog about a political issue, writing a letter to the editor about a political issue or problem, political posts on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter	Definition: • "Paying attention to public affairs and politics" (Zukin et al. 2006, 7). Activities: • Talking to family or friends about a political issue, party, or candidate, watching television news or reading a newspaper

Adapted from Zukin et al. (2006) and Cohen (2010)

Existing scholarship suggests that white Americans participate more frequently across most of these categories. For example, Verba et al. (1993) find that white respondents vote at higher rates, are more active within political organizations, and contribute more to campaigns than other racial and ethnic groups (political engagement; 1993, 462-465; Verba et al. 2012). These trends have historically held true for young people as well, with white 18-24-year-olds consistently voting at higher rates than young people of color (Cohen 2010, 164; CIRCLE). The notable exceptions to this trend are 2008 and 2012 when Black 18-24-year-olds, mobilized by the historic candidacy of Barack Obama, voted at higher rates than white youth—55 percent versus 49 percent

in 2008 and 55 percent versus 48 percent in 2012 (Cohen 2010, 164; CIRCLE). However, by 2016 this trend reversed again, with voter turnout among white youth reaching 54 percent and voter turnout among Black youth falling to 51 percent (CIRCLE).

These trends tend to persist across other participatory domains as well. White Americans attend more community meetings (civic engagement; 1993, 465; Verba et al. 2012) and discuss politics with family and friends more often (cognitive engagement; Verba et al. 1995; Verba et al. 2012). Among young people specifically, 77 percent of white 18-30-year-olds reported talking to family and friends about a political issue or candidate as compared to 69 percent of Black youth and 65 percent of Latinx youth (Cohen 2010, 180). Finally, people of color tend to comprise higher percentages of informal community activists and political protestors (public voice; Verba et al. 1993, 463-465; Junn 1999, 1423; Verba et al. 2012). This trend holds true among young people as well, with 15 percent of Black youth and 14 percent of Latinx youth having reported participating in a protest since the 2016 Presidential Election as compared to 12 percent of white youth (Cohen et al. 2017, 39).

A common explanation for these gaps in participation is that white Americans have greater access to resources such as money and report higher rates of political efficacy – that is, the belief that government is responsive to the concerns and actions of citizens (Verba et al. 1995, 272; Verba et al. 2012). However, as I have argued in previous chapters, socialization experiences, including those in school, also contribute to these trends.

Traditional Civic Education Courses

Civic education refers to the teaching of both the political and practical aspects of citizenship, the rights of individuals, and the duties citizens have towards one another as members

of a shared political community. Recall that for the purposes of this dissertation, civic education refers to any course that that aims to equip young people with attitudes, skills, and behaviors that prepare them for democratic citizenship. While many states have distinct civic education courses, citizenship standards are frequently embedded into other social studies courses, especially American history and American government (see CIRCLE). Therefore, I follow others who view social studies courses more broadly as important spaces for civic education (e.g. Merriam 1934, Niemi and Junn 1999, Levinson 2012).

I argue that traditional civic education courses are oriented towards training citizens that reinforce America's existing political culture (Almond and Verba 1963). While the National Council for the Social Studies' C3 Social Studies Framework represents one attempt to make civic education more engaging and meaningful, especially for young people of color, the framework continues to discuss "civic life" in terms of systems-justifying activities. According to the framework, "active and responsible citizens… vote, serve on juries when called, follow the news and current events, and participate in voluntary groups and efforts" (C3 Framework). Though the framework introduces laudable readiness dimensions that aim to foster greater social, cultural, and historical awareness (see C3 Framework, Pg. 47), it is difficult to see how the intended civic outcomes of these learning objectives are substantively different than the best practices already discussed within existing civic education research. Furthermore, these practices do not incorporate defining characteristics of critical pedagogy, which I discuss in greater detail below.

A number of studies explore how traditional pedagogical tools frequently used in social studies classrooms such as discussions, simulations, exams, and traditional content shape political behavior. Many of these studies focus on how features of open classroom environments such as conversations about current events and political issues shape the political attitudes and behaviors

of students (Niemi and Junn 1998, Torney-Purta 2002, Campbell 2008, Hess 2009, Gainous and Martens 2012, Dassonneville et al. 2012, Martens and Gainous 2013, Hess and McAvoy 2014, Persson 2015). Research addressing this topic in both education and political science suggests that open classrooms are associated with favorable democratic outcomes, including increased likelihood of voting and increased political knowledge, especially among socioeconomically disadvantaged students (Campbell 2008, Campbell 2019). Other active learning activities frequently present in civic education courses such as mock trials (Torney-Purta 2002, Feldman et al. 2007, Pasek et al. 2008, Finlay et al. 2010, Martens and Gainous 2013) are also shown to shape participation, political knowledge, trust, and efficacy.

Some studies even find standardized tests to be associated with favorable democratic outcomes. For example, Campbell and Niemi (2016) find that young Latinxs residing in states with high stakes standardized testing in civics results in higher rates of political knowledge. This trend is especially pronounced among Latinx immigrants (see also Niemi and Junn 1998).

Finally, traditional civic education courses typically address content centered around two major themes: political institutions and American heroes (Levinson 2012, Nelsen 2019b). Young people are cognizant of these themes as well. One study finds that 45 percent of young people associate their civics course with the "three branches of government, the constitution, and how bills become law" while an additional 30 percent associated these courses with "great American heroes" such as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln (Levin and Lopez 2004, 2). While much of the research on civic education concludes that the precise content of the course has little to no effect on student outcomes (Langton and Jennings 1968, Campbell 2006, Bruch and Soss 2018), others challenge this notion. For example, Torney-Purta (2002) finds that young people enrolled in civic education classes that stress the importance of elections vote with higher

frequency during adulthood (209). Similarly, Green et al. (2011) find that a curriculum that focuses on civil liberties and constitutional rights significantly increases student knowledge in this domain (see also Litt 1963, Feldman et al. 2007, Pasek et al. 2008, and Owen 2015). These studies offer some confirmation for an intuitive relationship: the ways in which young people are taught to think about politics shape their knowledge and intent to participate later in life.

However, extant work pays very little attention to how *content* might affect the aforementioned racial participation gap. Even if the pedagogical approaches highlighted above are well-intentioned, Apple (2011) suggests that traditional curricula frequently justify and reproduce inequality in society and must be analyzed through a critical lens. With this in mind, I next turn to a discussion of critical pedagogy, an educational approach that may be key to reducing the racial participation gap.

Critical Pedagogy

The concept of critical pedagogy is frequently attributed to Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). Freire suggests that this approach can allow people to develop critical consciousness—the ability to reflect and act upon the world in order to transform it (Seider 2017 et al.). Contrary to traditional pedagogy, which aims to reproduce America's political culture (Almond and Verba 1963), I argue that critical pedagogy may hold the key to closing racial participation gaps, effectively transforming it (Apple 2011).

Though this educational philosophy originated in adult literacy programs in Brazil (Freire 1970), it has come to inform a number of pedagogical techniques including critical reflection (Giroux 2001)—how individuals come to understand structures that limit access to social, economic, and political opportunities and perpetuate injustice—and culturally relevant teaching—

ensuring that marginalized students progress academically and develop critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings 1995, 483).[26]

Critical pedagogy's emphasis on empowerment and social justice has captured the attention of those interested in civic education as well (see Edwards 2009, Hope and Jagers 2014). In fact, a number of educational programs in the United States are already informed by critical pedagogy and seek to empower marginalized students through curricula that fill "historical voids" in social studies textbooks (Depenbrock, 2017). For example, youth participatory action research (YPAR) initiatives allow young people to study the social problems affecting their lives by (1) taking their local knowledge seriously, (2) providing the critical literacy and reflection skills needed to understand the historical roots of their oppression, and (3) allowing them to develop tactics to surmount this oppression (Levinson 2012, 224-232; Duncan-Andrade 2006, 167; Fine and Weiss 2000; Cammarota and Fine 2008, 2; Kirschner et al. 2003; Fine 2009). [27] Similarly, ethnic studies programs such as Arizona's controversial Mexican-American Studies curriculum utilize Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* alongside Chicano history textbooks such as Rodolfo Acuna's *Occupied America* (Depenbrock, 2017).[28] Extant work suggests that ethnic studies courses of this kind are associated with increased school attendance (Dee and Penner 2017), higher GPAs (Dee and Penner 2017), more empathetic racial attitudes (Novais and Spencer 2018), and the development of positive group associations that allow for higher rates of political participation

[26] See also see Darder 1991, Shor 1992, hooks 1994, McLaren 1994.
[27] This approach shares similarities with pedagogical interventions such as "spatial stories" in geography (see Elwood and Mitchell 2012) and "critical bifocalities" in education (Weiss and Fine 2012). Specifically, both approaches allow young people to make sense of their lived experiences while simultaneously building their political identities.
[28] This course was banned for seven years after law makers claimed that the course portrayed whites as oppressors and Latinxs as the oppressed. However, in 2017 this decision was overturned after a judge determined that the ban was motivated by racial animus (Depenbrock, 2017).

(García-Bedolla 2005).[29] Yet, to the best of knowledge, no work explicitly explores the effects of critical pedagogy on political participation experimentally.[30]

In the experimental design presented below, I examine whether course content informed by critical pedagogy can shape the willingness of young people to participate in politics. This approach is akin to the ethnic studies programs highlighted above, which are designed around the study of critical texts such as *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and works that highlight the agency of marginalized groups (Depenbrock 2017). While this approach does not test all aspects of critical pedagogy, it does allow me to gauge whether an important facet of this approach—the content—has a positive effect on the willingness of young people of color to participate in politics. Beginning with just the content is important because it allows me to isolate the effect of one aspect of critical pedagogy before introducing confounding factors such as teaching style.

In terms of outcome, though critical pedagogy ultimately aims to dismantle oppressive social and political hierarchies, both Freire and those who draw from his work note that political participation is a necessary precursor to achieving these ends (see Seider et al. 2017 and Diemer and Li 2011). With this in mind, it essential to explore how the various components of critical pedagogy, including critical texts, might push an individual to become more willing to participate in both formal and informal political acts.

[29] See also Shor (1992), Chilcoat and Ligon (1998), and Fischman and Gandin (2007).

[30] A number of exceptional qualitative studies find a more critical approach to civic education to be associated with favorable democratic outcomes among marginalized students (see Levinson 2012 and García-Bedolla 2005). Others examine whether schools contribute to the development of critical consciousness but are unable to demonstrate a causal connection between course content and political participation (see Seider et al. 2017 and Diemer and Li 2011).

Theorizing a Link Between Critical Content and Political Participation[31]

Critical pedagogy focuses on "people engaged in the fight for their own liberation" (Freire 1970, 53; see also Hope and Jagers 2014, 451). This approach envelops three components. First, critical pedagogy allows individuals to understand the causes of their marginalization in order to surmount it (Freire 1970, 47). This suggests that critical pedagogy must adopt a historical approach, pushing students to recognize marginalization as a systemic and historical process. While critical pedagogy can theoretically be implemented across content areas, the focus on locating the historic foundations of marginalization lends itself especially well to social studies, especially courses that focus on the development of American political institutions such as civics, American government, and American history.

Second, critical pedagogy aspires to "explain to the masses their own action" (Lukács quoted in Freire 1970, 53). In other words, rather than focusing exclusively on the actions of exceptional historical figures that are difficult for students to relate to (Levinson 2012; Peabody and Jenkins 2017), critical pedagogy also highlights the grassroots collective action taken by marginalized groups. This feature clearly separates the content of critical pedagogy from traditional curricula that may highlight prominent heroes of color such as Martin Luther King Jr. or Harriet Tubman while overlooking the political action taken by less vaunted historical figures (Levinson 2012). In other words, while policymakers have made attempts to incorporate more women and people of color into curricula since early 90s (see Moreau 2003, Nelsen 2019), highlighting prominent "American heroes" is substantively different than emphasizing the collective action tactics employed by marginalized groups of people (Levinson 2012, Peabody and Jenkins 2017).

[31] The theoretical discussion presented in this section is more rigorously assessed in Chapter 4.

Third, by focusing on these grassroots political activities, critical pedagogy focuses on extra-systemic political action in addition to formal institutional processes such as legal battles and elections. In other words, this pedagogical approach allows for a clear public voice component (e.g. emphasizing protests and boycotts) that is frequently missing from more traditional curricula. According to Freire, highlighting this type of political action allows the oppressed to reject the image and tactics of the oppressor (e.g. systems-justifying forms of political participation) and "replace it with autonomy and responsibility" (1970, 47). Freire suggests that these three components allow individuals to "unveil" the deeply rooted nature of their oppression, allowing for critical dialogue that precedes political action (1970, 54-55).

This approach harkens back to W. E. B. Du Bois' argument regarding the importance of centering Black points of view in history textbooks:

> Negroes must know the history of the negro race in America, and this they seldom get from white institutions. Their children ought to study textbooks like Brawley's "Short History," the first edition of Woodson's "Negro in Our History," and Cromwell, Turner, and Dyke's "Readings from Negro Authors." They ought to study intelligently and from their own point of view, the slave trade, slavery emancipation, Reconstruction, and present economic development…*It does not consist simply in trying to parallel the history of white folk with similar boasting about Black and brown folk, but rather an honest evaluation of human effort and accomplishment, without color blindness, and without transforming history into a record of dynasties and prodigies* (Du Bois 1935b, 333-334; italics added).

Thus, it follows straightforwardly that critical pedagogy should stimulate marginalized youth to reflect upon narratives about people "like them" and, in particular, on figures who have taken grassroots political action to confront long-standing, systemic inequality. Given that existing narratives in civic education courses (or social studies more generally) focus on positive political actions of white people and isolated references to prominent people of color (Moreau 2003, Levinson 2012, Nelsen 2019), such opportunities for reflection and motivation are lacking from traditional curricula. Thus, I theorize that shifting towards critical content will bolster rates of

traditional forms of political participation (i.e. voting) through an empowerment mechanism and acts of public voice through role-modeling.

Empowerment refers to one's sense that their own group has the agency and capacity to participate in the political process and advocate for group members. This allows the perceived benefits of political participation to outweigh the costs, allowing individuals who lack important political resources such as time and money to participate anyway (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, Bobo and Gilliam 1990). This is particularly important to consider when examining marginalized communities that lack of access to political resources and face discriminatory policies that depress political engagement (e.g. Sobel and Smith 2009, Brady and McNulty 2011, Burch 2013, Bruch and Soss 2018). It is also important to note that empowerment differs from external efficacy—the belief that one is capable of influencing government (Verba et al. 1995, 272). While both refer to how individuals interact with formal institutions, empowerment is substantively different in its emphasis on the importance of seeing marginalized group members gaining significant decision-making power within these institutions.[32]

Extant work suggests that empowerment serves as an important predictor of political participation among people of color. For example, scholars have found that Black Americans living in cities with Black mayors are more politically active than white people with similar socioeconomic statuses, at least during the initial rise of Black mayors (Bobo and Gilliam 1990, Spence and McClerking 2010; see also Leath and Chavous 2017). Similarly, García Bedolla (2005) finds that holding positive views of one's own group to be associated with higher rates of political participation among Latinxs in Los Angeles. I argue that critical pedagogy can stimulate a similar

[32] Furthermore, I measured both internal and external efficacy as outcome variables. However, the treatment had no significant effect on either measure.

empowerment mechanism as well by explicitly teaching students about the ways in which marginalized groups have influenced political decision making even in the face of limited resources and discriminatory policies. If young people feel that that they have the power to influence government officials, they should also be more willing to vote in elections and participate in other political engagement activities. Since empowerment theory has typically been invoked to explain political participation among marginalized groups, curricula that stimulate this mechanism should bolster rates of participation among young people of color without negatively effecting rates of participation among white youth. Thus:

> **H_1**: Young people of color exposed to critical pedagogy will report greater willingness to participate in acts of political engagement relative to those exposed to traditional content.[33]

Since other forms of political action take place outside of formal political institutions, it is possible that different mechanisms are at play with regard to public voice. I expect the effects of critical pedagogy to be especially pronounced on the respondents' willingness to participate in acts of public voice (e.g., protests, boycotts). I theorize that this is largely the result of a role-model effect. As mentioned, critical pedagogy highlights the political agency of "everyday" people of color by providing examples of extra-systemic action and acts of public voice – actions taken by individuals and groups who have historically been excluded from formal political institutions. Given that role models provide young people with tangible examples of how to pursue civic and political action (Levinson 2012) and convey important ideals about government and citizenship (Wrone 1979; Sanchez 1998, 3, Allison and Goethals 2011; Peabody and Jenkins 2017), I expect

[33] Hypotheses for this study were pre-registered at aspredicted.org (#11310)

narratives rooted in critical pedagogy to resonate among young people of color specifically. Even if young people feel disempowered due to a lack of political resources or a lack of representation within political institutions, resistance narratives that highlight the collective action of marginalized groups can provide impactful examples of how to pursue meaningful political action outside of political institutions. Thus:

> **H_2**: Young people of color exposed to critical pedagogy will report greater willingness to participate in acts of public voice relative to those exposed to traditional content.

Latinx Youth and Cognitive Engagement

Youth from immigrant families with lower educational attainment and English language skills should experience a greater increase in cognitive engagement even when enrolled in a traditional civic education course. Since Latinx youth are more likely to exhibit this combination of factors than other racial groups, we should expect the effect of critical pedagogy to be most pronounced among these respondents.[34] Extant work suggests that effect of traditional civics courses is most pronounced among young Latinxs, increasing their ability to engage in political discussions at home (Callahan and Muller 2013; Campbell and Niemi 2016). Contrary to traditional top-down processes of political socialization, Latinx youth play an important role in delivering information regarding political processes in the United States to their family members (Callahan and Muller 2013; Anguiano 2018; Weisskirch 2005; Burial et al. 1998).

[34] According to Pew, 55 percent of U.S.-born Latinxs are second generation immigrants and nearly 60 percent are age 33 or younger (2016). Sixty-six percent of my Latinx sample reports that both of their parents were born in Mexico.

I theorize that curricula that better reflect the experiences of Latinx youth will spur greater interest in the content than traditional approaches, and consequently help facilitate these conversations. Additionally, since content highlighting the history of Latinx-Americans is even less common than content highlighting Black History, it is possible that Latinx youth may be more impacted by the intervention since they are less likely to have been exposed to Latinx resistance narratives previously (Novais and Spencer 2018, 19). Existing scholarship suggests that even traditional civic education courses have a compensation effect on rates of political knowledge and willingness to engage in political conversations among young Latinxs (Callahan and Muller 2013, Campbell and Niemi 2016). I expect this compensation effect to be even more pronounced when young Latinxs are exposed to critical content that center individuals sharing their own racial and ethnic identity. Thus:

> **H_3**: Latinx youth exposed to critical pedagogy will report greater willingness to participate in acts of cognitive engagement relative to those exposed to more traditional content.

In what follows, I also will explore the effect of critical pedagogy on civic engagement; yet, I do not offer formal hypotheses. Acts of civic engagement such as volunteering represent non-partisan, "everyday" acts that aim to improve one's local community (Zukin et al. 2006). These actions are certainly important to the function of a healthy democracy, but they typically do not comprise significant moments canonized within the historical narratives presented in content informed by critical pedagogy.

Data and Methods

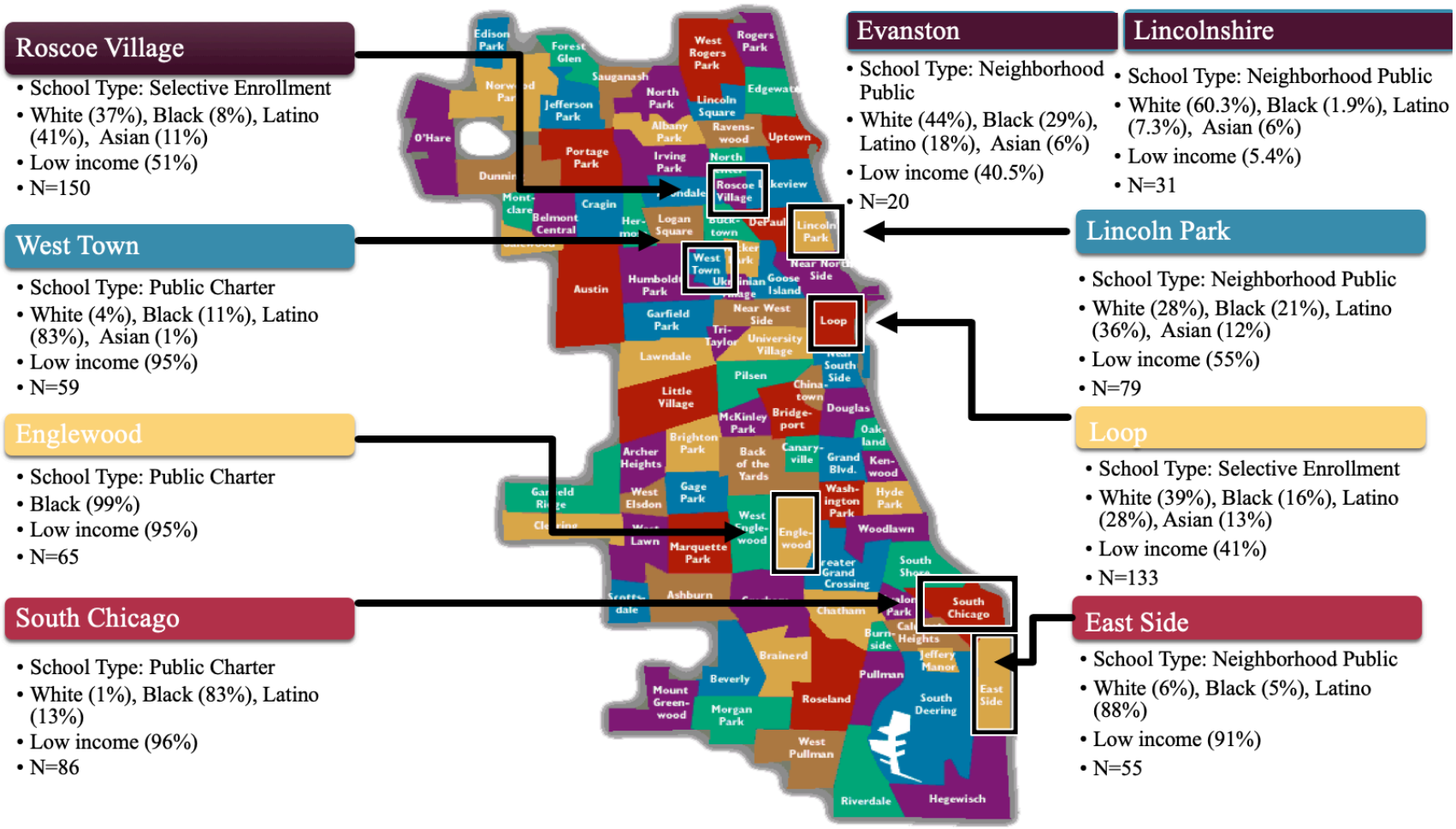
Experiments have frequently been employed to test the effectiveness of educational interventions (Cook 2002). However, I am unaware of any work that tests the impact of critical pedagogy on the willingness of young people to participate in politics experimentally. This study utilizes such an approach as it allows for clear causal inference regarding the impact of critical content—one important component of critical pedagogy. I conducted the study in 24 high school classrooms across three public charter schools, four Chicago Public Schools, and two public high schools in northern Chicago suburbs between August 2017 and April 2018.

I recruited schools using both convenience and snowball sampling (Mosley 2013). Teachers, parents, and students connected me with educators in four communities: South Chicago, Roscoe Village, Evanston, and Lincolnshire. Schools within all four of these communities agreed to participate in the study. Snowball sampling was employed to ask participating teachers to connect me to American history teachers at other schools, yielding connections to educators in two additional neighborhoods: Englewood and West Town. Members of the Chicago Public Schools Office of Social Science and Civic Engagement connected me to educators in two additional neighborhoods, one of which agreed to participate: East Side. Finally, I used contact information made available on school websites to contact 50 additional American history teachers at 20 Chicago area schools. While this "cold calling" technique proved less effective, I was able to recruit educators from two additional neighborhoods: Lincoln Park and Downtown Chicago. In all, twelve teachers spanning nine schools agreed to participate in the study. The location and school demographics of each of the nine sampling sites are summarized below in Figure 1.

The sample sites highlighted in Figure 1 span nearly 50 miles and are reflective of Chicago's racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity. Lincolnshire, a suburb 30 miles north of downtown Chicago,

was the northernmost sampling site and serves predominantly affluent white students (60.3 percent white; 5.4 percent low-income). Contrastingly, schools in neighborhoods on Chicago's south and west sides (West Town, Englewood, South Chicago, and East Side) tend to serve young people of color from low-income households. Schools located on Chicago's northside (Loop, Lincoln Park, and Roscoe Village) and the immediate suburbs (Evanston and Lincolnshire) tend to serve student populations that are more diverse in regard to race and socioeconomic status. All things considered, Chicago serves as an exceptional case for studying the effects of a pedagogical intervention such as critical pedagogy on diverse student populations.

Figure 1: Demographic Data and School Type by Sampling Neighborhood



While convenience and snowball methods may be vulnerable to sampling bias, a review of the geographic and demographic distribution of schools as well as school-level data assuage such concerns. It is important to note that the goal of sampling was to obtain enough white, Latinx, and Black respondents to test my hypotheses separately for each group. Even so, Table 2 demonstrates that the sample accurately reflects the racial and ethnic breakdown of the city of Chicago: 31 percent of participants are white, 27 percent are Black, and 27 percent are Latinx. Thus, my oversampling of schools within the specified neighborhoods was effective. Furthermore, Figure 1 of the chapter Appendix reveals a robust geographic distribution of respondents beyond the borders of the nine neighborhoods of study. In other words, the map demonstrates that the sample captured respondents living throughout the city and not just those residing in the nine neighborhoods of focus.

Table 2: Racial and Ethnic Breakdown of Sample

Race/Ethnicity	Sample Size	Percentage of Sample	Percentage of Chicago
White	212	31%	31%
Latinx	182	27%	28%
Black/African American	181	27%	32%
Asian	75	11%	5%
Biracial	22	3%	3%
Pacific Islander	2	<1%	<1%
Native American	1	<1%	<1%
Refused	2	<1%	<1%
Total:	N=678	--	--

Source: Chicago Public Schools (2017), U.S. Census Bureau (2010)

I was only allowed one class period to conduct the study. Thus, I crafted succinct textbook segments for students to read to test my hypotheses. Specifically, I selected historical cases that are conducive for discussing institutionalized discrimination and the corresponding agency of people of color: Abolitionism and the Underground Railroad, a case frequently mentioned in state history standards, Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW) and Chinese Exclusion. I

selected the cases of Caesar Chavez/UFW and Chinese Exclusion as examples of historical experiences of Latinxs and Asian Americans respectively, given the large size of the Mexican American and Chinese American communities in Chicago and the extent to which they comprise the Latinx and Asian American communities in the city. In fact, 91 percent of Latino respondents identify as Mexican and the plurality of Asian respondents (39 percent) identify as Chinese. In order to account for the great deal of internal variation among Latinx and Asian Americans in regard to language, culture, and immigration experiences (Beltran 2010; Wong et al. 2011) and to satisfy critical pedagogy's emphasis on identity, addressing national origin is essential. In all, participants were between 14 and 18 years of age (μ=16.5) and a little over half (55 percent) of the 678 participants were women.

Procedures

I travelled to each participating school between August 2017 and April 2018 to conduct this study. I arrived an hour early to each school in order to meet with teachers to discuss their teaching practices, course syllabi, and to observe their classroom environments and their interactions with students. Each participating teacher also participated in a 60-minute, in-depth interview regarding their teaching practices. These interviews are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5.

This qualitative data allowed me to gauge whether each educator already used critical pedagogy within their classroom. Due to the existing use of critical pedagogy at the classroom level in some schools, randomization within classrooms ensures that such pre-treatment effects will lead to under-estimates of the individual-level treatment effects. However, a brief discussion of these effects is included after the presentation of primary results.

Prior to beginning the study, I asked students to participate in a survey about an American history textbook that might be used in a Chicago area high school in the future. However, I did not tell students that they were being randomly assigned to read different versions of the text. At this time, I walked students through a written consent form that provided information about the study and its optional nature and gave every student the opportunity to opt out of participation.[35] I also stressed that there were no negative consequences for choosing not to participate. As an incentive, I entered participating students into a raffle to win a $25 gift card.

Participants then filled out a pretest questionnaire that asked for demographic information and a range of questions about political interest, ideology, and party identification. Following this questionnaire, each student read three textbook segments highlighting the historical events mentioned above. These texts served as the experimental treatment – the details of which I will discuss below. After reading the texts, students reported their willingness to participate in several political activities that constitute the forms of participation listed above: political engagement, public voice, cognitive engagement, and civic engagement. Each of these variables was measured using a 1-5 scale ranging from "very unlikely to participate" to "certain to participate." Though these questions measure intended participation rather than actual behavior, "intention to perform a behavior. . . is the closest cognitive antecedent of actual behavioral performance" (Ajzen and Fishbein 2005, 188; see also O'Keefe 2015, 128).[36] While the questionnaire only included one

[35] Only three students opted-out of participation (one in Englewood, one in East Side, and one in the Loop). Parents were also given the opportunity to opt their children out of participation prior to conducting the study.
[36] I requested to follow up with participants weeks and months following the intervention. However, Chicago Public Schools does not allow researchers to maintain contact information that can be used to follow-up with students.

measure for both cognitive[37] and civic engagement,[38] four activities were combined into a single political engagement index (α=0.70)[39] and eight activities were combined into a single public voice index (α=0.82).[40] I test my hypotheses by seeing if the critical pedagogy treatment – detailed below – altered these metrics.[41] Once every student completed the survey, I facilitated a 10-15-minute discussion regarding the true nature of the study and provided space for students to share their thoughts about the passages.

Experimental Conditions

My hypotheses require a control group that reads a traditional American history text and a treatment group that is exposed to text that meets the criteria of critical pedagogy. In creating the experimental conditions, I wanted to ensure that the texts were as real as possible. Thus, I adapted excerpts from existing, widely circulated American history texts that are at a high school reading level (see Table 4). *The American Pageant* (Kennedy et al. 2006), the textbook Marcos reflected upon at the beginning of the chapter, is commonly used in Advanced Placement (AP) U.S. History courses in the United States (College Board 2018; American Textbook Council 2018) and presents a standard account of American history (Loewen 1996). I found at least one copy of this text in

[37] Cognitive engagement was measured using one question: "How likely are you to talk to family and friends about a political issue, party, or candidate within the next 12 months?" Responses were measured using a 1-5 scale ranging from "very unlikely to participate" to "certain to participate."
[38] Civic engagement was measured using one question: "How likely are you to work with people in your community to solve a problem within the next 12 months?" Responses were measured using a 1-5 scale ranging from "very unlikely to participate" to "certain to participate."
[39] The political engagement index includes four activities: intent to vote, political campaigning, giving money to a political issue/cause/candidate, and joining a political group. Responses were measured using a 1-5 scale ranging from "very unlikely to participate" to "certain to participate."
[40] The public voice index includes six activities: protesting, boycotting, buycotting, contacting a public official, posting about politics on social media, signing a petition, sending a political email, or writing a blog or letter to the editor about a political issue. Responses were measured using a 1-5 scale ranging from "very unlikely to participate" to "certain to participate."
[41] While I am unable to test the empowerment mechanism explicitly using this data, I discuss this possibility here for theoretical clarity.

more than half of the American history classrooms I visited. As I discuss shortly, I used this text to create the control baseline–the traditional historical information to which students are commonly exposed.

To create the critical content treatment, I turned to a more critical account of American history: *A People's History of the United States* (Zinn 2003). This text meets the criteria of critical pedagogy by centering the agency marginalized groups, systemic injustice, and grassroots political action (Loewen 1996). While *A People's History of the United States* is not a textbook per se, it is a widely circulated, critical, and accessible take on American history. That said, the text does not offer a robust account of Asian American political history. Thus, I supplemented the treatment with content from three additional sources: *Claiming America* (Wong 1998), "Lo Mein Loophole: How U.S. Immigration Law Fueled a Chinese Restaurant Boom" (Godoy 2016), and "How Racism Created America's Chinatowns" (Goyette, 2017). Interestingly, unlike the *American Pageant,* I only observed two copies of *A People's History of the United States* while visiting classrooms.

I created my own textbook template that allowed both the treatment and control conditions to appear identical in design in order to test the causal effect of the text. Participants in both the control and treatment conditions read all segments addressing the historical events previously discussed. Each segment includes a body text and an additional "Did You Know?" box. A prime for pan-ethnicity is included in the instructions since the Cesar Chavez/UFW passage focuses on a single ethnic group.[42]

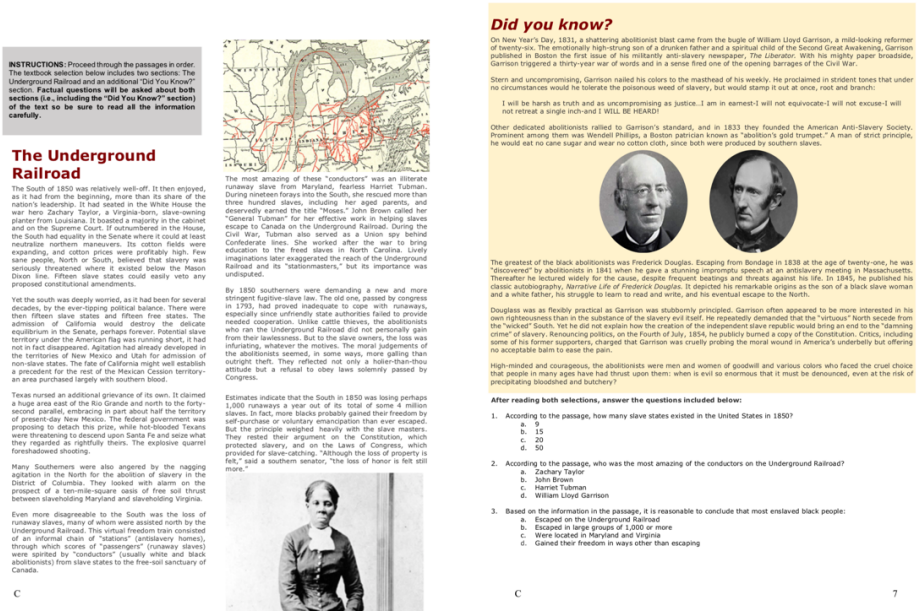
[42] Language for the pan-ethnicity prime is as follows: "While this passage is about Mexican [Chinese] Americans, it speaks to Latino/a [Asian] Americans as a whole. While Latino/a [Asian] American groups have a range of differences in their demographic characteristics, beliefs, and perceptions of life in the United States, they also share much in common."

For the control condition, both the body text and a "Did You Know" box across each of the three segments include text taken exclusively from *The American Pageant.* Pictures corresponding to the primary figures referenced in the text are included to make each segment look like a real textbook, as displayed in Figure 2. The combination of this text and the corresponding images accurately model a traditional American history textbook that would be used in a typical high school classroom.

For the treatment condition, the body text for each segment is also taken from *The American Pageant.* This allows students in each condition to receive the same historical background information for each segment. However, unlike the control, the "Did You Know?" box in the treatment condition includes text from *A People's History of the United States* and an additional heading that explicitly references how Asian, Black, and Latinx actors took political action to fight injustice. Like the control group, pictures corresponding to the figures and events mentioned in the text are included to make it look more like a textbook. However, given that this text discusses the grassroots political action of people of color in greater detail, the treatment includes more images of Black and Latinx actors. This treatment text and the corresponding images more accurately reflects critical pedagogy by centering the agency of marginalized racial and ethnic groups. This is summarized above in Figure 2. A summary of the content covered within each text is included below in Table 3. Full copies of both the control and treatment texts are included in the Textbook Appendix.

Figure 2: Example of Control vs. Treatment Conditions

Traditional Curriculum (Control)



INSTRUCTIONS: Proceed through the passages in order. The textbook selection below includes two sections: The Underground Railroad and an additional "Did You Know?" section. **Factual questions will be asked about both sections (i.e., including the "Did You Know?" section) of the text so be sure to read all the information carefully.**

The Underground Railroad

The South of 1850 was relatively well-off. It then enjoyed, as it had from the beginning, more than its share of the nation's leadership. It had seated in the White House the war hero Zachary Taylor, a Virginia-born, slave-owning planter from Louisiana. It boasted a majority in the cabinet and on the Supreme Court. If outnumbered in the House, the South had equality in the Senate where it could at least neutralize northern maneuvers. Its cotton fields were expanding, and cotton prices were profitably high. Few sane people, North or South, believed that slavery was seriously threatened where it existed below the Mason Dixon line. Fifteen slave states could easily veto any proposed constitutional amendments.

Yet the south was deeply worried, as it had been for several decades, by the ever-tipping political balance. There were then fifteen slave states and fifteen free states. The admission of California would destroy the delicate equilibrium in the Senate, perhaps forever. Potential slave territory under the American flag was running short, it had not in fact disappeared. Agitation had already developed in the territories of New Mexico and Utah for admission of non-slave states. The fate of California might well establish a precedent for the rest of the Mexican Cession territory- an area purchased largely with southern blood.

Texas nursed an additional grievance of its own. It claimed a huge area east of the Rio Grande and north to the forty-second parallel, embracing in part about half the territory of present-day New Mexico. The federal government was proposing to detach this prize, while hot-blooded Texans were threatening to descend upon Santa Fe and seize what they regarded as rightfully theirs. The explosive quarrel foreshadowed shooting.

Many Southerners were also angered by the nagging agitation in the North for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. They looked with alarm on the prospect of a ten-mile-square oasis of free soil thrust between slaveholding Maryland and slaveholding Virginia.

Even more disagreeable to the South was the loss of runaway slaves, many of whom were assisted north by the Underground Railroad. This virtual freedom train consisted of an informal chain of "stations" (antislavery homes), through which scores of "passengers" (runaway slaves) were spirited by "conductors" (usually white and black abolitionists) from slave states to the free-soil sanctuary of Canada.

C

The most amazing of these "conductors" was an illiterate runaway slave from Maryland, fearless Harriet Tubman. During nineteen forays into the South, she rescued more than three hundred slaves, including her aged parents, and deservedly earned the title "Moses." John Brown called her "General Tubman" for her effective work in helping slaves escape to Canada on the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, Tubman also served as a Union spy behind Confederate lines. She worked after the war to bring education to the freed slaves in North Carolina. Lively imaginations later exaggerated the reach of the Underground Railroad and its "stationmasters," but its importance was undisputed.

By 1850 southerners were demanding a new and more stringent fugitive-slave law. The old one, passed by congress in 1793, had proved inadequate to cope with runaways, especially since unfriendly state authorities failed to provide needed cooperation. Unlike cattle thieves, the abolitionists who ran the Underground Railroad did not personally gain from their lawlessness. But to the slave owners, the loss was infuriating, whatever the motives. The moral judgements of the abolitionists seemed, in some ways, more galling than outright theft. They reflected not only a holier-than-thou attitude but a refusal to obey laws solemnly passed by Congress.

Estimates indicate that the South in 1850 was losing perhaps 1,000 runaways a year out of its total of some 4 million slaves. In fact, more blacks probably gained their freedom by self-purchase or voluntary emancipation than ever escaped. But the principle weighed heavily with the slave masters. They rested their argument on the Constitution, which protected slavery, and on the Laws of Congress, which provided for slave-catching. "Although the loss of property is felt," said a southern senator, "the loss of honor is felt still more."

Did you know?

On New Year's Day, 1831, a shattering abolitionist blast came from the bugle of William Lloyd Garrison, a mild-looking reformer of twenty-six. The emotionally high-strung son of a drunken father and a spiritual child of the Second Great Awakening, Garrison published in Boston the first issue of his militantly anti-slavery newspaper, *The Liberator.* With his mighty paper broadside, Garrison triggered a thirty-year war of words and in a sense fired one of the opening barrages of the Civil War.

Stern and uncompromising, Garrison nailed his colors to the masthead of his weekly. He proclaimed in strident tones that under no circumstances would he tolerate the poisonous weed of slavery, but would stamp it out at once, root and branch:

I will be harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice...I am in earnest-I will not equivocate-I will not excuse-I will not retreat a single inch-and I WILL BE HEARD!

Other dedicated abolitionists rallied to Garrison's standard, and in 1833 they founded the American Anti-Slavery Society. Prominent among them was Wendell Phillips, a Boston patrician known as "abolition's gold trumpet." A man of strict principle, he would eat no cane sugar and wear no cotton cloth, since both were produced by southern slaves.

The greatest of the black abolitionists was Frederick Douglas. Escaping from Bondage in 1838 at the age of twenty-one, he was "discovered" by abolitionists in 1841 when he gave a stunning impromptu speech at an antislavery meeting in Massachusetts. Thereafter he lectured widely for the cause, despite frequent beatings and threats against his life. In 1845, he published his classic autobiography, *Narrative Life of Frederick Douglas.* It depicted his remarkable origins as the son of a black slave woman and a white father, his struggle to learn to read and write, and his eventual escape to the North.

Douglass was as flexibly practical as Garrison was stubbornly principled. Garrison often appeared to be more interested in his own righteousness than in the substance of the slavery evil itself. He repeatedly demanded that the "virtuous" North secede from the "wicked" South. Yet he did not explain how the creation of the independent slave republic would bring an end to the "damning crime" of slavery. Renouncing politics, on the Fourth of July, 1854, he publicly burned a copy of the Constitution. Critics, including some of his former supporters, charged that Garrison was cruelly probing the moral wound in America's underbelly but offering no acceptable balm to ease the pain.

High-minded and courageous, the abolitionists were men and women of goodwill and various colors who faced the cruel choice that people in many ages have had thrust upon them: when is evil so enormous that it must be denounced, even at the risk of precipitating bloodshed and butchery?

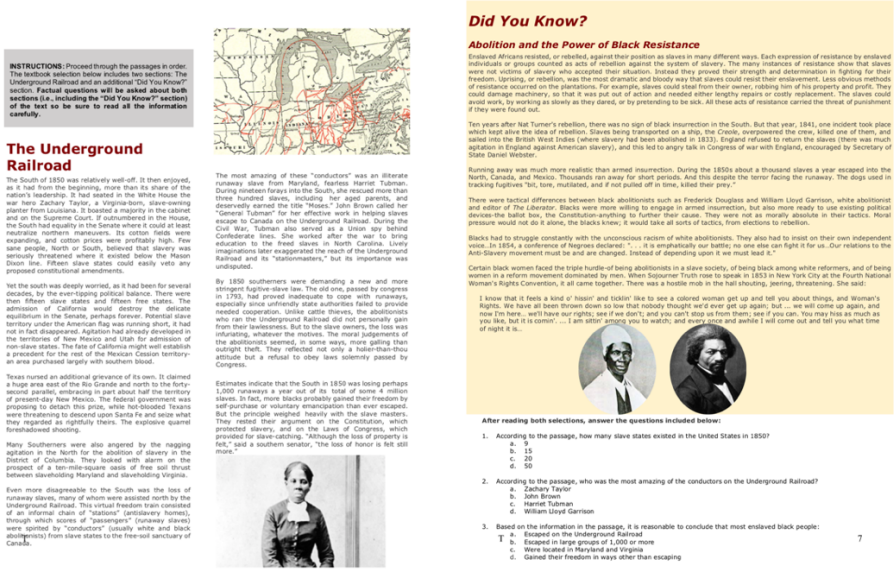
After reading both selections, answer the questions included below:

1. According to the passage, how many slave states existed in the United States in 1850?
   a. 9
   b. 15
   c. 20
   d. 50
2. According to the passage, who was the most amazing of the conductors on the Underground Railroad?
   a. Zachary Taylor
   b. John Brown
   c. Harriet Tubman
   d. William Lloyd Garrison
3. Based on the information in the passage, it is reasonable to conclude that most enslaved black people:
   a. Escaped on the Underground Railroad
   b. Escaped in large groups of 1,000 or more
   c. Were located in Maryland and Virginia
   d. Gained their freedom in ways other than escaping

C 7

In the control, both the body text and the "Did You know?" box features text from a traditional textbook-*The American Pageant.*

Critical Pedagogy (Treatment)



INSTRUCTIONS: Proceed through the passages in order. The textbook selection below includes two sections: The Underground Railroad and an additional "Did You Know?" section. **Factual questions will be asked about both sections (i.e., including the "Did You Know?" section) of the text so be sure to read all the information carefully.**

The Underground Railroad

The South of 1850 was relatively well-off. It then enjoyed, as it had from the beginning, more than its share of the nation's leadership. It had seated in the White House the war hero Zachary Taylor, a Virginia-born, slave-owning planter from Louisiana. It boasted a majority in the cabinet and on the Supreme Court. If outnumbered in the House, the South had equality in the Senate where it could at least neutralize northern maneuvers. Its cotton fields were expanding, and cotton prices were profitably high. Few sane people, North or South, believed that slavery was seriously threatened where it existed below the Mason Dixon line. Fifteen slave states could easily veto any proposed constitutional amendments.

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Did You Know?

Abolition and the Power of Black Resistance

Enslaved Africans resisted, or rebelled, against their position as slaves in many different ways. Each expression of resistance by enslaved individuals or groups counted as acts of rebellion against the system of slavery. The many instances of resistance show that slaves were not victims of slavery who accepted their situation. Instead they proved their strength and determination in fighting for their freedom. Uprising, or rebellion, was the most dramatic and bloody way that slaves could resist their enslavement. Less obvious methods of resistance occurred on the plantations. For example, slaves could steal from their owner, robbing him of his property and profit. They could damage machinery, so that it was put out of action and needed either lengthy repairs or costly replacement. The slaves could avoid work, by working as slowly as they dared, or by pretending to be sick. All these acts of resistance carried the threat of punishment if they were found out.

Ten years after Nat Turner's rebellion, there was no sign of black insurrection in the South. But that year, 1841, one incident took place which kept alive the idea of rebellion. Slaves being transported on a ship, the *Creole*, overpowered the crew, killed one of them, and sailed into the British West Indies (where slavery had been abolished in 1833). England refused to return the slaves (there was much agitation in England against American slavery), and this led to angry talk in Congress of war with England, encouraged by Secretary of State Daniel Webster.

Running away was much more realistic than armed insurrection. During the 1850s about a thousand slaves a year escaped into the North, Canada, and Mexico. Thousands ran away for short periods. And this despite the terror facing the runaway. The dogs used in tracking fugitives "bit, tore, mutilated, and if not pulled off in time, killed their prey."

There were tactical differences between black abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison, white abolitionist and editor of *The Liberator.* Blacks were more willing to engage in armed insurrection, but also more ready to use existing political devices-the ballot box, the Constitution-anything to further their cause. They were not as morally absolute in their tactics. Moral pressure would not do it alone, the blacks knew; it would take all sorts of tactics, from elections to rebellion.

Blacks had to struggle constantly with the unconscious racism of white abolitionists. They also had to insist on their own independent voice...In 1854, a conference of Negroes declared: " . . . it is emphatically our battle; no one else can fight it for us...Our relations to the Anti-Slavery movement must be and are changed. Instead of depending upon it we must lead it."

Certain black women faced the triple hurdle-of being abolitionists in a slave society, of being black among white reformers, and of being women in a reform movement dominated by men. When Sojourner Truth rose to speak in 1853 in New York City at the Fourth National Woman's Rights Convention, it all came together. There was a hostile mob in the hall shouting, jeering, threatening. She said:

I know that it feels a kind o' hissin' and ticklin' like to see a colored woman get up and tell you about things, and Woman's Rights. We have all been thrown down so low that nobody thought we'd ever get up again; but ... we will come up again, and now I'm here... we'll have our rights; see if we don't; and you can't stop us from them; see if you can.. You may hiss as much as you like, but it is comin'. ... I am sittin' among you to watch; and every once and awhile I will come out and tell you what time of night it is...

After reading both selections, answer the questions included below:

1. According to the passage, how many slave states existed in the United States in 1850?
   a. 9
   b. 15
   c. 20
   d. 50
2. According to the passage, who was the most amazing of the conductors on the Underground Railroad?
   a. Zachary Taylor
   b. John Brown
   c. Harriet Tubman
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3. Based on the information in the passage, it is reasonable to conclude that most enslaved black people:
   a. Escaped on the Underground Railroad
   b. Escaped in large groups of 1,000 or more
   c. Were located in Maryland and Virginia
   d. Gained their freedom in ways other than escaping

T 7

In the treatment, the body text features text from the traditional textbook as well-*The American Pageant.* However, the "Did You know?" box features text from a more critical text-*A People's History of the United States.*

While the control and treatment conditions address similar historical events, are of equal length and reading level, and are nearly identical, the behaviors and historical figures they mention are different (see Table 3). Students were randomly assigned to either the control or treatment group. OLS regression analyses suggest that experimental conditions were well-randomized across a number of demographic characteristics (see Table 2 of the Appendix).

Table 3: Content Summary for Each Textbook Excerpt

	Abolitionism and Underground Railroad	Cesar Chavez and the UFW	Chinese Exclusion
Control Source: *The American Pageant* (Kennedy et al. 2006) Reading Level: 11th-12th Grade	Word Count: 1130 Key Figures: • Harriet Tubman • John Brown • Wendell Phillips • Zachary Taylor • William Lloyd Garrison • Frederick Douglass • Abolitionists Behaviors: • Escape • Legal Action	Word Count: 868 Key Figures: • Cesar Chavez Behaviors: • Created civic organizations and the UFWOC • Elected mayors • Latinos are inconsistent voters	Word Count: 921 Key Figures: • Wong Kim Ark Behaviors: • Pooled money • Created Chinatowns and immigrant clubs • Legal action • Entrepreneurial ventures
Treatment Sources: *A People's History of the United States* (Zinn 2003); *Claiming America* (Wong 1998); "Lo Mein Loophole: How U.S. Immigration Law Fueled a Chinese Restaurant Boom" (Godoy 2016); "How Racism Created America's Chinatowns" (Goyette, 2017) Reading Level: 1240 Lexile (12th Grade+)	Word Count: 1153 Key Figures: • Nat Turner • Harriet Tubman • Sojourner Truth • Frederick Douglass • Abolitionists Behaviors: • Rebellion • Theft • Damaging machinery • Avoid work/feign sickness • Escape • "Ballot box"	Word Count: 895 Key Figures: • Cesar Chavez Behaviors: • Rebellion • Boycotts • Organizing farm workers • Strikes • Hunger strikes • Campaigns • Media use • Legal actions • UFWOC	Word Count: 910 Key Figures: • Wong Kim Ark Behaviors: • Created community organizations that provided services • Legal representation and action • Created the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association • Offered health services • Created private watchman patrol • Evaded immigration laws • Used media and petitions to protest

Statistical Models

My analyses focus on the effect of the treatment condition (critical content) on each of the four participatory domains discussed above. The bulk of these analyses is a simple comparison of means across treatment and control groups. If my theory is correct, I should observe two things. First, Asian, Black, and Latinx participants in the treatment condition should report greater willingness to participate in each of the four participatory domains. Second, the gap between intended participation among white youth and young people of color should decrease and become less significant.

I conducted an additional series of robustness checks in order to account for possible variations that may emerge across schools and study dates. Since the experiment was never conducted at multiple schools on the same day, school fixed effects were included in OLS analyses to account for possible school and time effects. Including this additional variable did not significantly alter the results (see Tables 3-6). This suggests that I am in a strong position to compare control and treatment condition means and any difference reflects the content rather than other factors.

Finally, I used content analyses of course syllabi, classroom observations, and in-depth interviews with each participating teacher to determine if critical pedagogy was already being used within each classroom. Using these qualitative data, I am able to conduct a final set of analyses that allow me to test for pre-treatment effects (Druckman and Leeper 2012). If a teacher already uses critical pedagogy in their classroom, the effect of the experimental intervention should be less pronounced since those in the control group will have already been exposed to material that may resemble the treatment. Contrastingly, if a teacher utilizes traditional pedagogy, even the brief

intervention of a critical text should show a discernable effect. This final series of analyses allows me to theorize about the ways in which the critical content presented in the experimental treatment may interact with other teaching tools in order to gain a more comprehensive view of the possible effects of critical pedagogy in the classroom.

Results

I first test **H_1:** young people of color exposed to critical pedagogy will report greater willingness to participate in acts of political engagement relative to those exposed to the traditional curriculum. I find partial support for this hypothesis. As shown by the comparison of means presented in Figure 3, Latinx and Black youth exposed to the treatment condition (critical content) report greater willingness to participate in acts political engagement relative to those in the control group (traditional content).[43] While the difference in means does not reach levels of statistical significance for Black youth (p=0.17), it is highly significant for Latinxs (p=0.001; Cohen's *d*=0.37).[44] Despite lacking an explicit reference to voting, the treatment segment addressing the Chavez and the UFW potentially activated an empowerment mechanism that bolstered willingness to participate more broadly.[45] Thus, as García Bedolla suggests, positive group images embedded within school curricula appear to be important drivers in shaping one's willingness to act politically (2005, 9; 183-185). More importantly, a comparison between white youth in the control group and Black and Latinx youth in the treatment group provides strong support for my primary claim: exposure to critical pedagogy *decreases* gaps in political engagement between white youth

[43] Due to the directional nature of each hypothesis, one-tailed tests are used. Sample sizes for each condition are included in Table 7 of Appendix A along with means and standard errors for each dependent variable.
[44] Figures 2 and 3 of Appendix A demonstrate that young Latinxs exposed to the treatment condition showed greater willingness to vote and campaign relative to those who were in the control group.
[45] While I was unable to test the empowerment mechanism in this chapter, this topic is addressed explicitly in Chapter 4. These results were especially pronounced among men, suggesting that more must be done to ensure that these texts are also attuned to the importance of gender. This topic is also addressed more explicitly in Chapter 4.

and young people of color. As demonstrated by Table 4, the large gaps in political participation present between white youth and young Latinxs exposed to the traditional content (p=0.005) are no longer significant among those exposed to critical content (p=0.449). Similarly, the gaps in political engagement that emerge between white youth and Black youth exposed to the traditional content (p=0.014) are decreased substantially in the critical content group (p=0.89). Taken together, these findings suggest that critical pedagogy can play an important role in decreasing racial gaps in political engagement between white youth and young people of color.

While Asian youth exposed to the treatment condition report slightly less willingness to pursue acts of political engagement, the difference in means for this group is statistically highly insignificant (P=0.69). This lack of an effect has a number of possible explanations including small sample size or an ineffective prime for pan-ethnicity. I explore the ineffectiveness of this intervention in greater detail in the next chapter.

Figure 3: Political Engagement

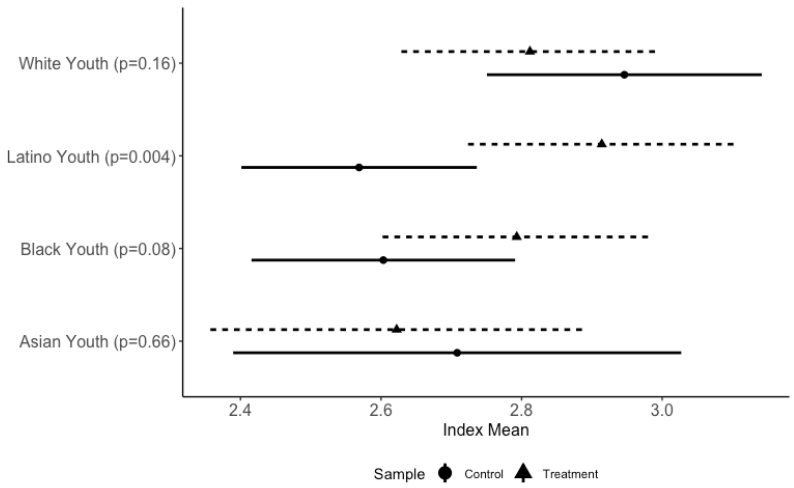


Figure 4: Public Voice

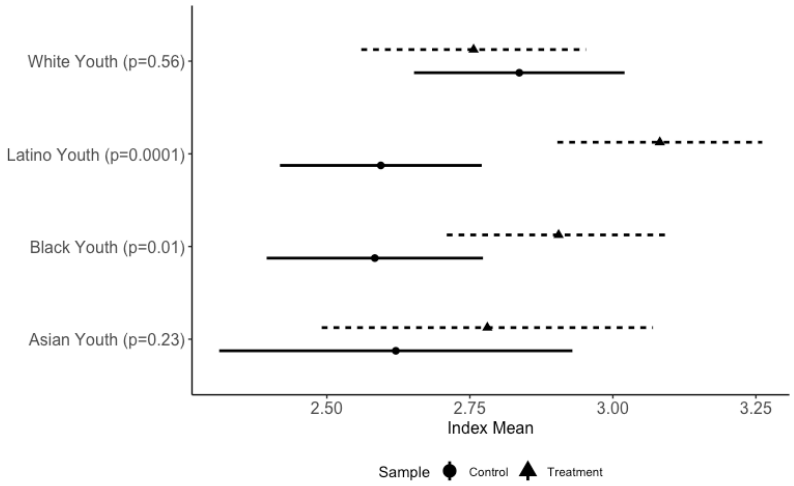


Figure 5: Cognitive Engagement

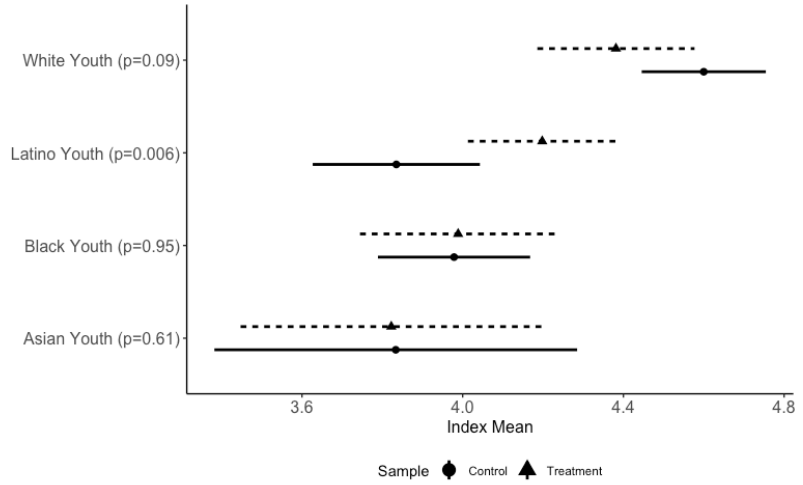


Figure 6: Civic Engagement

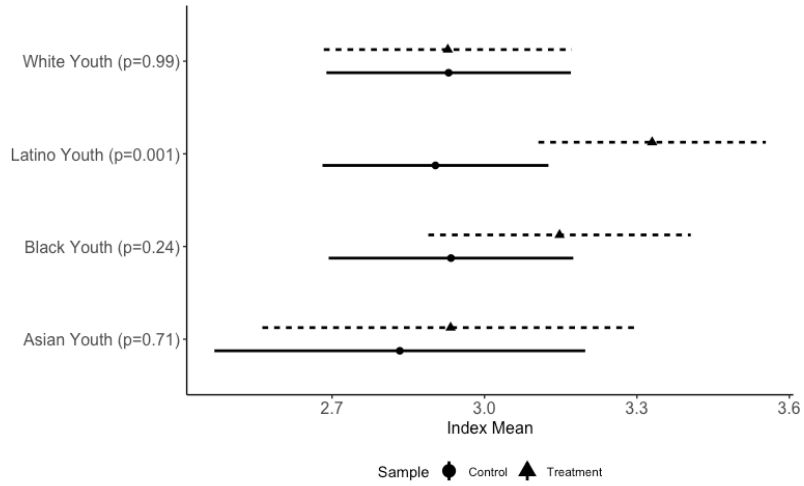


Table 4: Participation Gap Between White Youth and Young People of Color by Condition.

	Political Engagement	Public Voice	Cognitive Engagement	Civic Engagement
White/Latinx Participation Gap				
Control→Treatment (p-value)	+0.38 → -0.10 (p=0.005)→(p=0.449)	+0.24 → **-0.33** (p=0.06)→(p=0.017)	+0.77 → +0.18 (p<0.001)→(p=0.183)	+0.03 → **-0.40** (p=0.877)→(p=0.01834)
White/Black Participation Gap				
Control→Treatment (p-value)	+0.34 → +0.019 (p=0.014)→(p=0.89)	+0.25 → -0.15 (p=0.062)→(p=0.295)	+0.62 → +0.39 (p<0.001)→(p=0.015)	-0.005 → -0.22 (p=0.979)→(p=0.227)

Table 4 summarizes the effect of the treatment on the White/Latinx participation gap and the White/Black participation for each participatory domain. According to my theory, the treatment (critical pedagogy) should cause the participation gap between white youth and young people of color to decrease and become less statistically significant. The results presented above demonstrate that this is almost always the case.

***Note:** Bold text indicates instances in which young Latinxs express *significantly greater* willingness to participate than young whites.

Next, I test **H_2**: Latinx and Black youth exposed to critical content will report greater willingness to participate in acts of public voice relative to those exposed to more traditional historical accounts. Overall, I find strong support for this hypothesis. As shown in Figure 4, Latinx and Black youth exposed to the treatment condition report greater willingness to pursue acts of public voice.[46] Difference in means are statistically significant for both Latinx (p=0.002) and Black respondents (p=0.02; Cohen's *d*=0.36). It is likely that the large effect size among Latinxs (Cohen's *d*=0.53) exposed to the treatment is also function of both ethnicity and political context. Though the treatment passage mentions multiple national origin groups, Cesar Chavez is the primary focus.[47] Given that 91 percent of Latinx respondents within the sample are Mexican, the passage potentially bolstered feelings of empowerment by centering a role-model representing this national origin group. Second, this survey was distributed within a political context that is particularly threatening for Latinxs. Over half of the Latinx respondents included in this study participated within two months of the Trump Administration's decision to rescind DACA, suggesting that policy threat may have interacted with the treatment condition's focus on the political activism of Latinxs to yield particularly robust results (see Zepeda-Millan 2017).[48] Thus, while the treatment condition clearly has an effect on the reported behavior of Latinx respondents, a number of other contextual factors specific to this group are likely contributors to the large effect size. Most importantly, Figure 4 demonstrates that critical content effectively eliminates gaps in participation between white youth and Black and Latinx youth. Gaps in public voice between white

[46] These results are consistent for both women and men.

[47]While I was unable to test the role-modeling mechanism in this chapter, this topic is addressed explicitly in Chapter 4.

[48] School administrators and teachers in West Town emphasized that I could not ask students for their geographical or contact information beyond Zip Code due to heightened immigration concerns. Prior to beginning the survey, one student asked their teacher whether they could use their initials to give consent rather than identifying themselves by name due to concerns regarding immigration status (West Town, October 6, 2017).

youth and young Latinxs border on statistical significance among those exposed to the traditional curriculum (p=0.06). However, Table 4 demonstrates that critical content not only closes the participation gap across racial groups in the realm of public voice, but actually pushes Latinx youth to be *more willing* to participate in this domain than their white peers (p=0.017). Similarly, gaps in public voice between white youth and Black youth approach statistical significance among those exposed to the traditional content (p=0.062). However, this gap is decreased significantly among those in the critical pedagogy group (p=0.295).

While difference in means tests do not reach levels of statistical significance for Asian youth (p=0.46), exposure to the treatment text does move respondents in the expected direction. However, a disaggregated examination of acts of public voice for this group does yield one significant finding. Asian American respondents exposed to the treatment are more likely to say that they would contact a public official relative to those in the control group (p=0.02; see Figure 4 in the Appendix). This is a particularly impressive finding in light of the generational and ethnic makeup of the Asian respondents. Eighty-three percent of the Asian Americans in the sample are second generation immigrants and nearly 60 percent are of either Chinese, Vietnamese, or Korean descent. Wong et al. report that these national origin groups, and recent immigrants in particular, are least likely to contact a public official (2011, 57;62). Thus, while the findings presented in the public voice index fail to reach statistical significance for Asian Americans, the increased willingness to contact a public official within the treatment condition suggests that critical pedagogy did have the intended effect on at least one act of public voice for this group.

I also find strong support for **H_3:** Latinx youth exposed to critical content will report greater willingness to participate in acts of cognitive engagement relative to those exposed to more traditional accounts that center white political actors. As shown in Figure 5, Latinxs express greater

willingness to participate in cognitive engagement activities when exposed to critical content than those in the control group (p=0.001; Cohen's *d*=0.35). Consistent with the literature on language brokering discussed in Chapter 2, this result was especially pronounced among young Latinas. As hypothesized, it is likely that critical content helps young Latinxs feel greater capacity to engage in robust conversations about politics. More importantly, Figure 5 also suggests that critical content shrinks the cognitive engagement gap between white and Latinx respondents. As demonstrated by Table 4, while gaps in cognitive engagement are significant between white youth and young Latinxs in the control condition (p<0.001), this gap is no longer significant in the critical content group (p=0.183). However, white youth continue to outpace every other group in willingness to participate in cognitive engagement activities.

Though no formal hypotheses are presented for civic engagement, results for civic engagement are shown in Figure 6. Asian, Black, and Latinx respondents exposed to critical content expressed greater willingness to pursue civic engagement activities relative to those in the control group. Though difference in means only reach levels of statistical significance for Latinx youth (p=0.001), the effect size is fairly large (Cohen's *d*=0.36).[49] More importantly, Figure 6 demonstrates that exposure to critical content closes the participation gap between young people of color exposed to critical content and white youth in the control group. Most impressively, Table 4 demonstrates that young Latinxs exposed to the treatment are actually *significantly more* likely to say they are willing to participate in cognitive engagement activities than their white peers (p=0.018) This suggests that critical content may not have to emphasize a particular type of participation in order to see an effect. Rather, centering role models of color and grassroots action

[49] When disaggregated by both race and gender, results approach statistical significance for Black men (p=0.09).

within historical narratives may contribute to a sense of empowerment that bolster one's willingness to participate in more localized and non-partisan domains as well.

Pre-Treatment Effects

In order to theorize how the experimental intervention discussed above may interact with other pedagogical tools, I conducted a final series of analyses that test for pre-treatment effects. Drawing from content analyses of course syllabi, classroom observations, and in-depth interviews with each of the participating teachers, I categorized schools into one of two groups: students enrolled in classes where the teacher uses traditional pedagogy and students enrolled in classes where the teacher uses critical pedagogy. A simple comparison of means across the treatment and control groups in each of these categories reveals a pre-treatment effect such that those in classes with extant critical pedagogy already exhibit increased participation.[50]

Figures 7-10 compare means for intended participation between students who are already exposed to critical pedagogy and those who are not. These figures reveal two important findings. First, the effect of the treatment condition on each of the four participatory domains is only significant among students who are enrolled in courses where the teacher uses traditional content and traditional teaching strategies (e.g. lecturing rather than student-led discussions or youth participatory action research). Since these students were not yet exposed to the critical content presented within the treatment condition, it makes sense that the effect is most pronounced among these students. Contrastingly, there is no significant treatment effect on intended participation among students who are already exposed to critical pedagogy in their classrooms. In other words,

[50] Sample sizes for each condition are included in Table 8 of Appendix A along with means and standard errors for each dependent variable.

the novelty of the critical content presented within the treatment condition is less pronounced when students are already exposed to this type of content.

Second, Figures 7-10 reveal that intended participation is higher among young people who are already exposed to critical pedagogy. This is consistent with my theory. However, differences in control group means do not reach levels of statistical significance for any of the four participatory domains. While this may cause some to question the long-term benefits of critical pedagogy, there are three things to consider before drawing this conclusion. First, the traditional content presented within the control condition is not a true control for young people already exposed to critical pedagogy. In fact, it is possible that exposure to the traditional content actually had a negative effect on intended participation among young people who expect to read more critical content as demonstrated by Marcos' quote at the beginning of the chapter. Second, the aim of critical pedagogy is to develop the critical consciousness of students, providing them with the tools needed to reflect upon and transform the world (Freire 1970). Students who are taught to think about the world in more critical ways are likely more aware of the challenges that arise from taking political action. Thus, it is also possible that consistent exposure to critical pedagogy alters how young people think about their own intent to participate. As Amna and Ekman (2014) suggest, while these young people may be prepared to take political action, it is likely that their intent to participate is more affected by their awareness of real-life challenges rather than an abstract commitment to future political participation. Finally, the results here suggest that teachers can cultivate youth engagement by introducing critical texts that highlight the agency of people of color. However, this does not mean that texts are the only intervention that should be used to shape behavior. Rather, in the tradition of critical pedagogy, these texts can be combined with other teaching tools such as youth participatory action research in order to foster more lasting

Figure 7: Political Engagement

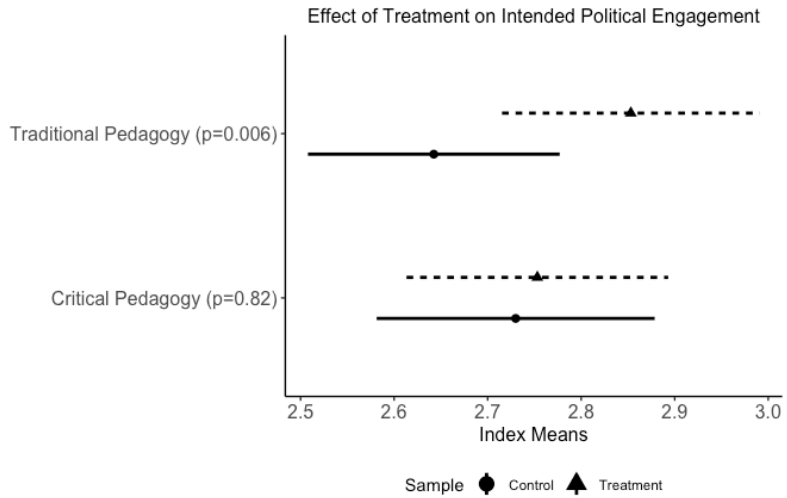


Figure 8: Public Voice

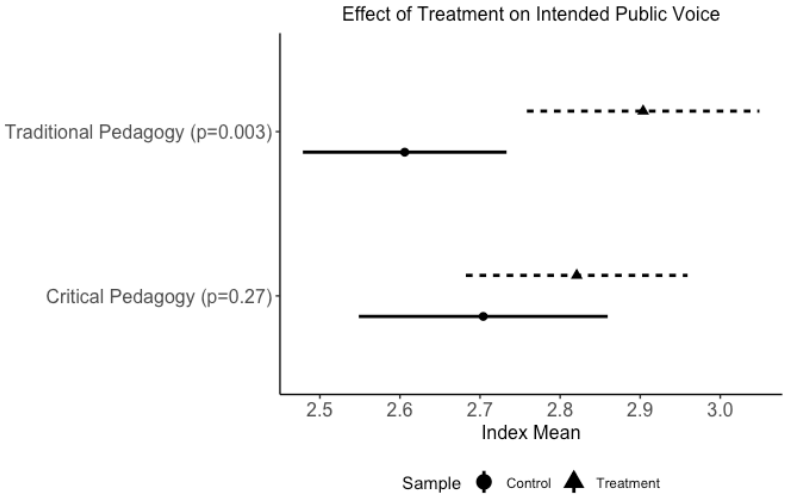


Figure 9: Cognitive Engagement

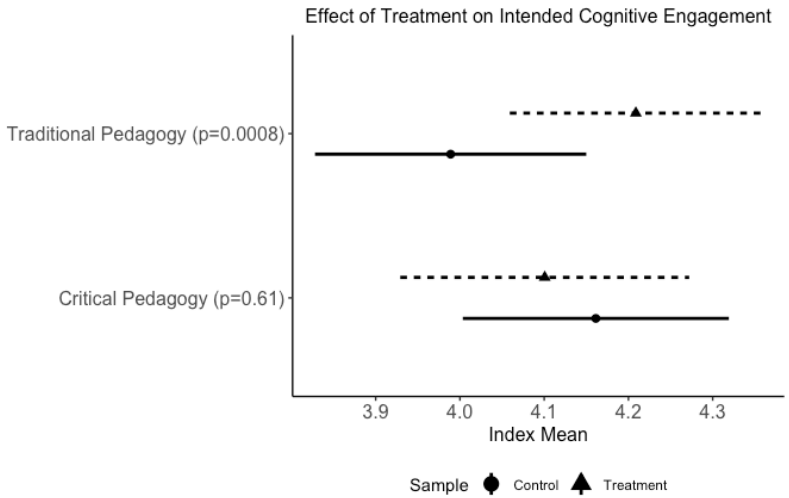
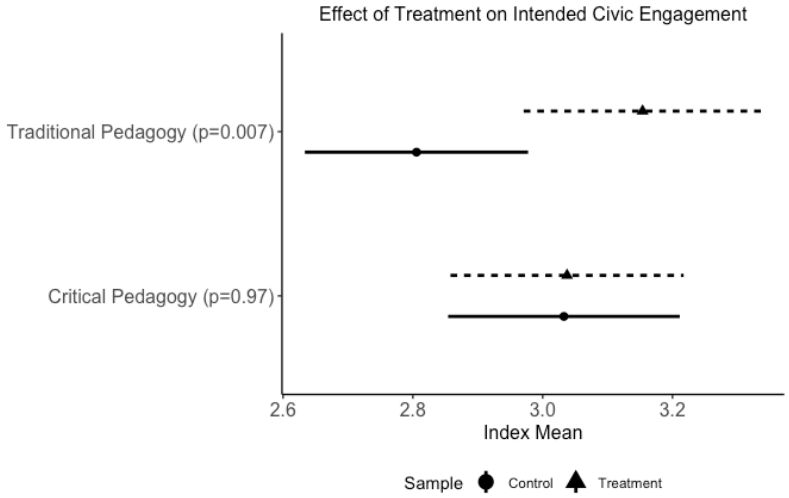


Figure 10: Civic Engagement



participatory outcomes. The main takeaway here is that course *content* should not be overlooked as one of *many* tools that can be used by those interested in closing the civic empowerment gap. This is explored comprehensively in Chapter 5.

Conclusion

My results accentuate a missed source of inequality in participation. Socialization matters and the content of civic education courses can impact how young people of color intend to participate in politics. Though unequal access to political resources such as money and political efficacy clearly account for gaps in participation rates between white folks and people of color, the content of civic education courses, coupled with other teaching tools, may help close these gaps. I find that exposure to content informed by critical pedagogy causes Black and Latinx youth to be more willing to pursue multiple forms of political participation. While these results are promising on their own, the forthcoming chapters address three remaining concerns.

First, this chapter cannot assess whether the effects of critical content persist overtime. While the robust results of this intervention suggest that course content can have a powerful effect on the willingness of young people of color to participate in politics, it is important to gauge whether such an intervention continues to shape political behavior beyond high school. Second, an independent reading exercise is admittedly a weak test of Freire's conception of critical pedagogy. While the pre-treatment effects highlighted in this study suggest that the pre-existing practices of teachers dramatically shaped the effect of my experimental intervention, it is important to understand whether more robust interventions, combining both critical content and critical teaching practices, result in significant and long-lasting effects on the political behavior of young people. I address both of these concerns in Chapter 5.

Finally, it is important to understand why the critical pedagogy intervention presented in this chapter was less effective among Asian American students. While this chapter theorizes about potential mechanisms that link exposure to critical content to increased rates of intended participation, the focus groups presented in the next chapter allow me to address this concern more comprehensively.

Coda: Implications for Policy and Practice

As the United States becomes more racially diverse, it is important to explore ways to better prepare young people of color for active participation in American democracy. As demonstrated by this chapter, one possible way forward involves civic education practices that incorporate a more inclusive account of our history that directly addresses racial oppression and the grassroots political action taken by people of color in struggles against it. Schools have long been viewed as cradles for democracy. However, a more critical approach to education may be necessary in order to encourage political participation that actually serves to benefit those who have been most marginalized by the political process (June 1999; Junn 2004). As advocates of critical pedagogy suggest, we must "understand deeply the nature of mechanisms that work to establish and maintain asymmetric social relations … in order to redress systemic inequalities" (Hope and Jagers 2014, 451). Schools represent an important space to just that.

Such an effort will require collaboration among multiple actors. First, constituents must be willing to lobby their elected officials for curricular changes that better reflect the diverse experiences of American youth. Given that many political elites have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo and will inevitably push back against efforts that aim to empower young people of color, individuals will have to support political candidates committed to meaningful

educational reform. Second, as I argue in Chapter 5, teachers will have to be properly trained to utilize critical pedagogy in their classrooms. For many, this will require learning about new events, new historical figures, and developing a nuanced understanding of how to utilize curricula to foster positive group associations among students. However, if institutional barriers arise that aim to stifle this pedagogical approach, some educators may have to explore ways to circumvent these roadblocks within their own classrooms. Finally, such deep changes in civic education policy and practice will require a great deal of self-reflection among white students and white parents. The goal of critical pedagogy is *not* to decrease participation among white people. In fact, the results presented in this chapter suggest that critical content has no significant effect on white respondents. Rather, content informed by critical pedagogy provides a more comprehensive and truthful interpretation of our political history that explores the role of *multiple* narratives, figures, and modes of political action. To provide more empowering civic learning for young people of color, we must acknowledge the political agency of people of color throughout history. These transformations are vital if we are to prepare new and increasingly diverse generations of Americans to be full participants in democracy.

Chapter 4

From Solitary Heroes to Collective Action: Student Reflections on Empowerment

> *"It's important to describe political movements as a whole. [The traditional textbook] is mostly just describing two people and their speeches. In [the critical textbook] you can actually see they resorted to other actions beyond a few speeches to resist. Overall, it's empowering when everyone in the movement is portrayed as a hero, and it actually talks about women which the other text does not do. They're saying you can't keep us from our rights and [are] fighting back. Like it is emphatically our battle. No one else can fight it for us. It's these words, even though you might not find it poetic, that actually empower you to do something."*
>
> -(Kumar, 18 years old, Indian American)

Kumar's impassioned response to the narratives presented within various history textbooks demonstrate that young people are anything but apathetic observers of the content that they learn in social studies classrooms. While his teacher describes him as a strong student, Kumar does not characterize himself as particularly political; he does not read or watch the news and expresses little to no interest in local and national politics in his survey responses. In fact, when compared to the hundreds of high schoolers included in this research, Kumar reports that he is less likely to engage in a number of civic and political activities (μ=2.6 on a five-point scale) than both the sample as a whole (μ=3.1) and Asian Americans specifically (μ=3.0). Yet, his reflections demonstrate that social studies content can play a role in nurturing youth engagement when it critically engages with race and collective action.

In this chapter, I first explore the links between social studies content and greater feelings of empowerment. While Chapter 3 theorizes about potential mechanisms that connect social studies content to intended participation, this chapter presents a more comprehensive examination of these dynamics. I achieve this by using a mixed-methodological approach, isolating mechanisms by pairing focus group responses with the experimental results presented in Chapter 3. Overall, I leverage the insights of young people to demonstrate that collective action narratives that highlight movements (rather than a few widely discussed "great American heroes") are

particularly empowering for young people of color. However, the complexity of their responses also highlights challenges that teachers and policymakers will have to overcome in order to achieve more equitable democratic outcomes for young people.

Ethnic Studies and Conceptions of Empowerment

In the previous chapter, I theorized that an empowerment mechanism mediates the relationship between critical textbook content and increased rates of intended participation. Specifically, I argued that young people of color would be more likely to participate in politics if presented with historical narratives that highlight the ways in which marginalized groups gained political influence, and also provide tangible examples of the largely grassroots tactics used to achieve these ends. Indeed, these themes are central within a number of emancipatory pedagogies.

To understand how that content lead to participation it is useful to draw a parallel to work on ethnic studies. Specifically, the critical texts employed in the experimental treatment presented in Chapter 3 align with those used in ethnic studies curricula. Recall from Chapter 3 that ethnic studies "center the knowledge and perspectives of an ethnic or racial group, reflecting narratives and points of view rooted in that group's lived experiences and intellectual scholarship" (Sleeter 2011, vii). Advocates of critical pedagogy consistently note the interconnectivity between ethnic studies and other emancipatory pedagogies (Duncan-Andrade 2008). Indeed, as discussed in the previous chapter, ethnic studies programs such as Arizona's controversial Mexican American Studies curriculum utilizes *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* alongside Chicano history textbooks such as Rodolfo Acuna's *Occupied America* (Depenbrock, 2017).[51]

[51] This course was banned for seven years after law makers claimed that the course portrayed whites as oppressors and Latinxs as the oppressed. However, in 2017 this decision was overturned after a judge determined that the ban was motivated by racial animus (Depenbrock, 2017).

Ethnic studies courses of this kind are shown to have a number of academic and civic benefits (Dee and Penner 2017, Novais and Spencer 2018; see also García-Bedolla 2005), including greater feelings of *empowerment*. Empowerment, in this context, refers to one's sense that their own group has the agency and capacity to participate in the political process and advocate for group members. Evidence suggests that Black students exposed to curricula that emphasize African and African American history, culture, rituals, and activism are more likely to report greater feelings of empowerment and connection to the Black community than students exposed to more traditional curricula (Lewis et al. 2005). Similarly, Latinx students exposed to Chicano literature courses that center Chicano/a authors and culturally relevant issues (e.g. immigration, socioeconomic status, Catholicism, migrant labor, etc.) help students to feel part of a larger community united by a common set of experiences and hardships (Vasquez 2005; see also Sleeter 2011, 13). Finally, Filipino students exposed to a curriculum addressing Filipino American history and culture (*Pinoy Teach)* report greater feelings of empowerment and internal efficacy ten years later (Halagao 2010; see also Sleeter 2011, 14). While these studies invoke varying conceptions of empowerment, they are similar to definitions utilized by political scientists as well.

Empowerment is particularly important to consider when examining marginalized communities that may lack access to important political resources and face discriminatory policies that depress political engagement (e.g. Sobel and Smith 2009, Brady and McNulty 2011, Burch 2013, Bruch and Soss 2018). Indeed, existing work finds that this kind of empowerment is associated with higher rates of participation among people of color (Bobo and Gilliam 1990; García-Bedolla 2005). It is important to note that empowerment is not the same as political

efficacy;[52] in fact, the experimental results presented in Chapter 3 demonstrate that efficacy is not the attitude being activated when young people like Kumar engage with these texts (see Figure 1 in the Appendix). While both empowerment and political efficacy emphasize the ways in which individuals interact with formal institutions, empowerment captures the importance of seeing marginalized group members gaining and exercising decision-making power. I theorize that empowerment is the link between critical pedagogy and intended participation.

As shown in Figure 1, feelings of empowerment might manifest in at least three different ways. First, for some, empowerment could be associated with the presence of role-models who were able to gain political influence even within stigmatized social contexts. For example, Bobo and Gilliam's study defines high-empowerment areas as those where Black leaders were able to gain control over mayoral offices (1980, 377). As discussed in Chapter 2, since heroes are frequently invoked in social studies classes to provide students with examples of those who embody certain democratic values, it is possible that young people might discuss feelings of empowerment in terms of the "heroes" presented in the texts, especially if those figures are representative of a student's own identity. Additionally, since the critical textbook segments emphasize collective action narratives rather than the contributions of "personally responsible citizens," it is possible that young people may express feelings of empowerment by emphasizing the ways in which ordinary individuals (as opposed to political elites) work together to contribute

[52] Those interested in civic education frequently measure the success of various instructional techniques (Martens and Gainous 2012) and curricular programs (Pasek et al. 2008) by measuring students' external efficacy—the belief that government is responsive to one's demands. However, as demonstrated by Chapter 2, civic education courses appear to only be effective in achieving these ends for white students. Moreover, some express legitimate skepticism about using external efficacy to gauge the civic health of increasingly diverse generations of young people. Specifically, using external efficacy to gauge the success of civic learning introduces an assumption that we should be teaching young people of color to believe in the responsiveness of political institutions when they may have legitimate reasons not to do so (Junn 2004). With this concern in mind, ethnic studies curricula provide a path forward for those interested in empowering their students while also acknowledging the plurality of their lived experiences.

to political movements. By seeing individuals engage in collective action within historical narratives, young people are provided a window to other forms of political participation.

Figure 1: Theorized Causal Pathway

Second, empowerment could be expressed in terms of collective identity. Since the critical texts focus more on collective action than individual acts of "heroism," young people may discuss empowerment in terms of collective identity. As an example of how this manifestation of empowerment can affect political outcomes, García-Bedolla finds that Latinxs in Los Angeles who possess more positive views regarding the perceived agency of their own racial/ethnic group are more likely to be active political participants as well (2005, 6-9). Since García-Bedolla identifies Chicano Studies and multicultural history courses as one source of positive group attachments (2005, 11), it is possible that focus group participants may talk about empowerment in terms of collective identity as well.

Third, linked fate—the belief that one's "own self-interests are linked to the interests of the race" (Dawson 1994, 77)—could play a role in the ways in which Black youth discuss feelings of empowerment. Dawson attributes the presence of linked fate among Black Americans, in part, to the transmission of historical information through institutions and social networks (1995, 67). Thus, when Black youth reflect upon historical information that centers the agency of their racial

group, their political aspirations may be discussed in terms of the connection between group interests and individual interests.

Individual feelings of empowerment are likely to be deeply personal and, as demonstrated by Figure 1, are likely to manifest in different ways. However, I expect any discussions that may emerge regarding role models, collective identity, linked fate, and collective action to be strongly associated with the positive feelings that result when engaging with texts that emphasize the ways in which marginalized groups have gained political influence. My focus groups with Chicago Public Schools students and additional experimental results allow me to assess whether this is the case when young people engage with texts of this kind.

Mixed-Methodological Approach

In Chapter 3, I designed an experiment to capture the relationship between critical content and intended participation. My goal there was not to assess mediation and, to be clear, the design would have precluded me from doing so (Bullock and Ha, 2011). However, the informal discussions I had with students after they completed the experimental study demonstrated that they had strong psychological responses to the passages that they read. In other words, while the experiment demonstrates that critical content causes young people of color to be more willing to participate in politics, the precise psychological mechanism that connects the critical pedagogy exposure to participation decisions was less clear. Yet, I expect empowerment to be the mechanism – this was identified not only through the aforementioned theoretical work, but also from my conversations with students while implementing the experimental study. Focus groups are an effective means of exploring what mechanisms are at work – that is, as a way to clarify causal pathway (Seawright 2016, Cyr 2017). These focus groups also allow me to delve into why critical

content did not have an effect on the measured outcomes among Asian American students by providing the space for young people to provide unfiltered critique of educational materials. When possible, I also use additional data from the survey experiment to demonstrate the generalizability of the focus group responses.

Focus Groups

I recruited focus group participants using convenience sampling during the winter of 2020 (Mosely 2013, 41).[53] I relied heavily on my pre-existing relationship with teachers during this process. Three of these teachers (one at a plurality white school in downtown Chicago, one at a majority Black school in North Lawndale, and another at a majority Latinx in West Town) allowed me to distribute the experiment discussed in the previous chapter in their classrooms during the 2017-2018 school year. A fourth teacher at a plurality Asian American high school in West Ridge helped me recruit students for the final focus group. These educators allowed me to conduct the focus groups within their classrooms, providing five key advantages. First, it minimized logistical challenges that could arise by having students travel to an external location. Second, since students had already spent a significant amount of time in each of the classrooms, the effect of the room's attributes (i.e. posters) was less likely to affect the content of the conversation (Barbour 2005). Third, since three of these teachers also allowed me to conduct Chapter 3's experiment in their classrooms, the consistency of room location allowed for an additional layer of consistency between the focus group and the experimental studies discussed in the previous chapter. Fourth, it minimized self-selection that could have resulted by recruiting students from external community

[53] The majority white school in downtown Chicago asked to postpone the focus group until the Fall of 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. I fully intend to revise this chapter using the results from this final focus group.

organizations that may appeal to young people who are already more civically or politically engaged. Finally, given the realities of school segregation Chicago, I was able to select focus group locations that would allow me to speak to equal numbers of Asian, Black, Latinx, and white youth.

After study locations were determined, teachers asked their students if they were interested in participating in a 60-minute focus group about history textbooks in exchange for a $15 gift card. After compiling a list of interested students, eight students from each school were randomly selected to participate. In all but one of these cases, each of the focus groups was made up entirely of young people sharing the same self-identified racial identity.[54] Though the focus group participants tended to be more involved in school activities and reported higher rates of news consumption, the focus group and experiment participants are fairly similar in terms of age, gender, ideology, and parental political interest. These comparisons are highlighted below in Table 1. The comparability of these samples is crucial, given I am aiming to understand mechanisms from the experimental data using a new sample of participants.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Samples

	Experiment			*Focus Group*		
	Asian	Black	Latinx	Asian	Black	Latinx
Age (μ)	*16.8*	*16.3*	*16.3*	*16.5*	*16.8*	*16.7*
Percent Women	*53%*	*60%*	*53%*	*50%*	*60%*	*50%*
Percent in Club	*89%*	*72%*	*70%*	*100%*	*100%*	*100%*
Ideology (μ)	*2.9*	*3.1*	*3.2*	*3.1*	*3.6*	*3.5*
Parental Political Interest (μ)	*2.9*	*3.5*	*3.1*	*3.0*	*2.9*	*2.8*
News Consumption (μ)	*4.2*	*3.9*	*4.0*	*4.1*	*5.2*	*4.5*

Upon arriving at each school, I explained the purpose of the study and had students fill out a brief questionnaire that asked for demographic information and a range of questions about

[54] Two Black students participated in a focus group conducted at a predominantly Latinx school in West Town.

political interest, ideology, and party identification. These questions allowed me to compare the focus group participants to those who participated in the experiment two years prior (see Table 1). Next, students were asked to read the same textbook segments presented to students in the survey experiment and were instructed to record any reactions they had the texts in the margins. This close-reading exercise allowed me to ensure that 1.) each participant was able to share their reflections for each textbook even if they did not feel comfortable participating in the full group and 2.) to provide an outlet for expression that may have been otherwise prohibited by the group's conversation, my own questioning, or my own racial identity, which differed from the students in each of the focus groups.[55] The students' written reflections were transcribed and tabulated into word frequency counts to ensure that themes present within individual reflections aligned with the broader group discussion. Word frequency visualizations are presented within the Appendix.

Following the individual exercise, students participated in a recorded focus group discussion about the textbooks. The texts prompted lively conversations at each of the schools that could have extended far beyond the designated 60-minute period. While the conversations highlighted below focus on the students' textbook reflections, the participants linked the content of the texts to a number of subjects, including the shortcomings of civic education courses, frustrations about the electoral college, the upcoming 2020 Presidential Election, and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

[55] A large literature demonstrates that the race of an interviewer can contribute to response bias, especially when topics such as race are addressed (Allens 1964, Davis 1997). Ideally, each of the focus groups would have been facilitated by an individual who shares the racial identity of the participants. However, this proved difficult to accomplish given the slate of logistical and institutional review board challenges that come with conducting research within public schools.

To begin these discussions, I first asked the participants a series of very general questions. These questions aimed to get the students talking about the texts without priming them to think specifically about the mechanisms of interest (empowerment):

- What reactions did you have to the passages from "Textbook 1?"
- What reactions did you have to the passages from "Textbook 2?"
- Which passage is more interesting? Why?
- Which passage is more informative? Why?

In many cases, empowerment came up before being prompted (discussed shortly). However, in other situations, the students first examined the texts in a way that was more akin to literary criticism. The Asian American focus group, for example, highlighted the ways in which an author's vocabulary could help the reader identify potential biases. However, the students almost immediately began talking about the more theoretically relevant theme of racial bias within history textbooks (Epstein 2009).

> **MDN[56]:** *Let's start with the Chinese Exclusion passages. What responses did you have to Textbook 1?*
>
> **Mae[57]:** *My name is Mae. I like the vocabulary that was being used in this text. It wasn't too formal or informal, but it was a bit hard to read because of how it was formatted. Like it was too much like a textbook. And I think a lot of students would want to use something formatted in that.*
>
> **Paula:** *Paula. Well, there was a sentence from…paragraph 2, which was just filled with minuscule vocabulary, and used a lot of stereotypes against Chinese immigrants. Like, calling them "rice eaters." That seemed unnecessary and offensive.*
>
> **Andy**: *Hi, I'm Andy. Yeah. I thought it was actually kind of biased against the Chinese migrant workers…*

On the rare occasions when the conversations began to stall or if students were continuing to focus on more literary aspects of the texts (e.g. word choice and sentence structure), I would ask about empowerment and other potential mechanisms more explicitly:

---

[56] MDN refers to the author, Matthew David Nelsen.
[57] In order to protect the privacy of the participants, all names that are used are pseudonyms.

- Which passage is more empowering? Why?
- Which passage provides better information about how to participate in politics?
- Do either of the passages talk about individuals you look up to? Which figures stand out most?

In the focus group excerpts shared in the sections that follow, I am sure to include my own line of questioning if students were explicitly prompted to think about specific mechanisms. In most instances however, my role in the focus groups was one of an observer and expressions of empowerment emerged quite naturally. A full list of focus group questions is included in the chapter Appendix.

Following each focus group, recordings were transcribed verbatim and analyzed in NVivo. Using an etic (observer) structure, research categories were generated in NVivo to categorize moments when students touched upon the theorized mechanism (i.e. empowerment) (Adair and Pastori 2011). However, notes from each focus group were used to generate emic (insider) categories that I did not plan to discuss before beginning the focus group (Strauss 1987). Each line from the interview transcripts was coded into the appropriate NVivo categories. Coding visualizations, located in the chapter appendix, were then created for each category to identify emergent themes within the coded data (Miles and Huberman 1994).

Talking About Textbooks[58]

My conversations with high school students challenge accounts of civic learning that downplay the importance content (Langton and Jennings 1968; Campbell 2006). The young people I spoke with were anything but apathetic observers of their own learning and spoke candidly about the emotional responses that came up when they engaged with each of the texts. Overall, the students expressed a strong preference for the critical textbook over the traditional textbook; they described these passages as more empowering and more accessible, a response that surprised many of their teachers. Moreover, the students tended to have fairly negative responses to the more traditional textbook.[59] While some students appreciated that this text was written like "a story" that provided colorful accounts of a few prominent individuals, the majority of the students immediately identified the racial biases at play in this text.[60] In the section that follows, I place the voices of young Chicagoans front and center, examining how historical narratives contribute to multiple expressions of empowerment.

Role-Modeling

When young people are asked to think about what they learned about in their American history of civic education courses, they frequently talk about "great American heroes" (Levine and Lopez 2004). However, just because someone remembers learning about individual acts of

[58] The students' written reflections also help assuage concerns that the focus group responses highlighted in this chapter might not be representative of the focus group participants as a whole. The word frequency visualizations included in the Chapter Appendix demonstrate that themes of empowerment emerged in individual responses as well. For example, prominent themes in each of the textbook segments include the racial and national origin group of interest as well as "fight" and "win." As expected, these themes do not emerge in the students' individual responses to the traditional textbooks. Rather, prominent themes from these texts include William Lloyd Garrison (a white abolitionist), the Irish, and Mexican food. Taken together, the two qualitative data sets suggest that there was a great deal of overlap between how the students responded to the texts individually and collectively.

[59] Coding frequencies for these themes are located in the Chapter Appendix

[60] See Epstein (2009)

heroism in the context of a social studies course does not mean they carry the values those heroes are meant to embody into their lives (Peabody and Jenkins 2017). Even during a period when curriculum developers are working to create educational materials that highlight the contributions of women and people of color, some contend that these figures are frequently portrayed as so "God like" that their actions are impossible to emulate (Levinson 2012). My conversations with Chicago high schoolers shed light on the role of heroes in social studies classrooms, demonstrating that individuals do not hold a monopoly over heroic acts; heroism and interrelated feelings of empowerment can be found in moments of collective action as well.

Paula, a 17-year-old Filipino American, does not hold back when I ask a group of students in Chicago's West Ridge neighborhood to share their thoughts about the two textbook excerpts. While some of her classmates discuss the structural elements of the passages and their vocabulary, Paula shifts the group towards a discussion of racial bias (see previous focus group excerpt). Her teacher smiles while working at her desk, seeming to suggest that her students will not be shy during this conversation. After several students mention heroes, I ask about role-models more explicitly.

> **MDN***: We've heard a lot about role models from multiple individuals. Which textbook do you think has better role models or better heroes for people to look up to?*
>
> **Paula:** *In [the traditional textbook], they didn't do anything to showcase Chinese Americans as role models in anyway. They just portrayed them as helpless and weak, and the Irish were savages that hurt them. It's very black and white. I don't see anybody as a role model in [the traditional textbook].*
>
> **Mae:** *From what I got from [the critical textbook], the whole community is a role model. It's not so much about individuals, which I like.*
>
> **Kumar:** *I also thought [the critical textbook] had better role models because of the way they represented Chinese Americans; they were presented as smart people who could get out of like strife on their own.*
>
> **John:** *I don't know if this makes sense, but in [the traditional textbook], they focus on, like, official figures. They don't focus on the common people. The [critical textbook] shows that, even if you're*

not someone that's politically important in any way, you can make a difference in society if you join together as a group.

This exchange demonstrates that collective action narratives can effectively work in the place of more solitary acts of heroism. While students at each of the focus group locations mentioned that it can sometimes be useful to see certain ideas and values animated by the lives of prominent individuals, the young people I spoke with tended to be more favorable of collective action narratives. For many, this take on United States History was not only new and more engaging but contributed to expressions of empowerment. Kumar and John in particular suggest that emphasizing the heroic acts of "common" and seemingly "unimportant" people broadens their perceptions of who can make a difference politically. These insights are critical given that three of these students (Paula, Kumar, and John) reported below-average rates of intended political participation prior to the focus group discussion.[61] While one could argue that their low rates of intended participation may reflect a deeper understanding of the stakes associated with taking political action (Amna and Eckman 2014), these students also reported lower rates of political interest than both their peers and the Asian Americans who participated in the experiment. This is critical since it suggests that historical narratives that emphasize collective action can be particularly empowering among those who are not already politically engaged. Similar themes emerged in my conversation with students in West Town as well.[62]

Anika, one of two Black participants in the majority-Latinx focus group in West Town shared the frustrations she felt while enrolled in a civics course three years prior. Namely, she

[61] Intended Participation on a 1-5 scale: Paula (μ=2.6); Kumar (μ=2.6); John (μ=1.6)
[62] Recall that two Black students participated in a focus group conducted at a predominantly Latinx school in West Town. When quoting these students, I am sure to note that their race differed from the majority of the participants at this study location.

expressed that too often real-world issues such as the results of the 2016 Presidential Election were not addressed in class, compounding her political disillusionment. One of her current teachers, a deeply committed social studies educator listens intently. The candidness her students bring to the focus group discussion are reflective of the open-classroom environment she maintains in her American History course.

> **Anika**: *[Hillary Clinton] had the most votes but didn't become president because of the electoral college? Like, how confusing is that? It really doesn't make sense. I was like why vote? My voice individually is not being heard and no one answered my questions [in civics] so I just, I don't know. It makes me not political.*
>
> **MDN:** *A lot of times in social studies classes, teachers try to teach about current events using historical examples or historical figures. Is that useful or is it just more of the same?*
>
> **Anika**: *It's empowering. I like hearing about people who made a difference. If something's wrong I obviously want to address it. I would want to learn about how I can make a change.*
>
> **Serena:** *See for me, I felt like [the critical textbook] stuck out because of this. There was a whole paragraph dedicated to Mexican women. And the strike they did in California and I thought that was really important because in most textbooks I've read, women are usually excluded, and we don't know a lot about them. And it's a common to believe that they're inferior to men and others. So, seeing this in [the critical textbook] was just like "wow, you're actually acknowledging women and their history." It was something I've never been taught before.*
>
> **Anika**: *The [critical textbook's] passage about African Americans, also talked a lot about Black women, they didn't just talk about [William] Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglas. They also talked about Sojourner Truth. She stood up and was like dropping truths at the National Woman's Rights Convention. She called it like it is. So, I thought that was cool that they included her.*

Anika and Serena's responses are illuminating for four reasons. First, Anika explicitly links heroism to empowerment. Though she rightfully shares a sense of political disillusionment, she also suggests that it is empowering to learn about figures who made a difference. The text she cites does not try to convince her that the cynicism she feels towards the political process is misplaced. While many social studies textbooks perpetuate a "progress as usual narrative" (Loewen 1996), the critical textbook leans into narratives where historical figures such as Sojourner Truth channeled disillusionment into political action. Second, the exchange reiterates the point that

heroism is not reserved to individual actors. Both Serena and Anika cite segments that highlight moments of collective action taken by women specifically and express appreciation that the texts include these narratives. Third, their responses demonstrate the importance of gender in emancipatory pedagogies. While my work focuses primarily on race, their exchange illustrates the importance of incorporating other facets of identity into curricula and pedagogical practices as well. While Serena and Anika cited textbook segments that featured figures that shared their racial identity, focus group participants frequently described feeling empowered when other racial groups were emphasized.

Of the focus groups I facilitated, the African American students I spoke with in North Lawndale possessed the greatest degree of heterogeneity regarding pre-existing political interests. For example, Kiara volunteered for Elizabeth Warren's presidential campaign and reports significantly higher rates of intended participation (μ=4.4 on five-point scale) than her peers (μ=2.9). Contrastingly, Jasmine reports significantly lower rates of intended participation (μ=1.5) and, like Anika in West Town, expresses frustration that she has never been taught how to register to vote and has not learned about any of the presidential candidates. Taken together, their responses demonstrate that the critical textbook elicits feelings of empowerment among individuals with varying political dispositions.

> **MDN:** *What stood out to you after reading each of the textbooks?*
>
> **Jasmine:** *I like [the critical textbook] because it feels like... I don't know. It talks more about... just not about that person it talks about a whole bunch of people. Like, "here's the fight." I also liked that it talked a lot about Black women.*
>
> **Kiara:** *The [traditional textbook] made me feel angry because out of all my 17 years of schooling, I've never heard of [the Chinese Exclusion Act]. I also wrote that this is also infuriating because to treat people in such an inhumane way is, like, sickening. I say, however, I don't like how the Chinese Americans look weak [in the traditional textbook], because there's no talking or fighting back in the [traditional textbook]. However, in the [critical textbook] …I was very pleased to know that Chinese*

> *Americans fought back very strategically. I also assume this is what started the restaurants in Chicago's Chinatown, and [a Chinese restaurant] in my neighborhood...I really love how the text makes the Chinese Americans look like warriors for how they defended themselves.*

Like the participants highlighted from the West Town focus group, the references to collective action and Black women in particular catches Jasmine's attention. While one could argue that exposure to historical information in a social studies classroom is little more than a mundane experience for a high school student, Jasmine's recognition of a "fight" is a notable shift and may explain the higher rates of intended participation documented in the previous chapter. Moreover, this focus group segment suggests that the texts are impactful even for those who are already politically engaged. Kiara was shocked that she had never learned about the Chinese Exclusion Act and found narratives that emphasized the ways in which Chinese communities mobilized against discriminatory immigration laws to be empowering. In her words, they were "warriors" that "defended themselves."

While I cannot speak to and do not want to overstate the long-term effects of reading a single historical text, the focus group responses provide important insights for those interested in designing course curricula that is received more favorably and is more empowering for the young people who are asked to engage with it. It is also important to note that the students featured above do not represent the entirety of the focus group responses. In fact, several students mentioned that they would benefit from learning from leaders within their own community. Misael, a 17-year-old Mexican American stated that "It would be nice if they had new people like more recent to talk about, and how they changed things. Why they changed things. Maybe some people from around here." The historical narratives discussed in the focus groups are certainly not the only way to foster feelings of empowerment in social studies classrooms. Rather, the focus group responses demonstrate that students are drawn to information that lean into some of the frustrations and

challenges they are experiencing and provide insights for how marginalized groups of people have mobilized to make a difference.

Collective Identity

My conversations also illuminate the ways in which social studies content can impact how young people come to characterize various marginalized groups. For example, Paula and Kiara attend schools in different parts of Chicago and do not share the same ethnoracial identity but mention that the traditional textbook portrays Chinese Americans as "helpless" and "weak." Contrastingly, the critical textbook portrays them as "smart" and "like warriors." Thus, the ways in which young people come to internalize messages about their own racial identity (as well as the identities of others) is shaped in part by the content and materials an educator brings into the classroom.[63] Since positive perceptions of one's own racial group are associated with higher rates of political participation, it is important to consider whether collective action narratives that highlight the political efforts of marginalized groups come to characterize expressions of empowerment.

In West Town, Serena and Marcos suggest that the critical textbook excerpts contribute to greater feelings of empowerment. This exchange took place almost two minutes after I asked a broad question about which text the participants preferred. After multiple women in the focus group expressed that they liked seeing the perspectives of women included in the critical textbook, Serena and Marcos started talking about empowerment without being prompted. In the process, they express a sense of pride for not only the Mexican American laborers and activists whose racial

[63] This is undoubtedly true for how white youth come to think about other racial groups as well, a theme I will explore once I am able to conduct the focus group with white students.

and ethnic identity they share, but Chinese Americans as well. Most strikingly, however, their expressions of empowerment emerge alongside a desire to be more politically engaged.

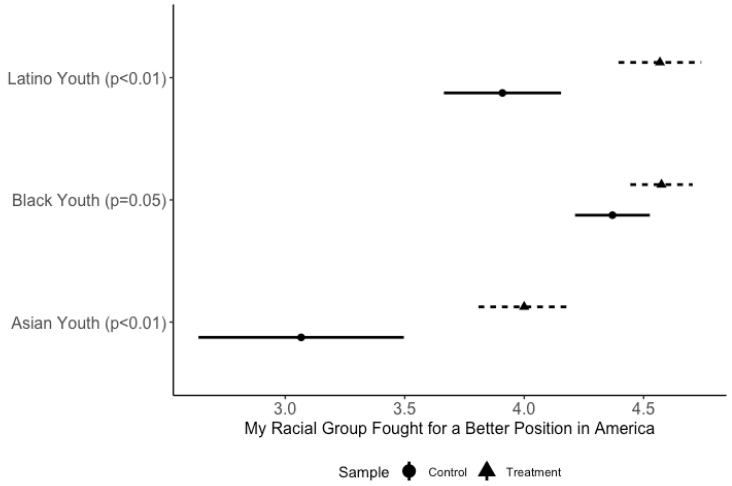
> **Serena:** *[The critical textbook] made me want to get more involved. They included several [labor] unions that have gotten political. Then even paragraph three mentions the [activism] of janitors. So even acknowledging them was like "wow." Even these people who are unheard in their career are getting involved… it made me realize that you can do anything.*
>
> **Marcos***: [The critical textbook] left you with an empowering message and it really hit me with the Chinese American section. Like all these different groups of people have been discriminated against in a country that they were just trying to call home. [The critical textbook] shows that Mexican and Chinese immigrants were able to get through it when they came out fighting.*
>
> **Serena:** *I agree with what Marcos just said about feeling empowered. [The traditional textbook] concludes that, ultimately, we're not able to make a difference because we don't vote and that doesn't influence American politics. Like damn, what about all these people in the [critical textbook] who were able to campaign for representation in local government and, like, advocate for bilingual education in schools?*

Serena's final comment, a statement echoed by multiple Latinx participants in this study, helps to synthesize one of the prominent normative claims of this research: civic learning should be empowering rather than dismissive of the political agency exercised by marginalized groups. While civic learning should push students to become aware of inequities in political participation, the claim that Latinxs have not influenced American politics is historically inaccurate and disempowering. Rather, in the words of the students, social studies curricula should provide examples of "how the unheard get involved." The students suggest that narratives of this kind are empowering and provide young people with the reflective space to determine if they desire to engage in politics. A similar finding emerged in the experimental results as well.

After each of the three textbook passages (Abolition, Chavez and the United Farm Workers, and Chinese Exclusions), the experiment participants were asked a series of questions that tested their comprehension of the material and aimed to gauge how they felt about each of the three racial groups (African Americans, Latinxs, and Asian Americans) addressed in each

passage. Figure 2 plots mean values for how Asian, Black, and Latinx youth responded to the following question when their own racial group was presented in the textbook segments: "How much do you disagree or agree with the following statement: Black/Latino/Asian Americans took an active role in fighting for a better place within American society."

Figure 2



As demonstrated by Figure 2, young people of color exposed to the critical textbook were more likely to agree that their own racial group fought for a better position in American society than those exposed to the traditional textbook. These additional data from the experiment, taken together with the focus group responses, bolster the claim that feelings of empowerment mediate the relationship between exposure to critical content and increased rates of intended participation. Similar themes emerged among the Black youth a spoke to in North Lawndale as well.

Linked Fate

Devon, a 17-year-old African American man, had been fairly quiet during the focus group I facilitated in North Lawndale. While he excitedly told me about his post-graduation plans before the focus group began, he at first appeared hesitant to engage in a conversation about politics. About halfway through the conversation, the participants came to the near unanimous conclusion that they preferred the more critical textbook. When I asked them to think about why they felt that way, the students suggested that the critical text seemed more factual because it included the perspectives of more individuals. As the conversation began to wind down, Devon jumped in and, much to his surprise, reinvigorated the conversation.

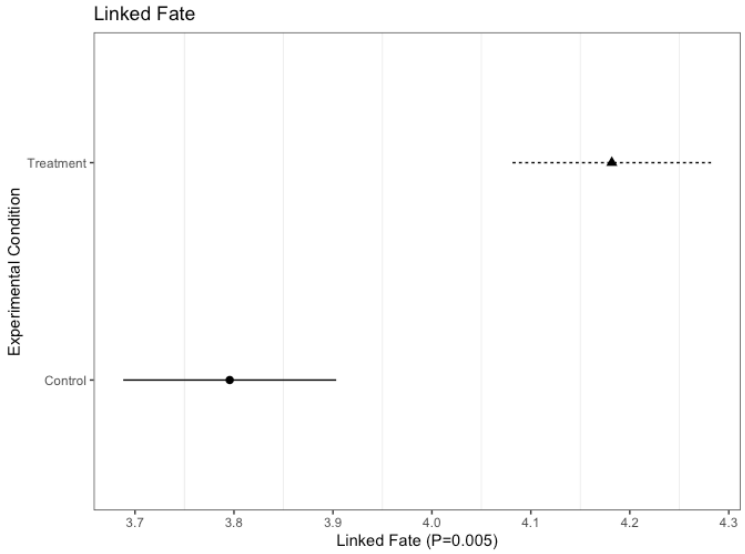
> **Devon:** *The [traditional textbook] has this heading, that talks about resistance, but the resistance, like I stated on my paper, is weak. It's like, "Oh, we are helpless. Like, we need somebody to come save us." Versus [the critical textbook] it's like, "Okay, we all got to use the tools we got to help ourselves*
>
> *[Snapping and nods of agreement from the other participants]*
>
> **Kiara**: *I think you just said it. Participate, not just sitting back and watching. I think the actual participation part is important. Using all the tools we can.*
>
> **Jada:** *[The critical textbook] just gives you more information about that. Period.*
>
> **Jasmine:** *Yeah. It gives out multiple perspectives. They rebel.*
>
> **Kiara:** *Yeah. Rebelling. Voting.*
>
> **Isaiah:** *Boycotting. Protesting.*
>
> **Kiara:** *They're practicing their rights. It's real. Like they own business, right? For the Chinese Americans. That makes you powerful too.*
>
> **Devon:** *They're out there practicing the Bill of Rights and I think [the critical textbook] is kind of encouraging us to do that.*

Like the focus group in West Town, Devon's expression of empowerment draws from the positive portrayals of African American activism in the critical textbook. He suggests that the text provides

him with a set of "tools" that can be used to take political action, a reflection that his classmates quickly build upon. It is worth noting that Devon's response also frames mobilization in collective terms, using "we" instead "I." In fact, the invocation of "we" is incredibly salient within the North Lawndale focus group transcript— "we" is used to talk about politics a total of 54 times over the course of a 40-minute conversation. This is distinct from the participants in West Town and West Ridge who only invoked "we" 14 and eight times, respectively. I contend that this unique verbal pattern among the study's Black respondents is the result of linked fate.

Earlier in the chapter I theorized that linked fate could frame the ways in which Black youth express feelings of empowerment since Dawson focuses on the importance of transmitting historical information from one generation to another (1994, 67). While I am unable to determine whether the themes and language patterns that emerged among focus group participants can be attributed to the texts (as opposed other external factors), additional experimental data do allow me to speak in more causal terms. After reading the textbook passages, students who participated in the experiment were asked the following question: "How much do you disagree or agree with the following statement? My own well-being is tied to the well-being of people who share my race/ethnicity?" Mean values for this response are reported for Black youth by experimental condition in Figure 3.

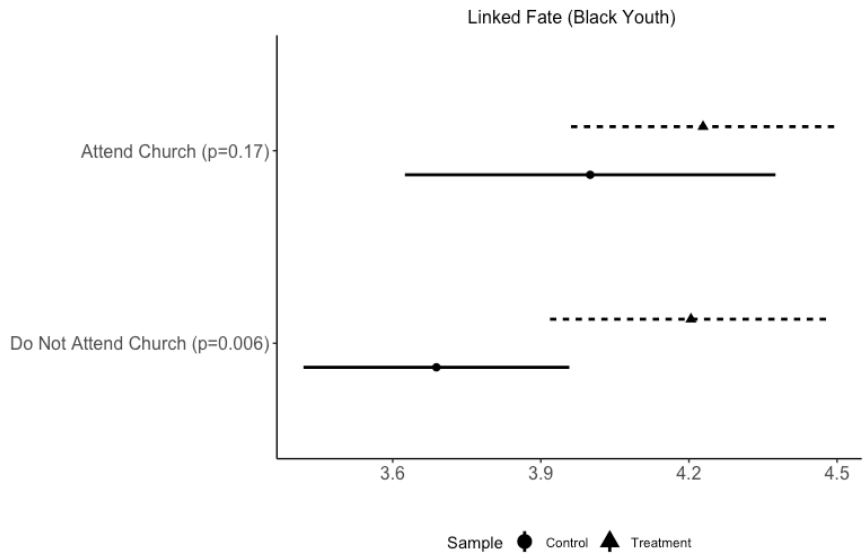
Figure 3



The experimental results demonstrate that Black youth who were exposed to the critical textbook content reported significantly higher rates of linked fate in the post-questionnaire than those exposed to the traditional text.[64] Additionally, this relationship was moderated by the participants' church attendance. As demonstrated by Figure 4, differences in reported rates of linked fate between Black youth who read the traditional textbook and those who read the critical text are only significant among those who *do not* regularly attend church. Since my theoretical aim is to clarify how schools, and social studies courses in particular, operate within processes of political socialization, this additional experimental result is critical. Specifically, it suggests that schools serve as important local level institutions that have the *potential* to bolster feelings of empowerment among racially marginalized groups if equipped with the right curricula and, as demonstrated by the next chapter, effective educators.[65]

[64] This hypothesis was pre-registered and can be located here.
[65] The experimental conditions did not contribute to significant differences in rates of linked fate among Asian, Latinx, and white youth. This is not surprising given Dawson's (1994) intent to explain important characteristics of Black political behavior specifically.

Figure 4



Conclusion

The focus group study presented in this chapter offers three important lessons. First, it demonstrates that social studies content has the ability to foster feelings of empowerment, which, in turn, contributes to higher rates of political participation. Examined alongside the experimental results presented in the previous chapter, I am able to highlight the importance of social studies *content* in processes of political socialization. Second, it shows that students are more than "empty vessels" waiting to be "filled" with knowledge (Freire 1970). While this chapter focuses on student responses to a handful of texts, this exercise suggests that students critically engage with and interpret course content (including but not limited to textbooks) while drawing from their own lived experiences. Indeed, the next chapter highlights the ways in which critical pedagogues utilize approaches beyond content to create transformational civic learning experiences for their students. Third, educational policies and school curricula are too often created and adopted with little input from those who are expected to engage with it on a daily basis: the students. The insights of young people should provide important checks on my own conclusions as a researcher and should inform

how policymakers think about how to improve civic education in the United States. Namely, while the focus groups demonstrate that critical content provides a promising path forward, they also speak to its limitations, particularly among Asian American students.

Coda: Implications for Policy and Practice

The results of the past two chapters demonstrate that critical content can help bolster feelings of empowerment as well as rates of intended participation among young people of color. However, the focus group responses reveal some limitations to take into consideration. In addition to adopting content that includes the perspectives of women and more modern, local heroes, the Asian American focus group participants emphasized the importance of seeing their own national origin group emphasized in the content they engage with. While the focus group excerpts included above demonstrate that historical narratives that center a single national origin group can be empowering, the null effect of the critical content intervention among Asian American participants in Chapter 3 suggest that something is missing from the excerpts utilized in this study. Near the end of my West Ridge focus group, all but one of the students reported that they preferred the more critical textbook. However, the group debated whether social studies content of this kind was enough to get young people more politically active; Kumar and Sujata were convinced, but Paula and Ken were significantly more skeptical. Since my theory emphasizes the importance of seeing one's own community take political action, I decided to ask about national origin more specifically.

> **MDN:** *I know that not all of you identify as Chinese American. How does it feel when a textbook uses Chinese Americans specifically as a way to talk about Asian Americans as a whole?*
>
> **Paula:** *It matters because you are excluding so many other nationalities when you are only focusing on Chinese Americans and there's a lot of events in history where America relied on these other*

groups of Asians. They didn't only associate with just the Chinese Americans. No, you're leaving out like an entire part of history.

Ken: *I feel like there's a lot of subcultures within different groups. For the Vietnamese the Northern or Southern dialects can be very different, the way we speak, and just generally in what we do. So, it's kind of weird that Chinese speak for Asians as a whole in history books when there's a lot of differences within specific Asian races.*

Sujata: *I think the reason why they use majority Chinese Americans is because it's more, I do not know if this is right, but when Americans think of Asian they normally thing like, "oh, Chinese because that's one of the hugest populations of Asians." I think that's why the majority of the textbooks use Chinese just because, I know in a similar way, each Asian has experienced some type …of racism or hardship of coming into America.*

MDN: *Did one of the texts seem more inclusive at towards multiple Asian identities?*

Kumar: *The second one related these problems to everyone, like Koreans and Japanese. They were clarifying that everyone faced [similar] problems [but] they didn't really describe what Korean and Japanese and Filipino people really did.*

The student reflections reiterate a central theme within the ethnic studies literature: curricula that emphasizes a student's own racial and national origin group are particularly effective in bolstering feelings of empowerment (see Vasquez 2005 and Halagao 2010). Obviously, this introduces a number of challenges for policymakers and curriculum developers, especially within incredibly diverse school districts such as Chicago Public Schools. I offer two suggestions to address this challenge.

First, theories of critical pedagogy, discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, emphasize the importance of allowing students to bring their own identities and lived experiences into the classroom. School leaders and teachers can incorporate this pedagogical tenant into their practice by embracing the curricular flexibility laid out by the National Council for the Social Studies C3 Framework. Since these standards specify an overarching set of skills rather than specific areas of content knowledge, schools and teachers are provided the space to tailor course content to meet the localized needs of students. In making this suggestion, it also important to recognize that other educational institutions, including the College Board, provide more specified

areas of content knowledge that are tested on Advanced Placement Exams. My second suggestion, informed by Natalia Molina's conception of racial scripts and counterscripts (2014), aims to provide a way for teachers to work around this constraint.

Molina suggests that *racial scripts* "highlight the ways in which the lives of racialized groups are linked across time and space and thereby affect one another, even when they do not directly cross paths" (2014, 6). As an example, Molina explores the ways in which different racial and ethnic groups are racialized in relation to one another. For example, "*Ozawa v. United States* (1922) and *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind* (1923), declared Japanese and Asian Indians ineligible for citizenship because they were not considered white, thus prompting nativists to hope that Mexicans might also be excluded from this narrowing definition" (2014, 6). In the process, Molina highlights *counterscripts* that focus on the ways in which marginalized groups resisted these decisions (much like the textbook excerpts discussed by the focus group participants).

Exercises of this kind not only closely align to the Historical Thinking Skills assed on the AP United States History Exam (see pg. 16 of the Framework), but create opportunities for teachers to incorporate perspectives that 1.) speak to their students unique experiences and histories and 2.) push them to examine how marginalized groups in the United States have been racialized in relation to one another. In the next chapter, I highlight other ways in which teachers work around these constraints in order to deliver transformative civil learning experiences to their students.

Chapter 5

Experts at Things They Know: How the Political Attitudes of Teachers Shape Their Pedagogy[66]

> *I'm not teaching you historical facts. That's not why I stepped into this role. We're here to talk about our human existence and how each of our stories is connected to one another. Sometimes I think there's a disconnect within the discipline of history at the academic level. There is an inability to connect the human experience. It's so technical: history needs to be presented in a specific way. It's often devoid of those human experiences, of folks that actually lived through the things that you're talking about…I try to reframe this. I get a handful of kids who say, "I'm bad at history." And I'm like "how are you bad at history? Do you not have a story about your life and your lived experience?" So, kids already come to the space with ideas about what history is and that it's about the memorization facts about random white folks who did X, Y, and Z. It's about unpacking that. Your ability to write, your ability to speak, your ability to rap, your ability to write poetry is history…What I want folks to walk out of here with the ability to do is to feel that they are informed and that they continue to be informed about how they exist in the world and how they exist in relation to others. At the end of the day, given all the identities that they have, I want them to know that they are human beings who deserve to be loved and who deserve to be cared for no matter what the world says about them…that's what drives what I do as an educator and it's been an evolving educational philosophy for me.*
>
> -David Williams (U.S. History Teacher, Nine Years in the Classroom)[67]

David Williams epitomizes what it means to be a critical pedagogue. He encourages his students to create knowledge rather than memorize historical facts; he invokes concepts such as power and structures when talking about race and identity; and he encourages his students to center their own experiences in the classroom. On the surface, one may conclude that his approach reflects years of training. His bookshelves are packed with texts about critical pedagogy—Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* among them. Yet, for as theoretically driven as his practice appears to be, like many critical pedagogues, David's approach to teaching cannot be explained by his training alone. While reflecting upon his nine years in the classroom, David attributes his teaching style to two factors:

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[66] The title of this chapter is taken from my interview with David Williams, the educator highlighted at the beginning of the chapter: "I thought that all history teachers knew everything about everything. And I was duped in high school because my history teachers were only experts at things that they knew…and the things that they cared about."

[67] In order to protect the privacy of the educators who so graciously invited me into their classrooms and took the time to speak with me, all names included in this chapter are pseudonyms.

first, watching his Black, working-class parents "negotiate different systems and structures" to secure "best access" for their son; and, second, educators who "built communities and relationships" and "integrated their own personal stories" into the content. In other words, David's lived experiences figure prominently in his pedagogical practice and, in turn, contribute to discernable effects on the democratic outcomes of his students. Of the 700 high schoolers who are included in this research (see Chapters 3 and 4), David's students reported the highest rates of intended participation in acts of public voice and the impact of his pedagogy continues to shape their political attitudes and behaviors even after they leave his classroom.

Samantha Ocampo and Alexandra Kowalski are student teachers in Chicago Public Schools. Both view education as inherently political, believe that discussions about race and identity are invaluable aspects of their classrooms, and center the experiences of their students while developing lessons. Both are also active political participants within their communities. Samantha, a Dreamer[68], is a part of an Asian American political organization that advocates for the rights of undocumented Chicagoans. Alexandra, the daughter of Romanian immigrants, is a member of an organization that facilitates conversations about race and oppression. Both of these young teachers were students in David Williams' United States History classroom.

In each of my conversations with teachers, I led with a question about why they decided to go into teaching. Before meeting with Samantha, I was unaware that she had been a student in David's classroom, let alone in his school. Yet, she immediately linked both her decision to become a teacher and her politicization to her experiences in his classroom. In the process, she

[68] Dreamers are individuals who live in the United States without official authorization since coming to the country as a minor.

explicitly named many of David's core pedagogical values and explained how they continue to shape her politics and teaching practice.

> *When I was in my junior year of high school, I was in David William's AP U.S. Class. The summer prior, before coming to school, was when everything happened in Ferguson. A lot of things were happening politically, including the murder of Michael Brown, but I guess I really didn't care; I wasn't really exposed to a lot of that. I didn't know how to think about these things critically, but when I got into Mr. William's classroom…he showed me how history is interactive and part of everything we are doing today, how it connects to us as people, why doing identity work in AP U.S. History is important, and why we need to talk about current events and social justice. I just never knew teachers could do this. I never knew that education could do this, and that was super eye opening for me…I couldn't tell you how I did on the AP U.S. History Exam, but I remember those experiences and I think that was the moment when I first became politicized. I knew at that moment that I wanted to pursue social justice work.*

While Samantha's experiences prior to entering David's classroom undoubtedly shaped her politics as well, she noted that these educational experiences, and her relationship with her teacher in particular, provided her with the skills to think more critically about her racial and ethnic identity as well as her undocumented status.

> *I would go into [David's] classroom and cry and be like, 'What's going to happen to me? Can I go to college?' He told me, 'Yes. You can still do all of these things, and it's going to be really hard. But I'm going to be there with you every step of the way.' Because of those conversations, I started doing a lot of immigrant rights work in Chicago. A lot of stuff around DACA. I got connected to a lot of folks first in the high school, and then we started a club at school. But I realized I wanted to go beyond all of that. We would fundraise at school and then we started doing stuff more in Chicago—more community work and social justice work outside of school.*

As Samantha's experiences demonstrate, there are multiple sites of political socialization—families, friend networks, and political organizations to name a few. However, I will highlight the ways in which schools, course content, and teachers impact the broader political socialization process – accentuating how educational institutions not only play a key role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of young people, as demonstrated by Chapters 3 and 4, but also in shaping the future practices of teachers as well. In Samantha's case, the social justice values that her teacher embedded into the content of her United States History course undoubtedly

contributed to her justice-oriented conception citizenship and her teaching philosophy as well (Westheimer and Kahne 2004).[69]

Like Samantha, I did not know that Alexandra Kowalski had been a student in David William's classroom when we sat down for our interview. However, my interview transcript documents my genuine surprise that his pedagogy was, again, explicitly mentioned. Strikingly, Alexandra also linked her experiences in David's U.S. History class to both her passion for racial justice and her belief that education is inherently political.

> *My senior year of high school I had a U.S. History teacher, David Williams, who really just changed the way I viewed the world that we live in…The way he is in the classroom is magic, and how he interacts with his students is so genuine and upfront, and unapologetic…When he sees students, he sees us as people, and he sees us as agents of change. He brings up topics that most teachers I would say are afraid to talk about… One time, I remember he broke the class up into two and did a really difficult reading, it was half in English, half in Spanish, Gloria Anzaldua's Borderlands. And we went through it, and we were just really talking about all of these different identities, but specifically race in America… That showed me that education is political. You cannot walk into a public education space and leave your ideologies at the door. That is, I will say, an injustice to your students. And so, he says what needs to be said, is unapologetically himself, creates this community and this space of growth and learning and love for students. He names things that should always be named and centers narratives that aren't frequently shared. I was very lucky to be in his class…Now I have a lot of tools to bring into my classroom because [of him] ... Sure, [education is] still very scripted to what the state requires and what that school needs. And, of course, there's job security issues that come with that. We still need a job! But at the end of the day, what's the point of education if you're not creating agents of change?*

Again, while Alexandra's experiences outside of school undoubtedly shaped her perceptions of education and politics, our conversation demonstrates that the skills she obtained in her United States History class ultimately allowed her to make sense of the experiences she discussed above.

> *I think I had a very unique childhood. I was raised by my dad's parents on the South Side of Chicago, just outside of Little Village. All of my friends spoke Spanish. And my mom wanted us to go to the schools in [the northside suburb] where she lived, so we commuted back and forth. So, I got to live*

[69] Westheimer and Kahne define justice-oriented citizens as those who "critically assesses social, political, and economic structures to see beyond surface causes" and "know about democratic social movements and how to affect systemic change," (2004, 240).

> *in this very privileged, suburban space in my education and then come home to the South Side and really see the differences in my own community… I got to see a lot of different things, but I didn't know what that meant at the time… I was taking mental pictures of all the things I was seeing and feeling…[but] entering… Mr. William's class was when I was awarded the language to describe all of the layers I was seeing… Now I know why we are one of the only Romanian families left in Little Village. There was white flight, but we couldn't afford to move so we stayed. But even with my family's hardships, I see my own privilege—I got to live the American Dream denied to so many of my students. I see how the world is set up and all the systems we have in place. I think that realization was the last tipping point for me to really be who I am today… [Now] this is the story that I tell my students.*

These educators' interwoven narratives animate four of the central themes of this book. First, social studies education plays a central role in processes of political socialization. The interviews above suggest that the stakes of social studies courses are not merely symbolic but hold the potential to transform students' political attitudes and behaviors and, for some, their own teaching practices. Second, the *content* of social studies classes is a crucial mechanism in this potential relationship between social studies classes and political attitudes and behaviors. Samantha and Alexandra explicitly link their politicization to their United States History class and continue to use race and identity as an important tool to understand the teaching of history. This suggests that the effects critical content explored in Chapters 3 and 4 persist into adulthood. Third, social studies is especially meaningful when it melds with the lived experiences of young people, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to take meaningful political action. Fourth, and most importantly for the purposes of this chapter, *teachers* have agency in these processes, drawing upon their own experiences to decide how and what to teach. This is not to say that context does not matter, but rather that perceptions of neighborhoods and institutional structures at school color the decisions made by teachers in their classrooms. In this chapter, I argue that the varying effects of content that emerged across institutional and geographical contexts in Chapter 3 may actually be the result of teachers' agency. David Williams, Samantha Ocampo, and Alexandra Kowalski are not entirely beholden to a curriculum guide, a district-

mandated textbook, or state standards; they are guided by their own perceptions of what should be taught in the classroom. Thus, it is individual experiences and perspectives that shape pedagogical choices, more so than institutional structures or organizational imperatives.

I arrived at these claims through a systematic study of how teachers decide what to teach in their classrooms and how to do it. I conducted in-depth interviews with 26 high school social studies teachers in schools across Chicago and obtained original survey responses from 300 Chicago area high school social studies teachers. Across the interviews and the survey data, it is clear that the lived experiences and attitudes of teachers figure prominently in their practice. I find that teachers who use critical pedagogy hold more liberal racial views, are less authoritarian in the ways in which they manage their classrooms, and possess more positive attitudes towards the neighborhoods where they teach. Understanding the factors that shape teachers' agency and decisions is important for the study of political socialization and also offers important insights for policymakers and practitioners hoping to make civic education more effective and inclusive for an increasingly diverse generation of young people.

In this chapter, I first explain how Freire's conception of critical pedagogy may manifest in the practices of high school social studies teachers. While Chapters 3 and 4 explore how critical pedagogy can inform the impact of *content,* this chapter considers other aspects of teaching including the political dynamics that emerge in a teacher's classroom management techniques that their approach to building relationships with their students. Second, I explain why it is so important to study the political attitudes of teachers with regard to their pedagogy. While schools and neighborhoods undoubtedly structure the ways in which educators teach, I argue that teachers are powerful agents who draw from their own attitudes and experiences while working with students. Third, I discuss the benefits of using a mixed-methodological approach for exploring this topic

and explain the procedures used to survey and interview teachers. Finally, I use survey and interview data to explore how the experiences of social studies teachers in Chicago shape both their political attitudes and teaching practices. The insights gained from this chapter offer a way forward for policymakers and practitioners interested in making civic education more inclusive and effective for young people in an increasingly diverse America.

Centering the Voices of Teachers: What We Know About Critical Pedagogy and Ideologies

Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* suggests that human beings require that their identities and experiences are recognized and affirmed (1968). However, this affirmation is constantly interrupted by oppressive systems that exploit and harm marginalized group members. For Freire, the only way to surmount this oppression is to have the oppressed lead the struggle to dismantle those systems (43-47). Critical pedagogy suggests that education can be a site for liberation through the development of critical consciousness—the ability to reflect and act upon the world in order to transform it (Seider et al. 2017). Chapter 3 suggests that critical pedagogy must utilize content that 1.) explains the systemic and historic nature of oppression, 2.) centers the experiences of marginalized groups, and 3.) sheds light on the extra-systemic political actions taken by the oppressed in pursuit of their own liberation. In addition to the selection of content, however, critical pedagogy also provides a more comprehensive guide for explaining the dynamics between students and teachers.

First, critical pedagogy critiques what Freire describes as the "banking model" of education in which teachers "fill" students with facts that they are required to memorize and recall (1968, 71-72; see also Foucault 1977). In this model, teachers choose program content (without

consultation) that students must adapt to, position their (professional) authority against the freedom of their students, talk while students listen "meekly," and view their own knowledge as superior to that of their students (71-73). Second, Freire characterizes dialogue between students and teachers as an act of "love, humility, and faith" that fosters mutual trust and critical thinking: "authentic education is not carried on by 'A' *for* 'B' or by 'A' *about* 'B,' but rather by 'A' *with* 'B,' mediated by the world" (91-92). For Freire, this relationship is inherently political: "one cannot expect positive results from education or political action which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by the people" (95). Put into practice, this suggests that the lived experiences of students should help guide the selection of course content, shape their understanding of history, and create an educational experience where young people are encouraged to use critical reflection about their understanding of the world in order to take meaningful action (87).[70]

While one may view critical pedagogy as a radical approach for reforming civic education in the United States, a number of educational studies have identified the development of critical consciousness as one of the primary goals of secondary education (see Ladson-Billings 1995, Seider and Huguley 2009, Levinson 2012). Indeed, critical pedagogy and more traditional approaches to civic education emphasize similar themes including open classroom environments where students talk about current events, critical thinking, and informed political action. What makes critical pedagogy distinct from traditional approaches to civic education is its emphasis on preparing students from marginalized backgrounds for political action by taking their preexisting knowledge and lived experiences seriously (Cohen and Luttig 2019). In order to demonstrate how

[70] Freire refers to the interaction of action and reflection as "praxis" (87).

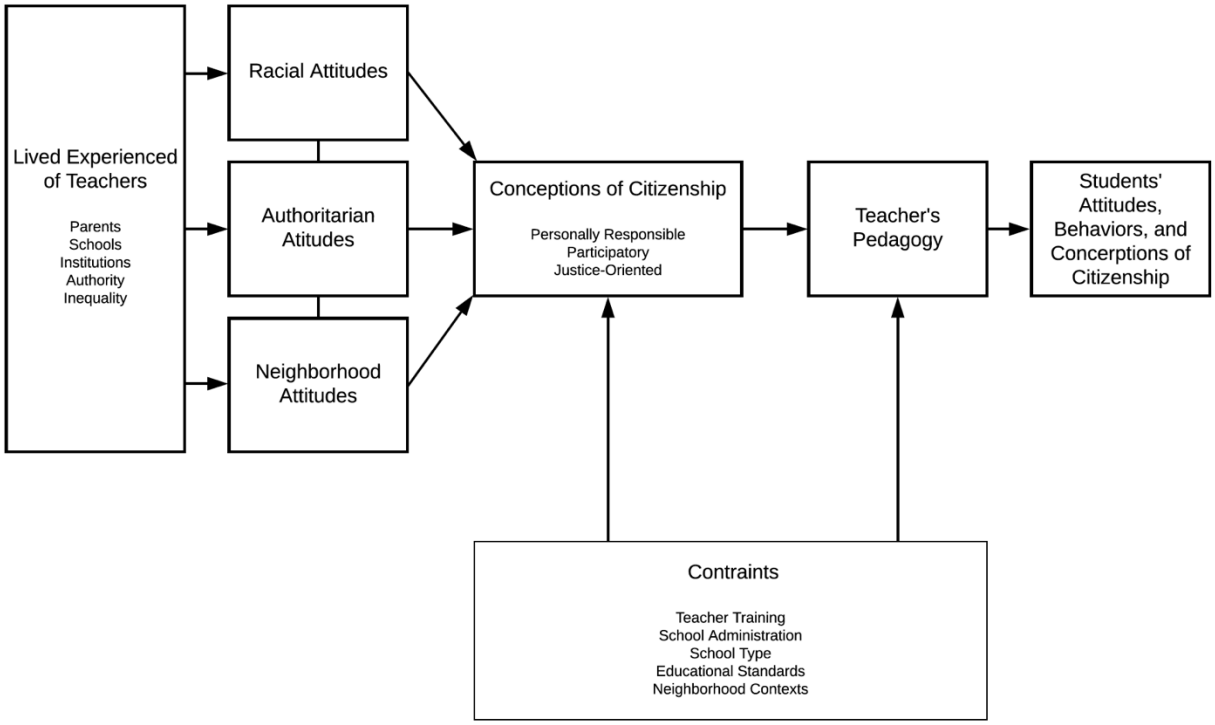
critical pedagogy manifests in Chicago area schools, I examine how teachers' distinct attitudes towards race, authority, and neighborhood contexts manifest in their educational practice.

In doing this, I do not mean to suggest that contextual factors such as neighborhoods and the institutional characteristics of a given school level do not matter. Rather, I argue that the ways in which teachers navigate these contexts are greatly informed by their lived experiences and preexisting attitudes. This chapter argues that the variations in curricular interventions observed across schools and neighborhoods in Chapter 3 can be better understood by highlighting the agency of teachers in the selection and teaching of content. In other words, rather than presenting an overly deterministic account of the ways in which structural factors constrain behavior, I hope to highlight the ways in which teachers serve as street-level bureaucrats, translating education policy into practice using their own attitudes and experiences as a guide (Prottas 1978, Lipisky 2010).

Political Attitudes and Educational Practice

Figure 1 summarizes processes of political socialization among teachers and students. As demonstrated by the figure, a number of factors undoubtedly contribute to a teacher's pedagogical choices in the classroom, including their attitudes and lived experiences. However, in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of a teacher's agency within this process, it is important to account for competing theories that place greater emphasis on constraints.

Figure 1: Political Socialization Among Teachers and Students [71]



First, the ways in which a teacher conceptualizes "good citizenship" is likely to influence how they teach about civic and political participation in their classroom. While my conversations with teachers demonstrate that their lived experiences and political attitudes play a major in how they talk about good citizenship, a number of institutional factors contribute to these definitions as well. Some schools, administrations, and curricula aspire for students to become *personally responsible citizens* who obey laws, pay taxes, and pursue independent (and largely non-partisan) acts of public service such as recycling and giving blood (2004, 240). This "ideologically conservative conception of citizenship" is widespread not only in civic education curricula but in

[71] It is plausible that schools as important neighborhood-level institutions also affect the attitudes of teachers and students. While I find no significant relationship between school- and neighborhood-level variables and a teacher's racial attitudes, it appears that school type (e.g. vocational schools) contribute to more authoritarian attitudes and contextual various (e.g. teacher's race matches the school's racial or ethnic majority) contribute to more favorable attitudes towards the neighborhoods where they teach. However, I am unable to assess the causal direction of these relationships in this chapter.

school-level initiatives that award rule-following students with "citizenship" certificates (Westheimer and Kahne 2004, 237; Levinson 2012, 42). Other programs, such as the Democracy Prep Charter School Network, may push students to become *participatory citizens* who seek to "solve social problems and improve society…[by] actively participating and taking leadership positions within established systems and community structures" (Gill et al. 2018; Westheimer and Kahne 2004, 240; see also Dewey 1916). Others still may utilize techniques such as Youth Participatory Action Research to encourage students to become *justice-oriented citizens* who seek to improve society by "questioning, debating, and changing established systems that reproduce patterns of injustice overtime" (Duncan-Andrade 2006, 167; Westheimer and Kahne 2004, 240).[72] While existing research touches upon the role of teachers in shaping these programs, they do *not* identify any underlying attitudes or experiences that may contribute to divergent pedagogical choices. Rather, they tend to evaluate how existing curricula or school structures shape the democratic outcomes of students (e.g. Pasek et al. 2008, Gill et al. 2018). Understanding the agency of teachers in shaping the selection and implementation of content is a critical component of the broader political socialization process at play within schools.

Broader neighborhood contexts are also important to take into consideration when evaluating how a teacher conceptualizes good citizenship. Existing work suggests that young people who grow up in more politically competitive locations are more likely to participate later in life (Pacheco 2008). Additionally, community characteristics such as diversity and rates of social capital contribute to competing motivations for why people participate (Campbell 2006).If

[72] While Westheimer and Kahne acknowledge that it is possible for curricula to emphasize multiple types of citizenship, the programs they observed tended to emphasize a single dimension (2004). I share their view that social studies courses should be designed to emphasize both participatory and justice-oriented citizenship; courses of this kind would not only push students to identify the roots of pressing political challenges, but would equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to pursue political action both within and beyond formal political institutions.

place has direct effects on the political socialization process, it is also possible that context shapes how a teacher comes to understand good citizenship and, in turn, contributes to how they go about addressing this topic in the classroom.

Second, constraints such as teacher preparation programs, educational standards, school districts, and administrators shape a teacher's content knowledge as well as the instructional choices they have available to them in the classroom more directly (Wineburg and Wilson 1988, Cuban 1991). For example, students within the Democracy Prep Charter Network register voters on the streets of Harlem and are required to pass a U.S. Citizenship exam in order to graduate from high school (Pondiscio 2018). An academic program that comprehensively structures how students should participate may limit a teacher's agency in selecting and implementing content that emphasizes forms of participation that diverge from this model. Furthermore, even if teachers are passionate about teaching social studies content, institutional factors may push them to adopt instructional techniques such as close reading exercises that aim to reinforce more high-stakes subject areas or tested content rather than civic learning (Ravitch 2014). Understanding the pedagogical choices of social studies teachers is critical since different instructional techniques are shown to yield different democratic outcomes among their students (Martens and Gainous 2013, 13).

Existing scholarship demonstrates that the lived experiences of teachers are important to consider when examining how their educational practices influence the lives of their students. An educator's student teaching experiences (Lortie 2002) as well as their interactions with authority figures within and beyond the walls of school (Greenwalt 2014) contribute to both the development of their attitudes as well as their perceptions how a teacher "should be" within the classroom (Kenyon 2017). In turn, the teacher-student dynamics that emerge from their pedagogy go on to

shape the ideologies of students as well as their conceptions of citizenship (Westheimer and Kahne 2004, Tobin, Hseuh, and Karasawa 2011). This relationship, summarized below in Figure 1, is especially important to consider with regard to a teacher's perceptions of three topics: race, authority, and neighborhood contexts.

First, understanding how a teacher develops their racial attitudes is an important factor to take into consideration with regard to their pedagogy. As earlier chapters demonstrate, social studies content that views race through a critical lens has the ability to bolster rates of intended political participation among young people of color. While existing work suggests that teachers working in urban settings such as Chicago possess a heightened sense of race consciousness and tend to rely on structural arguments for explaining inequality (Levine-Rasky 2001, Nieto 2003, Harding 2006), my classroom observations and analyses of course syllabi demonstrate that these beliefs do *not* consistently emerge in a teacher's day-to day practice. Indeed, existing work suggests that even if teachers do possess a heightened sense of racial consciousness, this does not ensure that they employ pedagogical practices that are transformative for racially marginalized students (Allen 2015, 79). Rather, it is important to consider how their attitudes operate alongside their lived experiences to shape their pedagogical practices. Since content that engages critically with race is associated with favorable democratic outcomes for young people of color, it is important to understand whether a teacher's racial attitudes and experiences contribute to the selection and implementation of content of this kind.

Second, since critical pedagogy emphasizes dynamic and open relationships between students and teachers, it is important to consider how a teacher's perceptions of authority manifest in their practice. Authority refers to the right to give orders and enforce obedience. However, authority in the classroom also "relies on legitimacy and trust" (Kenyon 2017, 96). If students

begin to question whether a teacher's actions are legitimate, they can begin to lose trust in authority more broadly. Since schools represent the first site in which many young people interact with government authority, the relationships that emerge between students and teachers in the classroom are inherently political (Foucault 1979). An educator's attitudes towards authority are important to think about since they likely shape how they build relationships, how they facilitate conversations in the classroom, and speak to how they believe young citizens *should* act. For example, teachers who value control in their classroom may be less likely to allow their students to engage in contentious conversations about politics and may believe that responsible citizens do little beyond obeying laws and pursuing non-partisan acts of civic engagement within their communities (Westheimer and Kahne 2004). Indeed, young people who attend schools with punitive or even authoritarian disciplinary policies tend to report higher rates of political distrust and lower rates of political participation during adulthood (Bruch and Soss 2018). This is especially pronounced among people of color and young women of color in particular (2018). Contrastingly, young people enrolled in classrooms where a teacher maintains an open-classroom environment defined by open conversations about politics tend to possess higher rates of political knowledge and report greater intent to vote (Niemi and Junn 1998, Torney-Purta 2002, Campbell 2008, Hess 2009, Gainous and Martens 2012, Dassonneville et al. 2012, Martens and Gainous 2013, Hess and McAvoy 2014, Persson 2015). Since teachers tend to report *less* support for free speech than non-teachers with similar rates of educational attainment (Slater 2008, 48), it is important to understand whether their orientations towards authority also manifest in their pedagogy as well.

Finally, I explore how teachers' attitudes towards the neighborhoods where they teach shape their practice. Since theories of critical pedagogy suggests that students should be making sense of their world and lived experiences within the classroom, understanding how a teacher develops their attitudes towards the communities where their students live is an important factor in understanding their practice. Indeed, neighborhood characteristics such as median-income, violent crimes rates, and access to local amenities such as grocery stores, coffee shops, and movie theaters are strongly associated with a teacher's decision to apply to a school (Duncan and Murnane 2011, 377). Additionally, the racial makeup of a school, and the concentration of Black students in particular, tends to be a stronger predictor of whether a teacher applies for and remains in a position than the salary (Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin 2002; Duncan and Murnane 2011, 377). Since neighborhood characteristics appear to figure prominently in the vocational decision making of teachers, it is worth exploring whether these factors shape their pedagogical practices as well. If teachers possess negative attitudes towards the neighborhoods where they teach, they may be less willing to invite students to incorporate their lived experiences into the classroom. With this is mind I hypothesize that teachers who **H_1**) possess more liberal racial attitudes **H_2**) are less authoritarian, and **H_3**) hold more positive assessments of the neighborhoods where they teach will be more likely to adopt aspects of critical pedagogy in their practice.[73]

Mixed-Methodological Approach

In order to explore whether a teacher's attitudes towards race, authority, and neighborhood contexts shape their practice after accounting for other institutional factors summarized in Figure 1, I utilize a mixed methodological approach that combines survey data from 300 social studies

[73] Hypotheses for this chapter were pre-registered and can be accessed here.

teachers in the Chicago area with 26 in-depth interviews. Pairing survey and interview data is useful for two reasons. First, the survey results allow me to assess whether the theorized relationship between attitudes and pedagogy is robust. Since the educators included in this research teach across dozens of communities spanning nearly 50 miles, it is important to explore whether these attitudes shape their pedagogy across a variety of geographical and institutional contexts. Secondly, the interviews allow me to tell a more comprehensive causal story that survey data alone cannot accomplish. Rather than simply identifying trends between the attitudes of teachers and their pedagogical practices, a mixed-methodological approach allows me to describe the socialization process through which teachers develop the attitudes that ultimately inform their behaviors in the classroom.

Survey Methods

To assess the relationship between attitudes and pedagogy, I distributed an original survey to high school social studies teachers in the Chicago area in June of 2019 using a listserv maintained by the Social Studies and Civic Engagement Department at Chicago Public Schools (CPS). Data were also collected from teachers in two suburban Chicago school districts over the same period. The survey respondents average 39 years of age and have spent an average of 13 years in the classroom.[74] Consistent with national trends, the majority of these teachers are white and half are women (Quintero 2018). Over ninety percent of the educators included in the survey sample teach in schools in the City of Chicago and just over 80 percent teach in schools that predominantly serve young people of color. While the racial makeup and the number of years teaching of the educators included in the survey sample matches that of the teachers who allowed

[74] Full distributions of these data can be viewed in Figures 1-3 of the Appendix.

me into their classrooms to conduct the experiment presented in Chapter 3, the survey sample is more representative in terms of gender and geography: the survey participants teach in 81 communities in the Chicago area (compared to 12 in the experiment sample) and half are women (compared to 38 percent in the experiment sample). This information is summarized in Table 2.[75]

Two dependent variables were measured in the survey. The first dependent variable is a critical pedagogy index. Participating teachers reported how frequently they utilized 16 teaching practices in their classrooms on a 1-5 scale ranging from "Never" to "All of the time." Each of these practices relate to the four components of critical pedagogy previously discussed: open classroom environments, critical thinking skills, critical content, and formal analyses of power structures (Mahmoodarabi and Khodabakhsh 2015; see also Rasmussen 2014). Each of these practices was then combined into a single critical pedagogy index utilized in the analyses below (α=0.90). The overall mean score on the critical pedagogy index is 4.0. While this average is fairly high, it is important to mention that one of the domains of the critical pedagogy index— fostering critical thinking skills (μ= 4.2)—is a common goal among more traditional pedagogues as well. A full break down of these items can be viewed in Table 1.

[75] Chicago Public Schools does not maintain records of teacher demographics across content area or grade level. As a result, I am unable to assess whether the data is representative of Chicago area social studies teachers as a whole.

Table 1: Critical Pedagogy Battery

Index	Survey Items	Alpha	Mean
Open Classroom	• A teacher should participate in class dialogues and discussions as a learner among learners. • Teachers are **not** the only source of knowledge in the classroom. • Teachers must share their authority and responsibilities with students in the classroom. • Teachers should use dialogue and open communication as one of the main activities in the classroom for sharing ideas. • Learners should be involved in the process of selecting topics and activities that are focused on in the classroom.	α=0.81	μ= 3.8 (1-5 Scale)
Critical Thinking	• A teacher's main role is to teach students not only to learn more independently but also to think and act in a more independent way. • Teachers should encourage and help learners to create learning opportunities for themselves. • A major role of teachers is to improve learners' critical thinking skills.	α=0.82	μ= 4.2 (1-5 Scale)
Critical Content	• Teachers should decide on their teaching strategies and techniques based on learners' specific characteristics (e.g., age, race, gender, needs, and interests). • Ideal textbooks are those which are designed locally and in the light of learners' real life. • The content of courses and books which are commonly taught in Chicago are often unrelated to learners' real-life concerns and problems. • Teachers should be critical of the cultural, social, and political aspects of textbook content while working with students. • Environmental, social, and political issues are suitable topics to focus on in the classroom.	α=0.76	μ= 3.7 (1-5 Scale)
Analyses of power structures	• One of a teacher's main roles is to make students aware of inequalities in society. • A major role of a teacher is to help students develop their own understanding of whom they are and their place in the world.	α=0.81	μ= 4.2 (1-5 Scale)
Combined	--	α=0.90	μ= 4.0

The second dependent variable measures textbook choice, which serves as a proxy for whether a teacher prefers more traditional or more critical content. Teachers were asked to rate the likelihood that they would use one of two textbook excerpts regarding the abolitionist movement in their classrooms using a 0-100 scale. The high schoolers discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 were exposed to these same passages. As a reminder, the first excerpt was taken from a traditional

United States History textbook (*The American Pageant)* and focuses on the political actions of white abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison. The second excerpt was taken from a more critical text: Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States.* In contrast to the first textbook excerpt, the second text addresses the activism of Black abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth as well as the grassroots resistance mounted by enslaved Black folks more broadly. After teachers evaluated both texts, I calculated their preference by subtracting their rating for the critical textbook from their rating for the more traditional one. If the difference between the two excerpts is positive, the teacher prefers the traditional text; if the difference is negative, they prefer the more critical one. These textbook segments can be viewed in full in the Appendix.

In order to assess the relationship between pedagogy and attitudes specifically, I examine three independent variables. Participating teachers responded to a series of questions about three topics: race, authority, and their perceptions towards the neighborhoods where they teach[76]. Racial liberalism was measured using an index of four items (α=0.63). Teachers were asked to report their level of support for affirmative action policies, their level of skepticism toward racial discrimination, and their support for prohibiting racist speech at school on a 1 to 7 scale (Druckman, Howat, and Rothschild 2019). Lower scores correspond to lower levels of racial liberalism. Overall, teachers reported fairly high rates of racial liberalism (μ= 5.8). However, as the results presented below will demonstrate, racial liberalism possesses greater explanatory power than political ideology overall. While 25 percent of teachers in the sample identify as extremely liberal, only 10 percent report the highest score on racial liberalism scale. A full break down of these items can be viewed in Table 3 of the Appendix.

[76] I also tested Patriotism as an independent variable. However, this battery did not yield any significant results.

Authoritarianism was measured using an index of four items (α=0.71). Teachers provided their preferences for four sets of child-rearing values: independence or respect for elders; obedience or self-reliance; curiosity or good manners; and being considerate or well-behaved (Feldman and Stenner 1997). The non-authoritarian responses (independence, self-reliance, curiosity, and being considerate) were coded as "1" while the authoritarian responses (respect for elders, obedience, good manners, and well-behaved) were coded as "3." Teachers who reported that both qualities were important were given a score of "2." Overall, the teachers in the sample are slightly more authoritarian than non-authoritarian (μ= 1.6). A full break down of these items can be viewed in Table 3 of the Appendix.

Neighborhood value, the final attitude of interest, was measured using an index of five items (α=0.72). Teachers were asked to evaluate a number of neighborhood attributes including perceptions of safety, crime, and collective efficacy on a 1 to 5 scale (Cohen 2005). This scale measures whether a teacher views the neighborhood where they teach through a deficit lens. Participants reported their perceived level of safety in the neighborhood, how much value area residents placed on education and collective action, and whether they felt their school was in a "good," "bad," or "okay" neighborhood. Overall, the teachers included in the survey data expressed slightly more positive evaluations of the neighborhoods where they teach (μ= 3.5). However, the interview data demonstrates that teachers who espouse a strong affinity towards these neighborhoods are more likely to tailor content to reflect the lived experiences of their students in the classroom, even if the area is under resourced or has high rates of violent crime.

In order to account for competing theories that may explain a teacher's pedagogy, four series of control variables are included in the OLS regression analyses presented in Table 3.[77] First, at the individual level, I control for age, gender, race, educational attainment, and political ideology. This series of variables also allows me to account for variations in a teacher's training and experience by controlling for the number of years teaching and whether participants trained through Teach For America or another alternative certification program. Existing work suggests that teachers who train through national service programs such as Teach For America show significantly lower rates of class-based and racial resentment (Mo and Conn 2018), which may contribute to divergent pedagogical practices. Second, I control for three school-level variables that may impact the extent to which a teacher is able to implement more critical teaching practices: school discipline, school leadership, and teacher autonomy. Since existing work suggests that more authoritarian school climates are associated with depressed rates of political participation among young people of color later in life (Bruch and Soss 2018), it is essential to take these institutional characteristics into account as potential factors that shape how teachers decide how and what to teach within their classrooms. Third, five additional variables are included to account for variation in teaching practices that emerge across various institutional contexts: school type; a school quality score that accounts for factors such as student achievement, graduation rate, and attendance; whether the principal is a person of color; the school's racial demographics; and whether the race of the teacher matches the school's racial majority/plurality. Finally, a series of neighborhood-level variables are also included to account for contextual factors beyond the school, including whether the teacher lives in the neighborhood, rates of violent crime, the percentage of low-income

[77] Since some neighborhoods are more highly represented in the survey data, clustered standard errors are used throughout in order to account for potential heteroskedasticity at the school level.

residents, and the neighborhood's mobility rate. A summary of each of these control variables is included in Table 5 of the Appendix.

Interview Methods

In order to understand the broader socialization process, I aimed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the lives of 26 social studies teachers in the Chicago area. Twelve of these teachers allowed me to spend hours observing their teaching and interactions with students, provided me with copies of their course syllabi and textbooks, and discussed their educational philosophies with me in between classes.[78] The 700 high schoolers included in Chapters 3 and 4 were the students of these 12 educators. Fourteen additional social studies teachers were recruited using snowball and convenience sampling techniques (Mosley 2013). This allowed me to learn from the experiences of a more diverse set of educators teaching across a variety of neighborhoods in Chicago, a source of predicted variation in teaching style. Throughout this process, I recruited teachers who could speak to a diverse set of teaching experiences across racial, gender, and neighborhood lines. While social studies teachers tend to be overwhelming white and male (Quintero 2018), Table 1 highlights my efforts to learn from the experiences of a diverse sample of teachers. Forty percent of the teachers I interviewed in Chicago are people of color compared to sixteen percent of social studies teachers nationally. Similarly, while 58 percent of the nation's social studies teachers are male (Quintero 2018), only 48 percent of the social studies teachers I interviewed are men.

[78] Eleven of these twelve teachers agreed to let me record our interviews. The twelfth agreed to have a conversation but did not want it recorded because they were actively applying for other teaching jobs. However, I was able to conduct a recorded interview of one other teacher at this school in order to corroborate the twelfth teacher's responses.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics and Geographical Distribution of Samples

Interviews

Race and Ethnicity of Teachers
Asian American (12 percent)
Black (12 percent)
Latinx (16 percent)
White (60 percent)

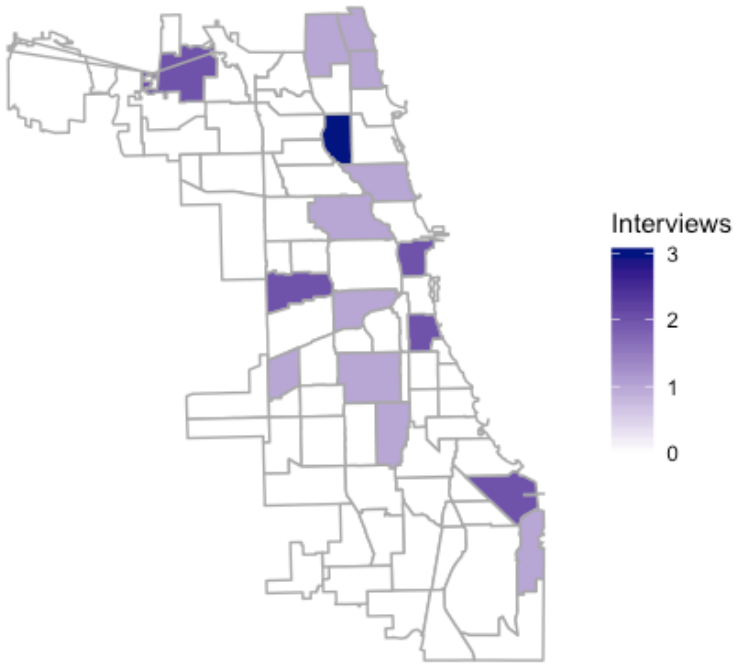
Gender
Woman (52 percent)
Man (48 percent)

Average Age
35 Years

Average Years Teaching
10 Years

Racial and Ethnic Makeup of Schools
Plurality/Majority Asian (<1 percent*)*
Plurality/Majority Black (25 percent)
Plurality/Majority Latinx (36 percent)
Plurality/Majority White (28 percent)

Suburban vs. Urban
Chicago Suburb (16 percent)
City of Chicago (84 percent)



Survey

Race and Ethnicity of Teachers
Asian American (3 percent)
Biracial (2 percent)
Black (9 percent)
Latinx (9 percent)
Native American (<1 percent)
White (76 percent)

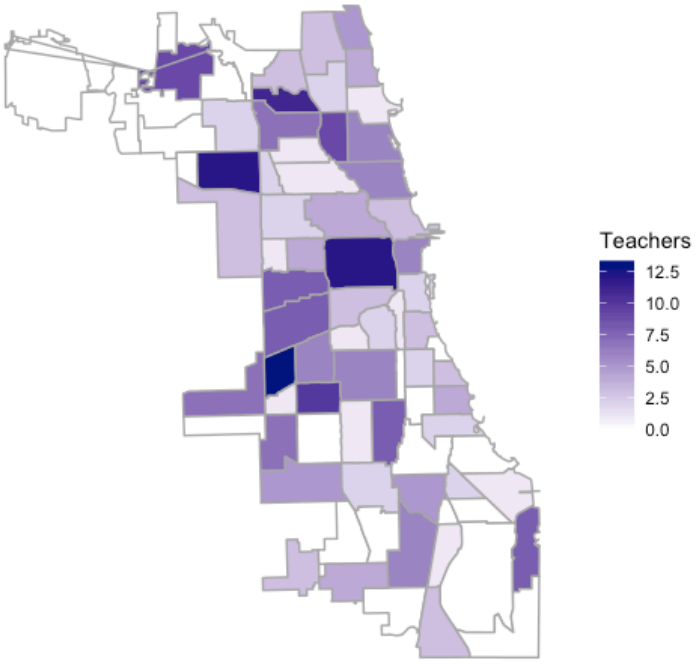
Gender
Woman (50 percent)
Man (48 percent)
Non-Binary (2 percent)

Average Age
29 Years

Average Years Teaching
13 Years

Racial and Ethnic Makeup of Schools
*Plurality/Majority Asian (*4.2 percent*)*
Plurality/Majority Black (35.9 percent)
Plurality/Majority Latinx (46.6 percent)
Plurality/Majority White (10.8 percent)

Suburban vs. Urban
Chicago Suburb (7 percent)
City of Chicago (93 percent)



This approach allows me to better theorize about whether distinct pedagogical practices emerge across various identity groups and geographical contexts (Klar and Leeper 2019, 419-431). The teachers included in the interview sample are slightly younger (μ=35) and have spent fewer years in the classroom (μ=10) than those included in the survey. While the majority of these individuals teach at schools that predominantly serve young people of color, I intentionally interviewed a greater proportion of teachers who teach at predominantly white schools in order to assess whether distinct trends emerge depending on the demographic makeup of the school. This information is summarized in Table 1.

My conversations with teachers touched upon a number of themes including why they decided to become a teacher, their training, and perceptions of their school environments. The primary goal of these conversations, however, was to better understand how their attitudes toward race, authority, and neighborhood contexts shape both and their conceptions of good citizenship (see Figure 1) as well as how they select course content and teach in their classrooms (Westheimer and Kahne 2004). In the process, I also asked a number of questions that aimed to assess alternative explanations such as institutional influences. To do this, I asked each teacher a number of school-focused question, including whether they felt they had sufficient autonomy at their school and whether there were topics they wish they could teach about but did not due to institutional constraints.[79] I used this information to determine which teachers actually use critical pedagogy in their classrooms versus those who possess the capacity to do so but hold back for various reasons. *The teachers I identify as critical pedagogues possess two characteristics: they define good citizenship in justice-oriented terms and actually carry these beliefs into their practice.* For

[79] The interview protocol used during these interviews is included in the Appendix.

example, David Williams not only talks about social-justice terms but actually utilizes practices in his classroom that his students are able to link to their politicization years down the line. However, it is also important to define who *does not* qualify as a critical pedagogue

As an example, Noah Jeong is a third-year world history teacher in the Archer Heights neighborhood on Chicago's Southwest Side. In many ways, Noah could be characterized as a critical pedagogue based on a narrow view of his interview responses. Though his school serves majority Latinx youth, he is hyperaware of considering his Palestinian students when developing lessons. Feeling underrepresented in social studies content as a Korean American, Noah sought to teach content that spoke to the unique experiences of some of his students using Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as a guide. However, as his interview responses demonstrate, institutional constraints such as the concern of his school administrators ultimately prevented him from continuing with the lesson.

> **Noah Jeong:** *I used to begin the year [with a] ...really difficult reading— Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire. So, there's a segment in the reading that I did about how… the banking method of education is oppressive, and it doesn't create human beings out of us. And essentially it comes down to the fact that being a human being for Paulo Freire is to think critically. So that being said, that kind of dictates the way that I want to teach… So two years ago I did a unit on the Israel and Palestinian conflict, and the reason why I included that is because we have a small portion of Palestinian kids that go to our school, and I just wanted to empower them and make them feel known, especially because the other Latino kids might not know about [this conflict]. I don't think I did a good job with it, but most of the conflict came from the fact that one of my colleagues is Jewish, and so he and the administration are speaking into my ear about what things I should mention, what things I shouldn't mention. It made me anxious, so I decided to drop it.*
>
> **MDN**: *What do you think it would take for you to feel confident in the idea that this is what you should do?*
>
> **Noah Jeong:** *Approval from my colleagues, approval from my department I should say. Approval from my administration and approval from the parents of my students…I guess I don't want to get in trouble. I am not one to necessarily rock the boat, if someone gave me the green light, I think I would teach it.*

Due to the institutional constraints Noah faces, he does not deliver the critical content he ideologically believes in and, as result, is not characterized as a critical pedagogue in this chapter.

In many ways, Noah is unique in that he is one of only three teachers who explicitly mentioned being told not to teach certain subject matter during my interviews. However, my ability to differentiate between his educational philosophy and educational practice reflects the great care that I took to analyze each conversation included in this study. Following each interview, transcripts were coded into thematic categories in NVivo and analyzed across a number of demographic characteristics including race and gender as well as various institutional factors such as autonomy. This approach allowed me to gain a more comprehensive understanding of whether a teacher's lived experiences contribute to the development of various attitudes that ultimately manifest in their pedagogical practice.

I next discuss the extent to which critical pedagogy manifests in the teaching practices of various social studies educators in Chicago. In the process, I highlight how the lived experiences of teachers shape their attitudes towards authority, race, and neighborhoods. While doing this, I do not aim to chastise traditional pedagogues; the teachers I spoke to care deeply about their students and take their work seriously. However, I argue that if school districts and educators are committed to preparing an increasingly diverse generation of young people for active political participation, exploring the attitudes and educational practices of critical pedagogues provides a potential way forward. Their experiences demonstrate that preparing young people for active participation within American democracy is not merely about effective implementation of engaging lessons; it takes a great deal of personal reflection. These educators do not shy away from expressing their values in the classroom. In fact, their attitudes guide how they select content and implement content as well as how they build relationships with their students.

Assessing the Relationship Between Attitudes and Pedagogy

The evidence presented in the regression analyses included in Table 3 suggests that a teacher's attitudes towards race, authority, and neighborhood contexts are significantly related to both dependent variables: critical pedagogy and textbook choice.[80] Recall that critical pedagogy is defined by dynamic and open conversations that center the lived experiences of students and critical thinking exercises in which students are encouraged to think about power and how to combat systemic oppression. Teachers who possess more liberal racial attitudes ($p<0.01$) and hold more favorable views towards the neighborhoods where they teach ($p<0.05$) are *significantly* more likely to utilize critical pedagogy in their classrooms even after accounting for a variety of other factors such as teacher training, school type, school performance, and neighborhood characteristics.[81] Specifically, a one-point increase on both the racial liberalism and the neighborhood value scale is associated with a 13-percentage point increase on the critical pedagogy battery.[82] The largely null-findings among the school- and neighborhood-level control variables suggest that social studies teachers in Chicago have more control over their pedagogical choices than existing scholarship might suggest.

I also find a teacher's racial attitudes and attitudes towards authority to be significantly associated with distinct preferences regarding the selection of course content. As demonstrated by Table 3, teachers with more liberal racial attitudes are significantly more likely to prefer the critical

[80] A full list of the variables featured in Table 2 can be located in the Appendix.
[81] More information regarding the various survey items included in various attitude indices can be located in Table 2 of the Appendix.
[82] Interestingly, though neighborhood value is significantly associated with critical pedagogy, this is the not the case for the selection of more critical content. Rather, it appears that neighborhood value is most strongly associated with formal power analyses, one of the four domains of the critical pedagogy index. This suggests that teachers who ascribe greater value to the neighborhoods where they teach are significantly more likely to engage in conversations pertaining to inequalities and helping their students make sense of their place in the world ($p<0.05$). These results are located in Table 7 of the chapter Appendix.

textbook ($p<0.01$).[83] To see this dynamic in action, consider, Samuel Reed, a white, 19-year teaching veteran who reports slightly more liberal racial attitudes ($\mu=6$) than the sample as a whole ($\mu=5.8$), claims that the critical text's emphasis on collective action would be particularly meaningful for his Black students.

> *I like [the critical text], especially for my Black students. I think what's significant is that it is more a bottom up approach to abolitionism. I think that stands out more to me, and it's a better read, because it deals with this idea of Black people having to struggle constantly with the unconscious racism of white abolitionists. They also had to insist on their own independent voice. I think this would resonate strongly with [my] students…We're trying to build up adults who are independent. This is a struggle...It's important to [give students] a sense of what [abolitionists] were doing. They were marginalized in society and had to fight to get these changes…So, we need to have a deeper appreciation for that. It's those sacrifices made by individuals that make a difference.*

Contrastingly, teachers who possess more authoritarian views are significantly more likely to prefer the traditional textbook ($p<0.05$). For instance, Michael Smith, a white, sixth-year educator in a predominantly Black neighborhood on the West Side of Chicago, reported the highest possible value on the authoritarianism scale, suggesting that he values control and obedience in his classroom over curiosity and independence. His racial attitudes are also less liberal ($\mu=3.5$) than the sample as a whole ($\mu=5.8$).

> **Michael Smith:** *Yeah, I think I would lean more towards [the traditional text]. Again, there's a lot of [the critical text] that I look at it and it sort of almost helps that victim narrative. Especially this second paragraph. It's like, "Oh, you're a Black woman. You face a triple hurdle. The white women don't even support you in this."*
>
> **MDN[84]:** *How would you respond to a colleague who was like, "Well, Black women in the abolitionist movement did face a triple hurdle?" Rather, how would you respond to someone who framed that as more of an acknowledgment of historical fact?*
>
> **Michael Smith***: I would always go back to the objective and our essential questions. What are we actually trying to teach them about? If our objective was for them to understand the early days of the abolitionist movement, I would argue that bringing gender into it may distract from that.*

[83] Ideology and racial attitudes have been shown to be very stable (e.g. Cunningham, Preacher, Banaji 2001). Thus, I am not concerned about reverse causality.
[84] MDN refers to the initials of the author: Matthew David Nelsen

Table 3: Results from Survey Analyses

	Dependent Variable:	
	Critical Pedagogy	Textbook Choice
Racial Attitudes	0.130***	-6.657***
	(0.041)	(2.304)
Authoritarianism	-0.035	9.539**
	(0.082)	(4.643)
Neighborhood Value	0.130**	-0.012
	(0.058)	(3.294)
Teacher of Color	-0.028	2.197
	(0.098)	(5.545)
Woman	-0.123	-5.269
	(0.070)	(3.939)
Political Ideology	0.015	0.143
	(0.033)	(1.852)
Teach For America	0.098	10.401
	(0.148)	(8.257)
Alternative Certification	-0.031	-19.279***
	(0.115)	(6.314)
School Leadership	0.217***	3.957
	(0.055)	(3.106)
Charter School	-0.087	-1.543
	(0.122)	(6.877)
Vocational School	-0.085	6.741
	(0.152)	(8.718)
Selective Enrollment School	0.266	3.936
	(0.149)	(8.368)
Military Academy	-0.020	-3.082
	(0.189)	(10.592)
Magnet School	0.185	-2.986
	(0.190)	(10.134)
Suburban School	0.498	-18.757
	(0.264)	(14.670)
School Quality Score	0.056	-3.812
	(0.080)	(4.428)
Principal of Color	0.230***	0.939
	(0.087)	(4.856)
…(see remaining control variables in the Appendix)		
Observations	235	237
R^2	0.281	0.206
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

These findings suggest that a teacher's attitudes (rather than institutional factors such as school type and academic performance) are strongly associated with the content that they use in their classrooms. Throughout our conversation, Michael shared that he is frequently at odds with his colleagues of color who critique the ways in which he teaches Black history. In his own words, his colleagues aspire to "create little rebels" while he hopes his students work within pre-existing systems. His decision to teach in this way is striking given that he works within an institutional setting where many teachers encourage their students to work beyond formal institutions. In fact, many of Michael's students have experienced gun violence in their communities and, as a result, have played an active role in the March For Our Lives movement at both the state and national level. However, both my conversations with Michael and his survey responses make clear that he believes that his students should value obedience and work within the confines of existing institutions, so it is not particularly surprising that he is attracted to content that emphasizes more traditional forms of systemic political participation even within an institutional setting that values activism.

> *It's difficult because part of [my students'] cultural identity has been shaped by 'fight the system, fight the powers that be.' So, a lot of them have a chip on their shoulder in terms of we're not going to sell out or be a part of this. I don't want to participate in a government that doesn't represent me sort of an attitude. A lot of that stuff is beyond our control, right? But if we could start one generation with a shift of like, "No. We can work within the system to change things."*

Michael believes that he is doing what is best for his students. However, as earlier chapters demonstrate, the selection of traditional content that emphasizes systems-justifying forms of political participation and the experiences of white political actors does little to bolster rates of participation among young people of color. While Michael may genuinely want his students to be able to change the world, the attitudes that inform his teaching practice may actually prevent him from achieving this goal.

The results included in Table 3 also demonstrate that other factors contribute to a teacher's pedagogy as well. Teachers who hold more favorable assessments of their school's administrative team and those who work with a principal of color are more likely to utilize critical pedagogy in their classrooms. For example, while David Williams tends to emphasize his own experiences in shaping his practice, he also notes that his school's administrative team, including his Black principal, also plays a role.

> *Folks who come from marginalized spaces, we approach politics in a certain way…for me there is always a focus on how things that happen in political arenas impact me and my family and people around me. So, I think all of that has convoluted on my focus towards critical pedagogy. But also, the work that [my school and principal] have done around race has been influential in that too. So, I don't think I would have been as far along in my own journey had it not been for some of the professional development experiences and administrative that I've had here.*

Though institutions such as schools undoubtedly shape the ways in which educators teach in their classrooms (see Bruch and Soss 2018), the survey data as well my conversations with teachers demonstrate that institutional factors can still be interpreted through a lens that emphasizes a teacher's agency. David explicitly states that his lived experiences as Black man are foundational in his decision to utilize critical pedagogy in his classroom. That said, the fact that his school's administration facilitates conversations about race at school undoubtedly makes it easier for him to adopt such an approach in his own classroom. In other words, while I do not contend that institutional factors such as school type and school leadership do *not* matter, my conversations demonstrate that teachers possess a great deal of agency within their own classrooms. In David's case, his school's commitment to facilitating conversations about racial equity reinforces many of his own attitudes, which allows him to easily teach justice-oriented content within his classroom. However, Michael's experience demonstrates that a racial justice message at the school level alone

is not enough to ensure that students are actually taught this way in their classrooms. Teachers ultimately decide what is taught in the classroom.

These results also yield two interesting attitudinal findings. While existing studies suggest that Teach For America teachers possess significantly lower rates of class-based and racial resentment than traditionally trained teachers (Mo and Conn 2018), I find no evidence to suggest that these teachers are more likely to bring these attitudes into their educational practice. Similarly, political ideology alone does not appear to shape how a teacher selects and teaches content in their classroom. While the vast majority of the teachers in the survey identify as liberal, my results demonstrate that racial attitudes serve as a better estimate for whether or not a teacher utilizes critical pedagogy in their classroom.

While these results are compelling on their own, what remains unanswered is how attitudes associated with the adoption of critical pedagogy are ultimately developed. In the section that follows, I use interview responses to place the experiences of teachers front and center. In the process, I demonstrate how the lived experiences of teachers map onto their political attitudes, ultimately guiding how and what they teach in the classroom.

Talking About Teaching

Throughout my conversations with teachers, I pushed them to reflect upon the experiences that ultimately shaped the ways in which they teach in their classrooms. While the survey results suggest that teachers with more racially liberal views and more positive evaluations of the neighborhoods where they teach are more likely to use aspects of critical pedagogy in their classrooms, I am better able to evaluate the strengths and limitations of this mechanism by turning to the lived experiences of teachers. For example, consistent with existing work addressing urban

educators, nearly every teacher I spoke to brought up the structural nature of racial inequality at some point during our conversation (Levine-Rasky 2001, Nieto 2003, Harding 2006). However, this does not mean that these teachers actually carry these attitudes into their pedagogical practices.

Two themes emerged that set critical pedagogues apart from their peers.[85] First, many of these individuals have a deep sense of social justice that they developed prior to entering the classroom; they invoke the language of activists and do not shy away from uncomfortable conversations about race. Second, they were taught to view history through a race-based lens. In other words, these teachers do not merely seek to incorporate more people of color into their content but use race to talk about the structural nature of inequality and distributions of power in the United States. While the survey results presented in Table 3 yield no significant relationships between race, gender, and pedagogy, my conversations demonstrate that the majority of educators who possess these characteristics are women and people of color.

Racial Attitudes and Pedagogy

Catherine Murphy is a white, 30-year teaching veteran and is more racially liberal (μ=6.25) than the average teacher included in this research (μ=5.8). Her workstation is decorated with handmade signs with phrases such as "Black Lives Matter," "Slavery Still Exists," and "Stop Police Brutality" (See Figure 2 of the Appendix). Across the room, her male colleague displays one of Donald Trump's "Make America Great Again" campaign signs above his desk. While walking past the sign, she shakes her head and tells me that "this is exactly why we need to push white kids to talk about race." She is well aware of the challenges that arise when trying to push

[85] I categorized ten educators as promoting *personally responsible* citizenship, eight as promoting *participatory citizenship,* and eight as promoting *justice-oriented citizenship* (Westheimer and Kahne 2004).

her predominantly white students to think critically about this topic, especially in the context of the northern Chicago suburb where she teaches. The historically white neighborhood is diversifying rapidly, and while Asian American students are expected to become the largest racial/ethnic group at the school within the next five to seven years, she explains the importance of emphasizing Black narratives as she reflects upon how to talk about race in her American Studies course.

> *I believe that under-represented voices should be heard. The question we're getting at now is which voices? Which kinds of stories? But we're only realizing now how problematic it is that every character of color is oppressed…It's going to be uncomfortable when we're addressing racial issues. It just is. But I think there are ways we can do it better. One of the things that we've dug into…and something we've heard from some of our Black students…is that every time we talk about race or every time we read a book about a Black character, it's always the experience of a slave... And I think we've been teaching white savior narratives without realizing that that's what we were doing. So, we've incorporated more empowering narratives from Black authors like Ta-Nehisi Coates: The Water Dancer and Between the World and Me. I think it's super important that kids see themselves in what they're reading. And even though we have a small Black population at our school, when teaching American Studies, I have a special obligation to teach the Black experience because the Black experience is so central to the American experience, especially when we are talking to students about race.*

Catherine's philosophy parallels Freire's emphasis on selecting content that allows students to reflect upon on the actions of marginalized groups. Her choices also demonstrate that she thinks critically about the feedback she receives from students and uses this information to guide her practice. Rather than teaching the same texts year after year, the concerns of her Black students ultimately inform her decision to rethink course content.

Catherine also differs from many of her colleagues in that she does not shy away from controversy in the classroom. Her co-teacher, another white woman with four years of teaching experience, reports the highest possible score on the racial liberalism scale (μ=7.0), but mentions that she avoids teaching controversial subject matter out of fear that she will upset the parents of her students. Contrastingly, Catherine continues to select content that reflects her belief that

students should not have to "unlearn" history that fails to accurately grapple with race, even if it upsets their conservative parents. This decision demonstrates that Catherine's racial views are not merely abstract, but figure quite prominently in her educational practice.

> *Something happened to me when my son was four and he was not yet in Kindergarten. I had the day off for Columbus Day. And my son asked me, 'Who is Columbus?' And I was like, 'Well, shit.' I have to tell him. And this is the first time he's going to hear this story. And so, I have this one opportunity. Remember, I was of a generation that learned one thing and had to unlearn it later. I read Howard Zinn's A People's History of the United States and was like, 'What? That happened?' I [also] didn't learn about the internment of the Japanese Americans when I was in high school. That was not part of the curriculum back then. So, I learned a history that I had to sort of unlearn later. And I didn't want my son to have to unlearn anything. And so, I started with the various [indigenous] nations. I was very conscious of the fact that I had this opportunity to shape his understanding of the story in this way. And so, now I always have lessons where I ask my students, 'Okay, imagine you've got a kid. You're a parent, it's 15 years from now. You've got this kid who's four years old. And they ask you, 'Who was Columbus? What would you tell them?'*

When I asked Catherine to think about how she ultimately arrived at this approach to teaching, she talked about two things: good citizenship and patriotism. Unsurprisingly, Catherine's conception of these topics differs from the celebratory "progress as usual narratives" frequently presented in civics courses (Loewen 1996); she does not romanticize national holidays, great American heroes, or national symbols. Rather, she believes that good citizenship and patriotism are rooted in critical analyses of one's identity and one's history, especially with regard to whiteness. She also mentions her affiliation with the Religious Society of Friends, which emphasizes equity and racial justice. These values ultimately pushed her towards additional pedagogical resources such as Courageous Conversations, which aspire to provide educators with the resources needed to facilitate interracial dialogues within their classrooms (Singleton 1992). In other words, Catherine's commitment to racial equity and self-reflection derive from her lived experiences and inform both her conception of citizenship as well as the ways in which she teaches about race within her classroom.

MDN: *What does it mean to you to be a good citizen, then?*

Catherine Murphy: *I've come to this painful realization that there's no such thing as a positive white identity. Whiteness is predicated on oppression. And, yet, when I'm checking boxes, that's the only box I can check. I am white, I have to own that at the same time that I really do understand that that has no meaning except the oppression of people who were not white. So, I think any love of country has to acknowledge that.*

Of the 17 white high school social studies teachers I interviewed, only four took a justice-oriented approach to talking about race in their classrooms.[86] Catherine Murphy was the *only* educator I spoke with who engaged in critical conversations of this kind within a majority white school. Unsurprisingly, teachers of color were more likely to talk about race while discussing the design and implementation of course content. While a teacher's race was not significantly associated with critical pedagogy in the survey results, this theme was quite salient in the interviews.

Marinna Acosta immigrated to the United States as a teenager from Colombia and has spent 24 years in the classroom. She works at a South Side school in Bronzeville, a historic African American neighborhood dubbed the "Black Metropolis" in the early 20th Century due to the high concentration of Black-owned businesses. Like Catherine Murphy, Marianna discusses the importance of centering the history of Black Americans in her United States History course. She believes that centering race in her classroom is not only an essential component for helping her students become engaged citizens but for building their enthusiasm for the course material.

MDN: *What does it look like, in your opinion, for your students to be good citizens?*

Marinna Acosta: *I want them to value equality. We just finished our Constitution Unit and had a discussion about whether American ideals work for African Americans and it was incredible because at the end they finally came to the conclusion that the only way to solve these problems is to become active and to vote for the things they want changed. So, yes, I want them to know about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. I want them to vote, but in the past I also had some kids join*

[86] Westheimer and Kahne define justice-oriented citizens as those who "critically assesses social, political, and economic structures to see beyond surface causes" and "know about democratic social movements and how to affect systemic change," (2004, 240).

> *the Black Lives Matter movement on their own and that's amazing. We want them to become part of society. We want them to become assets. So yeah, we really push them to be active.*
>
> **MDN:** *How do you go about building that sort of culture in your classroom?*
>
> **Marinna Acosta:** *You get to know your students and see what works for them and what doesn't work. What do they like, what do they don't like, what motivates them. You look to them and ask them questions. I do a lot of surveys and stuff like that…I get to know their interests, and treat them like I want to be treated basically… I go mostly for what's relevant to them. So, I do a lot of Black history…and the Black point of view on events. The [African American Studies teacher] focuses on modern Black social movements such as Black Lives Matter where I spend a lot of time on Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement. So, they get a good mix of Black history. I also try to teach about figures they may not have learned about before. We all love Rosa Parks, but I like to bring in new figures they can relate to. We also talk about the history of the school itself [since] it's a historic building. They love that...They find it fascinating.*

Marianna's responses demonstrate that her students play a central role in selecting the content that she teaches in her classroom. When I asked her to explain where she thought that approach to teaching came from, she did not mention her teacher training, but the ways in which she was socialized both at home and in school. "I guess that's who I am. I give everybody the benefit of the doubt, I want to know what interests them, and I look for their humanity. So, I just treat them like I would like to be treated. That's how I always have been because that's how I was raised and how I was taught in [grade] school." Like Catherine, Marianna also talks about seeking out additional resources that allow her to teach subject matter that is meaningful for her students. When she reflected upon her own history education, Marianna recalls learning a lot about Latin American wars and famous generals and mentions that her efforts to learn more about African American history was largely an independent effort.

> *I am a member of the Gilder Lehman Institute of American History. So, I take any class that I see on African American history. I took just about everything they offer. Since I'm Latina and Colombian, I didn't know a lot of this stuff from my own education. So, I had to read a lot and try to look for resources. I use [The City University of New York's] Debating U.S. History Resources a lot. Or the 1419 Project. So, I have quite a few resources I look through and the it's like "okay what's going to work with the kids?"*

Marianna's commitment to teaching history through a critical racial lens is also evident in her analysis of the history textbooks described above. When I asked her about her preference, she

immediately critiqued the implicit racial messaging of *The American Pageant.* "Is this actually a textbook that kids are reading? It's like a soap opera and so biased toward [the perspectives of white abolitionists]. That's scary. I don't think I would even consider showing this text to my Black students. The exclusive focus on white abolitionists is biased and a dangerous thing."

Catherine and Marinna's approaches to teaching are vastly different from Michael Smith, the white, racially conservative educator on the West Side of Chicago introduced earlier. While Catherine and Marianna try to incorporate the concerns of her students into their lessons, Michael frequently mentions the "misconceptions" his students bring into the classroom. Following the election of Donald Trump, for example, many of his students expressed concern that they would lose access to the federal food stamp program known as SNAP. When I spoke to Michael in June of 2019, he claimed that he did "a pretty good job at combating these crazy narratives" by teaching his students about the 13th Amendment and the various powers reserved to states within a federalist system. His explanation is striking for several reasons. First, Michael's attempt to use history to clarify his students' "misconceptions" overlooks the discriminatory policies (e.g. Jim Crow) enacted to harm African Americans following the ratification of the 13th Amendment and within a federalist system. Second, framing his students' concerns as "crazy" not only downplays the value of their lived experiences, but ignores the fact that candidate Trump promised to make cuts to the SNAP program on numerous occasions throughout the 2016 campaign cycle. As it turns out, the concerns of his students were neither "misconceptions" nor "crazy." Six months following our interview, the Trump Administration announced new rules that restricted access to the SNAP program, causing between 90,000-140,000 Illinois residents (and 50,000 residents in Cook County alone) to lose access to the program (Schulte 2019).

Unlike some of the other teachers already introduced, Michael *does not* view history through a race-based lens and expresses frustration that many of his Black colleagues choose to teach in this way. Instead, he tends to emphasize the economic aspects of certain historical moments, something he attributes to the high concentration of labor history courses he took as an undergraduate student.[87] This approach to history continues to shape how Michael interacts with his students and co-workers.

> *I know I have made people uncomfortable with the way I teach slavery…[because] I teach about the economics behind it, and the money part of it. I've had colleagues that have been upset with those sort of lessons...They see the institution of slavery in America as a totally race-based thing and believe it should be taught through that race-based lens…They see me as throwing a wrench into that story and undermining the identity of Black people in the country now and how [slavery] continues to affect them now. I consider myself to be a liberal person, but I personally don't believe that I should impart those beliefs on my students. I think my job is to present them with multiple opinions, facts, information, and let them develop their own identity. There have been a lot of colleagues here who have very, very liberal agendas that they push upon the students. So, if there's any sort of uncomfortable conversations about curriculum, some of it can get down to that. I'm not comfortable pushing this agenda on our students. I want them to make up their own mind. I also want them to be exposed to the other side and the arguments that they're making because I believe if you don't hear the other side, then you can't debate them. You're just ignorant.*

These conversations shed light on the broader socialization processes that inform a teacher's racial attitudes. While variations undoubtedly emerge from one individual to another, two things are clear. First, teachers who adopt critical pedagogy in their classroom tend to possess a deep sense of social justice that they carry into their teaching practice. These teachers do not merely possess racially liberal values, they actually center them in their pedagogy. Second, critical pedagogues have also been learned to view history through a critical racial lens. Catherine and Marianna have sought out additional educational resources that explicitly grapple with race while Michael teaches what he knows: an economic understanding of American history that derives from his undergraduate education.

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[87] "I did appreciate how that [my program] was content first. My degree is in history and then my minor is in secondary ed. My favorite courses were all the labor history courses I took during my sophomore and junior years."

Authority and Pedagogy

The experiences of Catherine, Marianna, and Michael also highlight the role of authority. Namely, Catherine and Marianna view the perspectives of their students as an invaluable resource that helps guide the trajectory of their class. Incorporating student input in this way is an undeniable exercise in democracy in the classroom (Dewey 1916, Freire 1970). Michael Smith, on the other hand, characterizes the concerns of his students using deficit-minded rhetoric. Rather than building upon the political knowledge his students do possess (Cohen and Luttig 2019), he views this knowledge as a series of "misconceptions" that needs to be "addressed" by invoking canonical accounts of United States history. The decision to place his professional authority against the knowledge of his students is exactly the sort of pedagogy Freire cautions against in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* Consistent with the survey results, educators like Michael who value authority in their classrooms appear to be more likely to gravitate toward traditional accounts of American history that are disempowering to young people of color (Epstein 2009, Levinson 2012)

Contrastingly, critical pedagogues relinquish some of the control typically reserved to them in order to promote student voice in the classroom. When teachers center the concerns of students, the content of the course frequently departs from the "progress as usual" and "white hero" narratives frequently embedded into social studies content (Loewen 1996, Levinson 2012) and becomes more critical in nature, especially within schools serving marginalized communities. To be clear, these classrooms are not without expectations or norms. Rather, the norms and expectations within the classrooms of critical pedagogues are generated by *both* students and teachers rather than by teachers *for* students. When I asked teachers to think about how they leverage their authority in classroom, critical pedagogues *consistently* talked about the importance

of building relationships with their students and the need to show empathy towards the multilayered challenges they bring into the classroom.

Brianna Boyd was born and raised on the city's South Side and is a product of Chicago Public Schools. She is an 11-year teaching veteran and has spent the entirety of her career teaching African American History and African American Studies within the Bronzeville neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago. Throughout our conversation, Brianna emphasized that her own experiences in the city's public-school system as well as her identity as Black woman figure quite prominently in how she chooses to engage with her Black students. While Brianna was not one of the survey participants, her teaching style suggests that she maintains an open classroom environment that centers the voices of her students; her classes are largely discussion based and regularly incorporate her students' concerns. She also serves as a mentor for other teachers at her school who struggle with behavior management and is known for her engaging teaching style.[88] When I asked her to think about how she came to teach in this way, she emphasized that she places the immediate needs of her students front and center.

> *Behavior management starts with relationships. You can't tell a child that they should stop talking as the first thing that you say to them. You have to ask them how their basketball game was, you have to make sure that they ate last night. So, I think it's important to have relationships with students and kind of go from there… if a student is behaving poorly oftentimes it's because something has happened, and so I usually start there. I usually don't start with addressing whether they were talking and laughing or playing. I start with, "How's your day going?" Because usually, you can kind of get to the bottom of some things once you figure out what's going on with them and what happened to them in their day and what was said or done to them that they feel was egregious. So, the relationship piece, I can't speak enough on that, it's very important… Sometimes a child is hungry, they've had a rough night, [or they're] couch surfing, meaning they're homeless and kind of living from place to place. In order to be an effective teacher, recognizing those concerns has to come first.*

[88] Marianna Acosta also teaches at Brianna's school and explicitly mentioned her exceptional classroom management skills.

Brianna's response is inherently anti-authoritarian. When challenges arise, she responds by inquiring about her students' lives rather than doling out punishments. The time she invests in building relationships also contributes to how her students act politically. By taking their lived experiences seriously, she is able to create an educational space where students are able to talk openly about their concerns and think through ways to address those challenges head on. Though the majority of Brianna's students face socioeconomic challenges that might undermine their ability to pursue civic and political activities (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995), they are active within the Black Lives Matter movement and organize initiatives to address concerns at their own school. Whether intended or not, Brianna's educational approach is similar to participatory action research and lived civics initiatives where teachers reserve space for their students to bring their lived experiences and concerns into the classroom and use their input to craft content for the course (Cohen, Kahne, and Marshall 2018; Levinson 2012, 224-232; Duncan-Andrade 2006, 167).

> **Brianna Boyd**: *We lost our school librarian here due to budget cuts, the students organized a read-in. So, they walked out of class and they went to the library, they grabbed a book and they just posted up in the hallway and they read for the rest of the day…they actually attracted enough attention where we funded that position for another year and a half. So, I was very proud of them for that.*
>
> **MDN:** *Do you think the skills that they learned in your civics class or other social studies classes played a role in their ability to organize something like that?*
>
> **Brianna Boyd:** *Absolutely, I won't take all the credit, but I think that just hearing about Black Lives Matter and the die-ins that they were seeing, things like that, that I was bringing into the classroom.*

Tony Russo is a white, third-year, United States History teacher in the South Chicago neighborhood. He trained to become a New York City police officer before moving to Chicago to begin Teach For America. When I asked Tony how he managed to make such a big leap from law enforcement to education, he mentioned that he always viewed both careers as attempting to

improve society and build relationships with communities.[89] However, Tony's approach to relationship building is starkly different from educators like Brianna Boyd. While Brianna believes that building relationships precedes the teaching of content, Tony suggests that his past efforts to learn about the challenges his students bring into the classroom made him a "soft" and ineffective educator.

> **Tony Russo**: *So, my first year I think [was], for lack of a better word, soft. I was very soft, and I just overly tried to be understanding, and it was to the detriment of what students were learning. A lot of my students are going to have serious issues that maybe they'll talk to me about, maybe they won't. The mindset that I've tried to take is that when we walk into this classroom, no matter what's going on, we're going to leave it at the door. For these 65 minutes we're not going to talk, we're going to learn. No matter what's going on, we're going to do our best to leave it at the door, learn, and then when class is over, I'm here to listen to or direct you to anything that you need, right? If something's going on at home, we're just trying to make sure that they're not missing out on important educational experience because of whatever may be going on. And there are obviously very serious issues for a lot of the students. Is that the best approach? I don't know, but it's ... I'm still trying to figure out what's best.*
>
> **MDN**: *You mentioned that your first year you were a "soft man." Were there certain things that you felt like you were being "soft" about specifically?*
>
> **Tony Russo**: *Misbehaviors, right? Kids just acting silly in the classroom or a kid with their head down. Obviously, you're probably very tired, but I should not be allowing you to sleep through class, because now you're missing out on all this information. Or just trying too much to dig into what's bothering my [students], what's going on with [them] at the expense of class time.*

There are a number of factors that may explain why Tony adopts such a different approach to classroom management. First, unlike Brianna, Tony has not taken the time to learn about the challenges his students experience outside of school. Indeed, he explicitly states that taking the time to learn about his students' lives potentially undermines his ability to teach content. Second, Tony deeply values authority in his classroom, which may reflect his training as a New York City police officer. Even though he describes his school's demerit system as "punitive," he also

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[89] **MDN:** "Tell me a little bit about the transition from pursuing being a police officer and going into the classroom. That seems like kind of jump."

Tony Russo: "I think the mindset always was I want to just be able to help people, I want to try to improve society in some type of way, so really it's just the switch from going from police community relations to education, school community relations. The big thing is just trying to build bridges with the community that I'm working with."

registers much higher on the authoritarian scale (μ= 2.75) than the average teacher included in the survey (μ= 1.6) and this is evident in how he selects and teaches content. Tony is transparent about the difficulties he faces while trying to get his students to engage with course material. For example, he mentioned that his attempts to teach exclusively African American History during Black History Month divulged into "an actual mutiny." His students claimed that they had learned this same version of African American History for four years and wanted something new. However, when I asked Tony whether he incorporated their feedback into his future lessons he stated that "[he] continued on with how [he] planned it just because [he] thought it was important."

My conversation with Tony sheds light on his students' frustration with his course. He structures his United States History course around a single guiding question: "How do we live up to our ideals as a nation?" In the process, he aspires to teach his students about moments in history where people have "fought through injustice to actually form a more perfect union." However, when I asked him to describe the topics, themes, and figures used to animate these lessons, he mentions the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, and the political philosophies of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes. While Tony's approach may be well-intentioned, it can be particularly frustrating for Black students, who are able to describe Euro-American biases in traditional curricula in great detail (Epstein 2009). When I raised this point after reviewing Tony's syllabus and listening to his analysis of various textbook passages, he was receptive to the idea that his students might be more engaged if he asked for their input on content, but held firm to the notion that there was an authoritative account of history that his students should learn.

> **MDN:** *Given that upwards of 90 percent of your students are African American and half are young women of color, to what extent is it important for you to select content that speaks to their*

> *experiences as well? Do you ever seek their advice regarding what they would like to address in class?*
>
> **Tony Russo:** *It's really important, and that's something I sometimes have to be mindful of, really be mindful of, because even though I try, I was going through my curriculum initially, and I'm like, "Oh, god. I didn't sketch out the Civil Rights Movement at all. What the hell's the matter with me?"...But when I'm looking at [the textbooks], I also have to think about which one does a better job about letting people know who William Lloyd Garrison is. When we're talking about the Abolitionist Movement, William Lloyd Garrison's a really important figure that they need to know about.*

The divergent pedagogies of Brianna Boyd and Tony Russo demonstrate the important role of authority in the selection of course content. Brianna is less authoritarian in her practice and incorporates the concerns of her students into her courses. She consistently tries to understand her students' experiences and interests—beyond basic identity heuristics—so that she can tailor the content to them. This fosters student engagement both within the classroom and beyond in the form of political activism. Her approach to teaching makes sense in light of her lived experiences; she grew up on the South Side of Chicago, empathizes with the concerns of her students, and understands that centering their experiences is an essential component of building rapport. Contrastingly, Tony adopts a much more authoritarian approach when designing his course. He believes that there is a canonical version of American history that young people need to know, which combined with his desire to control every aspect of his students' behavior, leaves little room for student voice. This ultimately undermines his ability to craft lessons that are engaging and empowering for his students.

Neighborhood Value and Pedagogy

These conversations also demonstrate the importance of place. For example, Brianna Boyd is both a native Chicagoan and a product of Chicago Public Schools. Thus, her connections to her school and the neighborhood where she teaches extend beyond her vocation. She understands the historical significance of the Bronzeville neighborhood as a hub for Black entrepreneurship, art,

and civil rights and wants her students to play a role in shaping its future. As a result, the lived experiences of her students ultimately guide the trajectory of the course. Consistent with the survey results, my conversations with teachers demonstrate that those with deep connections to the city and its neighborhoods are those who are more willing to adopt a critical approach while teaching. Feeling invested in the well-being of a neighborhood fosters deep connections to the young people living there and manifests in the practice of critical pedagogues.

Erika Urrutia thought critically about the neighborhood she wanted to teach in when she first applied to teaching jobs three years ago. Her thoughtfulness with regards to place is evident in her survey responses as well; her neighborhood value score (μ= 4.2) is higher than the sample average (μ= 3.5). Throughout our conversation, she emphasized that her upbringing as the daughter of two Mexican American immigrants ultimately inspired her to pass on her deep value for education to young people with similar backgrounds.[90] She knew she wanted to teach in a community serving predominantly Latinx youth and ultimately applied to positions in Back of the Yards, a predominantly Mexican-American neighborhood on the South West Side of the city made famous by the Union Stock Yards, the activism of Saul Alinsky, and Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*. The area is known for its rich immigrant history, serving as an enclave for Eastern European immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries and Mexican Americans since the 1970s.

> **Erika Urrutia:** *I did a lot of research on which part of the city I wanted to be in, and what kind of school I wanted to be at, and [my school] happened to have an opening, and so I applied to a couple of the schools in the area… I have a lot in common with the kids here. I think because I was brought up in a similar way, it lets me have pretty good relationships with them and their parents… Our principal grew up in the neighborhood as well, so I think there's a deep appreciation for Back of the Yards at the school.*

[90] **Erika Urrutia:** "When I was in high school I had a lot of teachers who were very influential in how I went about my daily life, and I grew up in a household that put a lot of emphasis on education, and my family are immigrants, Latin American immigrants, so I just think it's important. I wanted to be able to pass that on to other kids with similar backgrounds"

> **MDN:** *Does that appreciation for place get looped into your lessons at all?*
>
> **Erika Urrutia:** *We try to bring in local history as much as we can. The biggest issue with teaching U.S. History is that there will never be enough time. I'm sure that's how every teacher feels—there's never enough time to actually go through everything you want to talk about. So, we try to be explicit in including certain things in our unit. The biggest thing we talk about with Back of the Yards is the Industrial Revolution, how it's always been this working-class neighborhood, and how the working class has happened to be different racialized immigrant groups over different periods of time.*

Erika's responses demonstrate that her own appreciation for Back of Yards and its history, as well as institutional factors such as her principal's connection to the neighborhood, play a role in what ultimately gets taught in the classroom. While time was frequently mentioned as the primary constraint faced by United States History teachers, Erika and her school ensure that they reserve space to talk about the neighborhood's unique history as a working-class community of immigrants.

Erika's deep appreciation for the community, as well as her identity as a Latina, is also reflected in the ways in which she engages with her students. While I was surprised to find no significant relationship between the race of a teacher and the racial makeup of their school in the survey results, this was a salient theme in the interview responses. As mentioned before, critical pedagogues do not shy away from having uncomfortable conversations in their classrooms. While Erika frequently encourages her students to express their opinions, she also described moments where she pushed her students to think critically about their biases as well as the ways in which power operates within Latinx communities specifically. During our conversation, she told me about a moment when her school's football coach announced that he would not be returning the following year. When Erika joked that she could step in, one of her male students told her in earnest that women should not be allowed to coach sports.

> *I was like, "Why don't you come up for lunch and we'll talk about it?"…So, we talked and I was like, "This is what you said and this is how it affected me and also potentially other people." And so, I basically just gave him quick rundown [about how] he was insinuating that men and women aren't*

> *equal. And I was like, "Nope, we sure are not." So, I gave him a quick lesson and I was like, "This is why arguments [about gender equity] exist and why this movement exists." I also explained where his opinions were coming from. They are cultural because of machismo and all that, which he understood...Then two weeks later we were starting our final project and they had to choose a social movement from U.S. History to research, and he chose the U.S. Women's National Team fighting for equal pay. It was awesome…I just looked at him and was like "Do you see anything here?" And he was like "Yeah. You were right. I messed up."*

The responses above demonstrate the powerful conversations that can emerge when a teacher values and understands the inner workings of a specific community. While Erika's own identity as a Mexican American undoubtedly contributed to her ability to engage with her student about gender biases in this way, a handful of white educators demonstrated their ability to translate their appreciation for their school's neighborhood to engaging lessons that grapple with political power and the immediate concerns of their students. In other words, my conversations demonstrate that while shared identities and experiences between teachers and students are important, white educators are also capable of effectively implementing critical pedagogy within their classrooms.

George Petimezas grew up in conservative, rural community in southwest Michigan before moving to Chicago 11 years ago to continue his teaching career. He possesses a wealth of knowledge regarding Chicago's neighborhoods and the political history of the city's aldermanic wards. George is white but spoke at length about the challenges faced by his students in Pilsen, a Mexican American neighborhood on the city's South West Side fighting to maintain its cultural identity. In 2015 and 2016 alone, the number of building permits in Pilsen doubled; white residents flocked into the neighborhood to claim its newest properties, driving up rents and pricing Latinx residents out in the process (Knight 2019, 60-61). When George reflected upon the challenges that come with teaching in Pilsen as well as the concerns of his students, he consistently addressed the topic: "The whole gentrification aspect is everywhere. I mean, these kids are getting displaced and the identity of their neighborhood is changing because of it." Unsurprisingly, George's ninth-grade civics course is action oriented. His students begin each day by sharing their reflections about

challenges facing their community and are assessed based upon their ability to develop action plans to address their concerns. His love for Chicago, its neighborhoods, and local politics as well as his enthusiasm towards action civics are evident in the units he develops alongside his students.

> *I devised a real time mayoral election unit. We had kids who were on campaign teams who created a presentation. They had to analyze the turnout data from the general election. It started with like, okay, we're just going to have the kids campaign for candidates, right? And then it started to morph. After the first round when we got to the run-off data, everybody divided into two teams. And then they had to analyze the voter turnout data and analyze who voted for Amara Enyia, for example. Which precincts voted for Amara Enyia? Who are [Enyia's supporters] more likely to vote for now? They started making predictions based upon the similarity of [the candidates'] platforms. Then they started creating these presentations; if you voted for Amara Enyia in the general, you should vote for either Lightfoot or Preckwinkle in the runoff [based on] similarities in the campaign. And I made them do all of this and do this second round of presentations. It was due on Election Day because I didn't want their ideas to be skewed by results...And then we watched the results and they wrote these great reflective pieces like, okay, now that Lightfoot won, where do we go from here? What will she do for Pilsen?*

George's commitment to his school, his students, and Pilsen more broadly is tied to his racial attitudes as well. Indeed, it makes sense that educators with more liberal racial attitudes are also more likely to see the inherent value of communities of color. While George is aware of challenges such as crime and poverty that might dissuade teachers from applying to work at his school (Duncan and Murnane 2011, 377), he does not view his community through a deficit-minded lens. Rather, he wants to play a role in developing the skills his students will need to become agents of change within their own community. When I asked him to reflect upon how he developed such a strong social justice and localized approach to civics, he talked about seminal moments in his life that influenced how he sees race.

> **George Petimezas**: *To be honest about my racial journey, I've gone from the, "Hey, we shouldn't see color. Let's be color blind" perspective to realizing the fallacy that that is. Education and my personal life have played major roles in that journey…I started taking African American literature classes in college because I wanted to learn about perspectives that were different from the ones I grew up around. And then one of the seminal moments for taking that journey was a class at [my master's institution] before we moved to Chicago. It was a class on multiculturalism. The professor was an African American woman and talked about how we have to move away from the melting pot analogy and towards the Caesar salad analogy. It's not about everybody simply assimilating, which is that color blind issue. It's more about being able to maintain your distinctiveness and still manage to function as a society. And I think for me that was one of those Ah-ha moments and why I want Pilsen to maintain its distinctiveness. ...And, of course, I am married to a Mexican American*

> *woman…and have biracial kids and I live in a predominantly Black neighborhood. Short version of it is that all these experiences have changed my perspective. They've pushed me to understand the privilege that my gender and race are afforded in this society. White men like you and I are afforded so much privilege…we just don't have to negotiate certain spaces, right? And my goal as an educator and also my life is to leverage that to fight for my students and other marginalized groups of people.*
>
> **MDN:** *And why do you think you felt compelled to seek out other perspective so early on?*
>
> **George Petimezas:** *Well, this is fitting because I just thanked my former teacher. I didn't even like social studies at all until my senior year. I had a government teacher that challenged me to think on my own, to create an opinion, and have evidence to back it up. I did a lot of the old school memorization and regurgitation before that. And it was the first time I was like, "I get to really think for myself. I get to have my own opinion." And for me that was another seminal moment. It was this venture into exercising my voice…and I was like "[politics] is what I think and I'm going to use my voice to speak out about."*

My conversations with teachers highlight the importance of understanding their lived experiences. While it is interesting to identify trends between their attitudes and their behaviors in the classroom, digging into the broader socialization processes that inform those attitudes offers great insights for those interested in centering equity in conversations about civic education. For example, George's interview responses demonstrate the power of early educational experiences. The space he was afforded to think about controversial issues and the insights he gained from courses that explicitly grapple with race greatly inform his own practices in the classroom to this day.

Conclusion

The evidence presented in this chapter addresses a critical component of political socialization in schools. While Chapters 3 and 4 demonstrate that the content of social studies courses can shape the political attitudes and behaviors of young people in profound ways, the survey and interview data presented here highlight the agency of teachers in this process. Though existing models of political socialization emphasize the importance of teachers and their instructional choices (Niemi and Junn 1998, Torney-Purta 2002, Campbell 2008, Hess 2009,

Gainous and Martens 2012, Dassonneville et al. 2012, Martens and Gainous 2013, Hess and McAvoy 2014, Persson 2015), explanations regarding why teachers teach in the ways that they do tend to focus on structural factors such as teacher training programs (Lortie 2002, Mo and Conn 2018), organizational constraints (Wineburg and Wilson 1988, Cuban 1991, Bruch and Soss 2018), and educational standards (Ravitch 2010). These factors certainly play a role. In fact, the survey results presented here suggest that institutional factors such as school leadership have at least some effect on whether or not a teacher utilizes critical pedagogy in their classroom. Though this story may be unique to Chicago, it is important to recognize the ways in which teachers actively work to navigate institutional roadblocks in order to deliver more empowering civic learning opportunities to their students.

I find that the underlying political attitudes of teachers shape both the selection of course content as well as their pedagogy more broadly. More specifically, teachers who possess more liberal racial attitudes and more positive assessments of the neighborhoods where they teach are more likely to utilize critical pedagogy in their classrooms. Contrastingly, teachers with more authoritarian attitudes are more likely to prefer traditional social studies content. Regardless of their intentions, Chapters 3 and 4 demonstrate that this approach is unlikely to bolster rates of political participation among young people of color. Beyond trends highlighted within the survey data, my interviews shed light on the broader socialization processes that allow teachers to develop these attitudes in the first place.

My conversations highlight the deeply personal experiences that inform a teacher's pedagogical practices. While the lives of Chicago's social studies teachers are as diverse as the neighborhoods that they serve, I identify three themes that inform the practice of critical pedagogues. First, these teachers view history through a critical racial lens. They do not merely

seek to include more marginalized perspectives into their course content but use race and identity as a way to push students to think about unequal distributions of power throughout history. Whether they developed this way of thinking from their family members, through religious institutions, or from their own teachers, critical pedagogues see the study of race and identity as an undeniable component of a comprehensive civic education. In the process, they push their students to become justice-oriented citizens who are able to identify the roots of both personal and societal challenges. While some may fear that teaching in this way will do little more than create a generation of "armchair activists" (Westheimer and Kahne 2004, 245), the critical pedagogues I spoke to were also adamant about allowing their students to practice democracy in the classroom.

A second a theme that emerged among critical pedagogues was a willingness to relinquish some of their professional authority in order to make room for student voice. These teachers do more than lecture about subject matter; they allow their students to bring their experiences and concerns into the classroom and use history and social studies more broadly as a way for students to think critically about how to take meaningful political action. For example, Brianna Boyd's students did more than simply talk about social justice; they mobilized to save their school's librarian when they felt compelled to do so. Though each teacher I spoke to walked along a different path, critical pedagogues consistently expressed a deep sense of empathy towards their students and value the preexisting knowledge they bring into the classroom.

Finally, critical pedagogues have a deep appreciation for the neighborhoods where they teach. For some, this sense of neighborhood affinity is born out of shared lived experiences. Teachers like Erika Urrutia felt compelled to teach in a predominantly Latinx neighborhood that reminded her of her own upbringing. For others who do not share these experiences, the respect they feel toward the neighborhoods where they teach reflects a commitment to understanding the

significance of place. George Petimezas grew up in rural, white community in Michigan, but worked to develop an understanding of his school community and the challenges experienced by his students. The interviews highlighted in this chapter also offer invaluable insights into how we can better recruit and prepare teachers who are committed to empowering their students. In the final section of this chapter, I layout a series of proposals that address this topic by synthesizing the insights from the educators I interviewed in a policy-focused coda.

Coda: Implications for Policy

Social studies teachers are incredibly powerful individuals in their ability to shape the political attitudes and behaviors of their students. The teachers I spoke with were well aware of their own agency and offered cogent recommendations for how their training could be improved and how institutions could better support them as they work to prepare their students for democratic participation. Their insights tended to address four areas: how social studies content is taught to student teachers at colleges and universities, how to better recruit teachers committed to educating for democracy, how to bridge the gap between educational theory and practice, and how school administrators can support teachers working to develop content that is both empowering and aligned to state and federal standards.

As demonstrated by the educators highlighted in this chapter, being taught to view history through a critical racial lens is a defining characteristic among critical pedagogues. Some educators such as David Williams, the United States History teacher introduced at the beginning of this chapter, learned to think about history in this way from his parents. His story is consistent with existing scholarship that finds that African Americans frequently learn an interpretation of American history at home (Epstein 2009) and within religious institutions (Dawson 1994) that

conflicts with those traditionally taught in schools. For others such as Catherine Murphy, the racially liberal white educator teaching at a majority white school in suburban Chicago, learning to center race in the classroom was developed as a result of higher education. Recall that Catherine felt that she had to "unlearn" the history she was taught in high school after reading Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* as an undergraduate student. So long as the teaching profession continues to draw high concentrations of aspiring, white educators, post-secondary institutions should consider making critical race theory a central component of their education curricula.

In making this recommendation, I am *not* suggesting that aspiring teachers should be taught to think through an exclusively racial lens; they undoubtedly would benefit from learning multiple social science perspectives. However, my interviews, coupled with the experimental results presented in Chapter 3, demonstrate that educators who teach more traditional, "progress as usual" narratives are unlikely to empower racially marginalized students in their classrooms (Loewen 1995). Having a firm understanding of how race operates at different historical moments is a prominent characteristic of educators who challenge these narratives. In taking this position, I also want to reiterate that critical pedagogues still manage to teach more traditional subject matter in their classrooms. Addressing themes such as the Bill of Rights and the three branches of government is essential if we are to prepare young people navigate to various power structures (Levinson 2012). However, critical pedagogues manage to address these topics without falling back on narratives that further marginalize their students. For example, Marianna Acosta demonstrates that it is possible to teach her Black students about the significance of the United States Constitution while also allowing them to question its limits in light of their lived experiences. Her ability to do this is deeply tied to the way in which she has learned about United

States History. However, the teachers I interviewed also spoke to the limits of simply providing educators with more critical content.

Reynaldo Garcia, a world history teacher at a racially integrated selective enrollment high school on the Northside of Chicago, noted that recent attempts to incorporate more critical content into the district's social studies courses had fallen short. In 2015, Chicago Public Schools released a mandated curriculum called Reparations Won, which requires "middle and high school teachers to teach about the record of torture committed under the direction of disgraced Police Commander Jon Burge and the fight waged by Survivors and their allies for justice" (Reparations Won). While Reynaldo believes in the value of this curriculum, he expressed frustration that many of his white colleagues lacked the background knowledge and the necessary relationships with their students to effectively deliver controversial content of this kind.

> *First off, you have to build trust if you're going to teach this content. How many history teachers care enough about their students to have that conversation? That's a real human to human conversation. So, you have to have a certain culture in your room to have that conversation. I don't think there are many teachers that have that, first of all. And then you have to add the content knowledge. So that's another thing. I just don't know how something like professional development or a required curriculum is going to help change what teachers are already doing in the classroom. Teachers need to be having real conversations much earlier and they need to happen over an extended period of time.*

Reynaldo's response provides a sobering reminder that simply providing young teachers with more critical content is not sufficient on its own. Aspiring educators must be given multiple opportunities to engage in difficult conversations about controversial subject matter over an extended period of time. This is partly related to training, but it also speaks to the value of recruiting and hiring social studies teachers that are actually committed to having these conversations.

Existing research highlights unique vocational trends among social studies teachers. Notably, social studies and physical education are the only two subject areas in which men makeup the majority of the teaching force (Hansen and Quintero 2017). Additionally, 34 percent of these teachers coach an athletic team, 13 percentage points higher than math and science teachers (2017). As a result, social studies teachers are among the least likely to participate in ongoing professional development throughout their career (2017). If the goal of social studies is to equip young people with the knowledge and skills to exercise democratic citizenship, we must ensure that the teachers we are recruiting are truly committed to these goals. While it is laudable that so many social studies educators also mentor students in extracurricular activities such as athletics, we must also fight against the notion that social studies education is merely an "easy degree to gain access to coaching" (Stacy 2014, 301). One educator in suburban Chicago remarked "I would say there's a group of us, all women, who are rigorously engaging with history through a cultural and social lens—not just talking about presidents, but the policies they create. And then there are the coaches, all men, who are like 'Oh, do you know this random fact about Lincoln? How tall was his hat?' Or they spend a week talking about the mustaches of Civil War generals."

To counteract this trend, school districts should hire teachers for these positions based on their disciplinary merits in addition to their commitment to organizing extracurricular activities for their students. Elizabeth Todd-Berland's *A Political Education: Black Politics and Education Reform in Chicago Since the 1960s* documents the powerful democratic outcomes that can be fostered in urban school districts when educators committed to community-based education and youth empowerment are placed at the helm (2018). However, until history and civic education re-emerge as educational priorities, post-secondary institutions can ensure that expectations are established that re-characterize social studies education as a rigorous vocational program that

requires students to engage critically in conversations about difficult and oftentimes contentious topics, including race. However, identifying teachers who are willing to engage in racial consciousness work is just the beginning; more must be done to ensure that teachers are trained to actually live out these values in their pedagogy.

The educators I spoke with consistently mentioned a disconnect between educational theory and practice. Over half of the individuals I spoke with received some sort of training in critical pedagogy as an undergraduate student, but never understood it as an educational philosophy that was actually put into practice. They made fleeting references to *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire 1968) and *Teaching to Transgress* (bell hooks 1994), but most characterized these texts as "interesting reads from undergrad" rather than a practical guide for how to teach in the classroom. Rather, many teachers talked about the importance of their student teaching experiences in shaping their practice. Elizabeth O'Connor, a fifth-year teacher in Chicago's West Town neighborhood, utilizes many aspects of critical pedagogy in her classroom. While she attended an undergraduate institution that includes a critical theory sequence in its teacher education program, she associates her teaching style with more hands-on training experiences.

> *[My university] was more theory. Really great critical theory, but I never observed anyone who actually taught that way until I completed my [master's program], which was more of a practicum. We modeled lessons in the class and had frequent observations. That's where I developed my current teaching style. Theory is great, but we've got to get young teachers in there and show them how it's done. I mean, my student teaching in undergrad was fine, but it wasn't exactly real time like, "Let's stop and review what you just did and think through it."*

Teacher training programs should provide young educators with cooperating teachers who already use critical pedagogy in their classrooms. While teaching students critical theory is an important start, they must see how this approach manifests in the classrooms of critical pedagogues. While

post-secondary institutions may have to invest time in identifying cooperating teachers of this kind, it is an essential step in bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Finally, school administrators can reserve space for educators seeking to develop content that is relevant to the lives of their students. The curricular constraints put on teaches as a result of Advanced Placement Exams was frequently mentioned as the biggest factor preventing teachers from developing lessons that diverge from traditional curricula. Some mentioned that these exams have caused social studies to turn into a secondary literacy course where the only desired outcome was high test scores. Like many teachers I spoke with, Donald Miller, the 24-year teaching veteran introduced at the beginning of the dissertation, holds a clear vision of what social studies education *should* look like and, in many ways, his vision is more critical in nature. However, he spoke at length regarding the various institutional constraints that are enforced by school administrators that prevent him from teaching in this way.

> **Donald Miller**: *I'm not saying any teaching style is perfect, but right now, what we really have is a situation where history has become more of an English class where kids use their class time to read primary source documents and then construct arguments based on a question or prompt with a thesis statement…Why? The College Board dominates social studies curriculum in America today. Their CEO, David Coleman…is one of the most powerful people in education today. He came away with the belief that students need to be trained in close reading of primary source documents, without any historical content knowledge… If you want to understand how social studies history is taught in American education today, google "David Coleman, MLK's Letter from a Birmingham Jail." For 15 minutes he provides a sample lesson for how teachers are supposed to instruct their students. He says that the whole point of close reading is to get to the [author's intent] … I disagree with this approach to teaching history, because it reduces a great civil rights leader and an inspiration for millions of people around the world to a pen pal, a guy who wrote a letter to somebody one time."*
>
> **MDN:** *I imagine there's an obvious answer to this question, but if history teachers are in agreement on this, why do think they continue to teach in this way?*
>
> **Donald Miller:** *You live or die by the test scores as an administrator…If you're an AP U.S. History or AP world history teacher, you have administrators sitting in with you every time you have a curriculum meeting, which is once a week. They're going over curriculum, and they're going over*

exactly what assignments we're giving. Everything has to be modeled based on the College Board. Everything.[91]

MDN: *So, do they even pretend that the end goal is good citizenship?*

Donald Miller: *No. The goal is AP.*

The conversation above demonstrates that school administrators frequently leave very little room for teachers to diverge from traditional, Advanced Placement standards. School leadership and their districts are unlikely to downplay the significance of test scores anytime soon and, to be clear, achievement data can and should be used to ensure we strive for equitable educational outcomes. Similarly, recent debates over how and what should be taught in Advanced Placement classes have led to little more than partisan gridlock in Congress (Lerner 2015).

As previous chapters have emphasized, attempts to reform civic education are unlikely to occur through formal political processes. The teaching of history and government has always been a politically contentious topic in the United States and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future (Nash, Crabtree, and Dunn 1998; Moreau 2004). While efforts to push for institutional reforms are noble and should continue, we also must ask what can be done to empower young people now. As this chapter demonstrates, social studies teachers can serve as agents of change, navigating various institutional hurdles to create educational experiences that yield promising democratic outcomes for young people. While the lived experiences of these educators contribute to courageous pedagogies defined by racial consciousness, prioritizing student voice, and community-centered curricula, individual teachers are unlikely to create systemic change on their own. Teacher training programs, districts, and school administrators can take actions to help

[91] This statement is corroborated by two educators at this school. One said the following: “Our assistant principal came in like two days before the school year started and pretty much said, "If we're not following the College Board, you need to let us know by Friday [with] all the content you’re doing for the year, and which specific AP skill you’re doing with each piece of content."

support them in this work if they believe the goal of civic education is truly to prepare young people, including those from marginalized backgrounds, for democratic participation.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: Educating for Empowerment

> *"I believe civics makes a huge impact on politics. It helps people first realize what is the issue and then look back. How did this come about? What are some things that have already been done to try to address the issues? Then we can look into those solutions people came up with and say, "okay, yes this was good. Did that actually address the problems they needed to? Can it work now? If not, let's adapt." People actually have to have a firm understanding of that. Then they could go into politics and determine a better solution."*
>
> -Misael (16 years old, Mexican American)
>
> *"I think civics shapes our involvement in politics. Learning about all the wrong that has been done in the world…I think that makes me want to get more involved in making a change and finding a way for things to be equal and just try to fix it. I know it's impossible to fix all the wrong in the world, but I want to try to make up for it in any way that I can and I feel like the social studies, us being able to learn about that and understand all of that, it really leads to a better pathway of me being able to go out in the world and eventually make a change."*
>
> -Jasmine (17 years old, African American)

The students quoted above, Misael and Jasmine, believe in the potential of civic education. Their reflections demonstrate that the tools provided by high-quality civic education courses allow young people to reflect upon the challenges facing their communities, understand the roots of those challenges, and, ultimately generate ideas regarding how to make things better. In many ways, this dissertation is an exercise in this logic: with a better understanding of the challenges facing civic education we can take steps to make it more empowering.

This dissertation demonstrates that schools, and civic education courses in particular, play a pivotal role in processes of political socialization. While a number of factors undoubtedly contribute to the ways in which young people develop their political values and beliefs, the research presented here highlights the power of *state institutions* in shaping the ways in which younger generations of Americans ultimately participate in politics. While I am certainly not the first to suggest that schools have this power, extant work tends to explore the ways in which school disciplinary policies (Bruch and Soss 2018) and the dynamics that emerge between teachers and

students shape democratic outcomes (Niemi and Junn 1998, Torney-Purta 2002, Campbell 2008, Hess 2009, Gainous and Martens 2012, Dassonneville et al. 2012, Martens and Gainous 2013, Hess and McAvoy 2014, Persson 2015). In the process, the role of formal curricula has been left by the wayside (Langton and Jennings 1968; Campbell 2006, 153). This is surprising given that the history of civic education in the United States has been marred by debates about who has access and whose stories are included within the content. Like so many other policy domains, these debates have been inextricably tied to race. Young people of color are less likely to have access to these courses and are less likely to be represented within the curricula (Levinson 2012). The effects of these inequities are not merely symbolic but have discernable effects on political participation.

The analyses presented in Chapter 2 demonstrate that civic education courses are associated with distinct attitudes and behaviors along the lines of race and ethnicity. While these results confirm that access to these courses is incredibly important, they also suggest that we should not assume that traditional civic education courses will lead to more equitable outcomes across diverse populations of students. If anything, these courses may actually *contribute* to racial gaps in political efficacy and in multiple forms of political participation. This suggests that reform must be coupled with increased access.

Drawing from theories of critical pedagogy (Freire 1968), Chapters 3 and 4 offer one potential path forward. Narratives that highlight the grassroots political actions taken by marginalized groups to address systemic inequality are shown to be particularly empowering for for Black and Latinx youth, bolstering rates of intended participation. These results are important for at least two reasons. First, they demonstrate that course content does, in fact, play a role in processes of political socialization. Second, they demonstrate that narratives that center the ways in which less vaunted historical figures engage in collective action can be extremely empowering

for young people of color. This is important to take into consideration given that these courses tend to focus *overwhelmingly* on the political contributions of white men who held high positions of power. Moreover, exposure to critical content had no negative effects on intended participation among white youth. In fact, exposure to content of this kind led white youth to be significantly more likely to agree that Asian, Black, and Latinx people made significant contributions to American society (see Figure 2 with Chapter 4 Appendix). In short, critical pedagogy helps to close the racial gap in democratic participation.

Chapter 5 presents the final piece of the socialization story: the civic learning experiences that social studies courses provide continue to shape the attitudes and behaviors of people years down the line. The interwoven narratives of David Williams, Samantha Ocampo, and Alexandra Kowalski presented at the opening of Chapter 5 show that a teacher's actions in the classroom have discernable effects on the attitudes and behaviors of their former students. Moreover, this chapter highlights the agency of educators in the socialization process. Even in the face of institutional hurdles, critical pedagogues draw from their political attitudes and lived experiences to create and implement empowering civic learning opportunities for their students.

Taken together, the evidence provided within these chapters demonstrates the enormous civic potential of educational spaces. While I do not mean to suggest that civics alone will revitalize American democracy, I do think it is important to recognize the critical and complex role of schools in broader conversations about inequality. In addition to ensuring that young people have access to well-funded, neighborhood schools, it is also important for them to see their lived experiences and histories reflected in the content that is taught. I have demonstrated that these experiences are empowering and have observable impacts on political behavior.

Limitations

With this in mind, it is important to acknowledge that reimagining civic education in the United States requires more than simply understanding how to empower young people of color; it must also push white youth to think critically about privilege, racism, and the pervasiveness of inequality in the United States. While a large literature demonstrates that exposure to ethnic studies curricula pushes white youth to develop more empathetic racial attitudes (Sleeter 2011; see Figure 2 in Chapter 4 Appendix), fostering white empathy alone is insufficient; it must be coupled with meaningful political action that works to dismantle racist systems. This is admittedly something this work does not do, but the pursuit of effective, anti-racist civic learning experiences for white students is a worthy endeavor and one I am interested in exploring elsewhere. Though critical pedagogy is, by name, a "pedagogy of the oppressed," surely its focus on critical self-reflection and learning the historic roots of one's positionality is something that young white folks can benefit from as well

Relatedly, while Chicago is certainly an effective case study for exploring the potential of civic learning, this work cannot address whether the interventions proposed here would be effective across geographical contexts. Specifically, more work must be done to understand the ways in which schools and teachers in rural communities are creating and implementing lessons that are challenging their students to think more critically about their role in political processes. That said, critical pedagogy's focus on the multidimensional nature of both identity and oppression can offer a starting place for those interested in exploring this topic in greater detail beyond the city's limits. Despite these limitations, the individuals included in this research have given us plenty to think about regarding how to make civic education more empowering and we should take their perspectives seriously.

Centering the Insights of Students and Teachers

Too often education policy is developed and implemented without considering the perspectives of those who will feel the most immediate effects. The profound insights provided by the young Chicagoans and educators included in this research should inform the work of policymakers looking to make civic education more empowering for young people color throughout the United States. As the chapters included in this dissertation demonstrate, emancipatory teaching practices, including critical pedagogy, should always aspire to center the knowledge and lived experiences of students. With this in mind, empowering civics courses will likely look differently across contexts. However, three broad tenants, informed by critical pedagogy, should be taken into consideration.

First, the knowledge and lived experiences of students should drive the selection and implementation of content. Since civic education is meant to provide young people with the space to develop the skills to address challenges within their communities, it is first important to ensure that classrooms provide a space for students to talk about and reflect upon their lives. This will not only require training and hiring teachers that understand the pedagogical benefits of maintaining a classroom environment of this kind but identifying individuals who value the perspectives young people bring into the classroom. As discussed at length in the conclusion of Chapter 5, this suggests that teacher preparation programs will have to reevaluate how they are training young teachers and calls on school districts to do more to recruit educators who already possess strong affinities towards the neighborhoods where they teach. Moreover, this will require empathetic school administrators who understand that maintaining educational spaces of this kind enhance the overall civic ethos and academic achievement of their school (Campbell 2019, 40-42).

Second, students should be able to see themselves represented in course content. The students featured in Chapter 4 frequently brought up the importance of seeing less vaunted individuals highlighted within historical narratives—everyday people who made the decision to get involved even when they lacked elite status. To be clear, this does not simply mean incorporating more people of color into course curricula; it means selecting content that highlights the *agency* of individuals whose names we may never know. The efforts being made to institutionalize these changes are noble and should continue, but the history of civic education in the United States suggests that, at least in the short term, this work will likely be driven by courageous educators who find ways to navigate institutional hurdles to ensure their students' lived experiences and histories are reflected in course content.

Finally, it is important that the materials utilized in these courses provide young people with a broader understanding of the ways in which people exercise their agency while also validating their pre-existing political frustrations. Anika, the 17-year-old Black woman introduced in Chapter 4 helps to animate this point.

> *In my house, my uncle, he's very, very, very passionate about Black politics. He's super passionate and always talking about it…but I don't want to move into politics. Even voting is so bad because for example, like in our last election [Hillary Clinton] had the most votes but didn't become president because of the electoral college? Like, how confusing is that? It really doesn't make sense. I was like why vote? My voice individually is not being heard and no one answered my questions [in civics] so I just, I don't know. It makes me not political.*

Too often civic education courses romanticize political processes that are both confusing and, at times, at odds with basic democratic principles. It is clear from Anika's response that she is anything but politically apathetic nor does she lack the political knowledge that would allow her to make an informed political decision; rather, she is frustrated by the political process and her civic education course, which was incapable of addressing her concerns. As demonstrated by this

dissertation, content informed by critical pedagogy is fundamentally different; it leans into the frustrations of marginalized communities and highlights the ways in which people *collectively* make their position known. Narratives of this kind are empowering and should be invoked more frequently in social studies classrooms.

Schools are considered by many to be cradles for democracy, providing young people with the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that will prepare them for a lifetime of engaged citizenship. The pages of this dissertation have demonstrated that schools, and civic education courses specifically, could be doing more to live up to this aspiration. By taking the histories and lived experiences of communities of color seriously, civics courses can better empower young people to determine whether or not they want to engage in the political process and on what terms.

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Appendix for Chapter 2

Table 1: Comparison of Means (Original Data vs. Data Analyzed)

Variable	X	Y	T-Score	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	P-Value
Race	2.04	2.02	0.544	-0.066	0.116	0.587
Age	19.25	19.21	0.370	-0.187	0.275	0.712
Gender	1.53	1.54	-0.378	-0.043	0.029	0.706

Results from the T-Tests included in Table 1 demonstrate that there are no statistically significant differences between the respondents included in the original data set and those included in the analysis in terms in of race, age, or gender.

Table 2: Proportion of Respondents Reporting No Civic Education by States

State	Civics Required? (2005)	No Civic Education	Percentage of Survey Respondents by State
Alabama	Yes	37%	1%
Arkansas	Yes	0%	0.05%
Arizona	Yes	50%	1%
California	Yes	39%	11%
Colorado	Yes	28%	1%
Connecticut	No	41%	2%
D.C.	Yes	50%	0.03%
Delaware	Yes	50%	0.01%
Florida	Yes	30%	5%
Georgia	Yes	39%	5%
Hawaii	Yes	50%	0.01%
Iowa	No	36%	0.08%
Idaho	Yes	88%	0.06%
Illinois	No	58%	7%
Indiana	Yes	34%	2%
Kansas	Yes	22%	0.06%
Kentucky	Yes	52%	1%
Louisiana	Yes	21%	1%
Massachusetts	Yes	73%	0.08%
Maryland	Yes	28%	3%
Maine	Yes	50%	0.01%
Michigan	Yes	29%	4%
Minnesota	Yes	13%	1%
Montana	Yes	26%	0.02%
Missouri	Yes	26%	2%
Mississippi	Yes	38%	0.09%
Montana	No	33%	0.02%
North Carolina	Yes	33%	5%
Nebraska	Yes	50%	0.04%
New Hampshire	Yes	33%	0.02%
New Jersey	No	75%	2%
New Mexico	Yes	23%	1%
Nevada	Yes	45%	0.08%
New York	Yes	50%	5%
Ohio	Yes	33%	4%
Oklahoma	No	8%	0.09%
Oregon	No	13%	0.06%
Pennsylvania	Yes	43%	4%
Rhode Island	Yes	33%	0.02%
South Carolina	Yes	36%	2%
South Dakota	Yes	0%	0.007%
Tennessee	No	28%	2%
Texas	Yes	46%	9%
Utah	Yes	33%	0.06%
Virginia	Yes	27%	2%
Vermont	Yes	33%	0.02%
Washington	No	47%	1%
Wisconsin	Yes	21%	2%
West Virginia	Yes	0%	0.007%
Wyoming	Yes	100%	0.007%

Table 2 provides a summary of states that required a civic education course in 2005, the percentage of survey respondents within each state who did not have access to a civics course, and the percentage of survey respondents from each state.

Table 3: White Youth Attitudes (with State Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.141**	0.031
	(0.056)	(0.043)
Age	-0.019**	0.018***
	(0.008)	(0.007)
Gender	-0.048	-0.126***
	(0.052)	(0.040)
Religious Affiliation	0.026	-0.005
	(0.017)	(0.014)
Group Affiliation	0.122**	0.031
	(0.055)	(0.043)
Maternal Education	0.004	0.002
	(0.015)	(0.012)
Parental Political Interest	0.146***	0.008
	(0.029)	(0.023)
Citizenship	0.169	-0.036
	(0.147)	(0.115)
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Constant	2.499***	2.976***
	(0.363)	(0.284)
Observations	491	491
R^2	0.195	0.109
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 4: Black Youth Attitudes (with State Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.042	0.012
	(0.054)	(0.045)
Age	0.003	0.028***
	(0.008)	(0.007)
Gender	0.005	-0.046
	(0.050)	(0.042)
Religious Affiliation	-0.002	-0.006
	(0.017)	(0.015)
Group Affiliation	0.144***	0.041
	(0.054)	(0.045)
Maternal Education	-0.004	0.00004
	(0.014)	(0.012)
Parental Political Interest	0.109***	0.015
	(0.024)	(0.020)
Citizenship	-0.189	-0.144
	(0.113)	(0.095)
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Constant	2.346***	2.519***
	(0.276)	(0.231)
Observations	519	519
R^2	0.122	0.102
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 5: Latinx Youth Attitudes (with State Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.057	0.079
	(0.082)	(0.059)
Age	-0.014	0.033***
	(0.013)	(0.009)
Gender	0.076	-0.018
	(0.078)	(0.056)
Religious Affiliation	-0.035	0.007
	(0.027)	(0.020)
Group Affiliation	0.130	0.055
	(0.089)	(0.065)
Maternal Education	0.001	0.028
	(0.020)	(0.015)
Parental Political Interest	0.069	-0.038
	(0.038)	(0.027)
Citizenship	-0.096	-0.058
	(0.114)	(0.083)
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Constant	1.834***	3.153***
	(0.691)	(0.502)
Observations	242	242
R^2	0.173	0.283
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 6: White Youth Participation (with State Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	-0.003	0.043	0.008	-0.012
	(0.021)	(0.031)	(0.018)	(0.036)
Age	0.003	-0.006	0.002	0.014***
	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.005)
Gender	-0.019	-0.012	-0.009	-0.042
	(0.020)	(0.029)	(0.017)	(0.033)
Religious Affiliation	0.0003	0.024**	-0.006	-0.005
	(0.006)	(0.010)	(0.006)	(0.011)
Group Affiliation	0.082***	0.206***	0.066***	0.100***
	(0.021)	(0.030)	(0.018)	(0.035)
Maternal Education	0.004	0.026***	0.014***	0.030***
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.005)	(0.010)
Parental Political Interest	-0.012	0.010	-0.004	0.078***
	(0.011)	(0.016)	(0.010)	(0.019)
Citizenship	-0.005	0.063	0.063	0.033
	(0.056)	(0.081)	(0.047)	(0.094)
Internal Efficacy	0.030	0.009	0.025	-0.016
	(0.024)	(0.034)	(0.020)	(0.039)
External Efficacy	0.093***	0.049*	0.077***	0.074**
	(0.018)	(0.027)	(0.016)	(0.031)
Stated Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	-0.292**	-0.088	-0.205	-0.009
	(0.117)	(0.228)	(0.134)	(0.264)
Observations	494	491	491	491
R^2	0.108	0.277	0.235	0.220
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 7: Black Youth Participation (with State Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:			
	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive	Political
Civic Education	0.045	0.047***	0.066	0.024
	(0.028)	(0.015)	(0.043)	(0.020)
Age	0.002	-0.001	0.005	-0.004
	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.007)	(0.003)
Gender	-0.020	-0.010	0.005	-0.034*
	(0.026)	(0.014)	(0.040)	(0.018)
Religious Affiliation	0.026***	-0.001	-0.012	0.013**
	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.014)	(0.006)
Group Affiliation	0.226***	0.063***	0.126***	0.022
	(0.028)	(0.016)	(0.044)	(0.020)
Maternal Education	0.002	0.002	0.016	0.002
	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.011)	(0.005)
Parental Political Interest	0.028**	0.009	0.070***	0.001
	(0.013)	(0.007)	(0.020)	(0.009)
Citizenship	-0.058	-0.029	0.083	0.023
	(0.059)	(0.032)	(0.091)	(0.041)
Internal Efficacy	-0.033	-0.009	0.017	0.017
	(0.030)	(0.016)	(0.046)	(0.021)
External Efficacy	0.097***	0.039***	0.160***	0.018
	(0.025)	(0.014)	(0.039)	(0.017)
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.003	-0.060	-0.306	0.086
	(0.165)	(0.090)	(0.254)	(0.114)
Observations	519	519	519	519
R^2	0.303	0.198	0.178	0.129
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 8: Latinx Youth Participation (with State Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:			
	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive	Political
Civic Education	0.138***	0.069***	0.169***	0.015
	(0.043)	(0.024)	(0.065)	(0.025)
Age	-0.006	0.006	0.018	0.002
	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.011)	(0.004)
Gender	-0.032	-0.036	-0.101	-0.053**
	(0.041)	(0.023)	(0.062)	(0.024)
Religious Affiliation	0.031**	0.005	-0.001	0.008
	(0.014)	(0.008)	(0.021)	(0.008)
Group Affiliation	0.158***	0.021	0.055	0.019
	(0.047)	(0.026)	(0.071)	(0.028)
Maternal Education	0.008	0.012**	0.029	0.012
	(0.011)	(0.006)	(0.016)	(0.006)
Parental Political Interest	0.023	0.004	0.047	0.023*
	(0.020)	(0.011)	(0.030)	(0.012)
Citizenship	0.078	0.039	-0.080	-0.014
	(0.060)	(0.033)	(0.091)	(0.035)
Internal Efficacy	0.049	-0.001	-0.101	0.025
	(0.051)	(0.028)	(0.077)	(0.030)
External Efficacy	0.051	0.051**	0.061	0.091***
	(0.037)	(0.021)	(0.056)	(0.022)
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	-0.483	-0.352	0.438	-0.466**
	(0.398)	(0.220)	(0.600)	(0.232)
Observations	242	242	242	242
R^2	0.290	0.202	0.224	0.347
Note:				*p**p***p<0.01

Table 9: Political Participation (with Voting)

	Dependent Variable:		
	White	Black	Latinx
Civic Education	0.003	0.018	0.019
	(0.030)	(0.019)	(0.028)
Age	0.002	0.004	0.006
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.006)
Gender	-0.012**	-0.043**	-0.025
	(0.025)	(0.015)	(0.025)
Religious Affiliation	-0.011	0.010	-0.004
	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.009)
Group Affiliation	0.140***	0.043**	0.058
	(0.026)	(0.021)	(0.031)
Maternal Education	0.005	0.010	0.007
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.007)
Parental Political Interest	0.001	0.013	0.022
	(0.012)	(0.007)	(0.012)
External Efficacy	0.108***	0.014	0.124***
	(0.032)	(0.023)	(0.056)
Constant	-0.276	-0.112	-0.497***
	(0.154)	(0.121)	(0.150)
Observations	267	335	161
R^2	0.728	0.059	0.218
Note:			**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 10: White Youth Attitudes (Multiple Imputations)

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.191***	0.057
	(0.077)	(0.058)
Age	-0.035**	0.035***
	(0.012)	(0.007)
Gender	0.111	-0.187***
	(0.071)	(0.054)
Religious Affiliation	0.029	0.013
	(0.025)	(0.018)
Group Affiliation	0.144***	0.059
	(0.054)	(0.058)
Maternal Education	0.015	0.012
	(0.020)	(0.017)
Parental Political Interest	0.178***	-0.003
	(0.038)	(0.029)
Citizenship	-0.065	-0.173
	(0.197)	(0.146)
Constant	3.720***	4.256***
	(0.191)	(0.253)
Observations	567	567
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 11: Black Youth Attitudes (Multiple Imputations)

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.015	0.047
	(0.068)	(0.056)
Age	-0.011	0.036***
	(0.011)	(0.009)
Gender	0.037	0.004
	(0.067)	(0.056)
Religious Affiliation	0.004	-0.009
	(0.022)	(0.019)
Group Affiliation	0.221***	0.050
	(0.074)	(0.061)
Maternal Education	-0.006	0.007
	(0.019)	(0.016)
Parental Political Interest	0.140***	0.005
	(0.024)	(0.027)
Citizenship	-0.101	-0.126
	(0.156)	(0.129)
Constant	3.921***	4.069***
	(0.300)	(0.251)
Observations	635	635
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 12: Latinx Youth Attitudes (Multiple Imputations)

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.116	0.279***
	(0.104)	(0.090)
Age	-0.017	0.051***
	(0.017)	(0.013)
Gender	0.045	-0.158***
	(0.099)	(0.077)
Religious Affiliation	-0.021	-0.025
	(0.035)	(0.026)
Group Affiliation	0.217	0.096
	(0.115)	(0.089)
Maternal Education	-0.021	0.005
	(0.028)	(0.037)
Parental Political Interest	0.098**	0.005
	(0.048)	(0.037)
Citizenship	-0.085	0.018
	(0.134)	(0.105)
Constant	4.243***	3.177***
	(0.441)	(0.339)
Observations	314	314
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 13: White Youth Participation (Multiple Imputations)

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	0.054	0.058	0.15	-0.002
	(0.047)	(0.029)	(0.095)	(0.032)
Age	0.002	-0.009	0.022	0.011**
	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.015)	(0.005)
Gender	-0.009	-0.009	-0.001	-0.031
	(0.044)	(0.027)	(0.090)	(0.031)
Religious Affiliation	0.0019	0.029**	-0.007	-0.002
	(0.015)	(0.009)	(0.029)	(0.010)
Group Affiliation	0.204***	0.244***	0.322***	0.113***
	(0.047)	(0.039)	(0.096)	(0.033)
Maternal Education	0.012	0.030**	0.073***	0.025**
	(0.013)	(0.008)	(0.026)	(0.009)
Parental Political Interest	-0.005	0.057	0.253	0.075
	(0.056)	(0.100)	(0.240)	(0.082)
Citizenship	0.015	0.040**	0.253	0.075***
	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.240)	(0.017)
Internal Efficacy	0.037	-0.013	0.074	-0.027
	(0.052)	(0.044)	(0.107)	(0.036)
External Efficacy	0.078	0.025	0.175	0.041**
	(0.050)	(0.042)	(0.102)	(0.035)
Constant	-0.436	-0.031	-0.421	-0.099
	(0.252)	(0.215)	(0.513)	(0.175)
Observations	567	567	567	567
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 14: Black Youth Participation (Multiple Imputations)

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	0.016	0.030	0.253***	0.057
	(0.040)	(0.033)	(0.074)	(0.037)
Age	-0.010	0.0019	-0.008	0.009
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.012)	(0.006)
Gender	-0.109**	-0.045	-0.051	0.010
	(0.039)	(0.033)	(0.073)	(0.036)
Religious Affiliation	0.027**	0.030	-0.021	-0.0007
	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.025)	(0.012)
Group Affiliation	0.084	0.280***	0.359***	0.179***
	(0.043)	(0.036)	(0.080)	(0.040)
Maternal Education	0.007	-0.0010	0.003	0.017
	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.020)	(0.084)
Parental Political Interest	0.037	-0.108	-0.116	0.017
	(0.091)	(0.077)	(0.172)	(0.084)
Citizenship	0.012	0.051***	0.077**	0.079***
	(0.019)	(0.015)	(0.034)	(0.018)
Internal Efficacy	0.053	-0.040**	0.024	0.037
	(0.040)	(0.034)	(0.074)	(0.037)
External Efficacy	0.008	0.032***	0.017	0.045
	(0.039)	(0.033)	(0.073)	(0.036)
Constant	0.137	-0.003	0.233	-0.302
	(0.214)	(0.180)	(0.399)	(0.197)
Observations	635	635	635	635
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 15: Latinx Youth Participation (Multiple Imputations)

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	0.042	0.144***	0.401***	0.218***
	(0.061)	(0.050)	(0.119)	(0.055)
Age	-0.005	-0.009	-0.007	0.012
	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.019)	(0.008)
Gender	-0.094	0.005	-0.073	-0.086
	(0.056)	(0.048)	(0.112)	(0.051)
Religious Affiliation	0.010	0.048***	0.010	-0.003
	(0.012)	(0.016)	(0.039)	(0.018)
Group Affiliation	0.167	0.189***	0.209	0.124***
	(0.065)	(0.056)	(0.131)	(0.059)
Maternal Education	0.025	0.020	0.027	0.010
	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.027)	(0.013)
Parental Political Interest	0.004	0.093	0.056	-0.011
	(0.075)	(0.065)	(0.151)	(0.069)
Citizenship	0.073	0.033	0.052	0.067***
	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.054)	(0.024)
Internal Efficacy	0.120	0.072	-0.029	-0.023
	(0.064)	(0.056)	(0.129)	(0.059)
External Efficacy	-0.007	-0.037	0.105	-0.002
	(0.061)	(0.053)	(0.124)	(0.057)
Constant	-0.415	-0.139	0.066	0.184
	(0.292)	(0.253)	(0.586)	(0.265)
Observations	314	314	314	314

Note: **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 16: Survey Items[92]

Survey Item	Question Wording
Civic Education (CIVIC EDUCATION)	• Have you ever taken [a high school / an] American government or civics course? o Yes/No/Don't Know
Religious Affiliation (RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION)	• How often do you attend religious services? o Scale of seven, including "don't know"
Group Affiliation (GROUP AFFILIATION)	• Are you a member of an organized group, such as one run through school, church or the park system? Any group or organization counts, not just political groups. o Yes/No/Don't Know
Maternal Education (MATERNAL EDUCATION)	• What is the highest level of schooling [your mother / the person who acted as a mother to you] completed? o Scale of ten and "don't know"
Parental Political Interest (PARENTAL POLITICAL INTEREST)	• How often did that person follow what was going on in government and public affairs? o Scale of six and "don't know"
Citizenship (CITIZENSHIP)	• Were you born outside of the United States? o Scale of three and "don't know"
Internal Efficacy-Average of Two Questions (C6, C7)	• When faced with a problem, I can figure out the right solution and fix the problem. o Scale of five and "don't know" • I am confident that I can deal effectively with unexpected events. o Scale of five and "don't know"
External Efficacy-Average of Two Questions (C12, C13)	• I believe that by participating in politics I can make a difference. o Scale of five and "don't know" • I have the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in politics. o Scale of five and "don't know"
Political Engagement -Average of Four Questions (D3, D9, PARENTAL POLITICAL INTEREST1, D 12)[93]	• In the past 12 months have you voted in a national or local election? o Yes/No/Don't Know • In the last 12 months, have you been active in or joined a political group? o Yes/No/Don't Know • In the last 12 months, have you given money to a candidate, party or political issue? o Yes/No/Don't Know • In the last 12 months, have you worked or volunteered on a political campaign for a candidate or a party? o Yes/No/Don't Know

[92] Cohen 2005

[93] The political engagement variable within the text includes three items. Voting was excluded in order to avoid eliminating respondents under the age of 18. However, the political engagement variable included in the Appendix includes all four political engagement activities.

Civic Engagement -Average of Two Questions (PARENTAL POLITICAL INTEREST4, PARENTAL POLITICAL INTEREST9)	• In the last 12 months, have you worked with the people in your neighborhood on a political issue or problem? o Yes/No/Don't Know • In the last twelve months have you engaged in organized volunteer or community service work—that is, worked for others for no pay o Yes/No/Don't Know
Public voice-Average of Seven Items (D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, PARENTAL POLITICAL INTEREST0, PARENTAL POLITICAL INTEREST5)	• In the past 12 months, have you contacted a public official or agency? o Yes/No/Don't Know • In the last 12 months, signed a paper or e-mail petition? o Yes/No/Don't Know • In the last 12 months, attended a protest meeting, demonstration or sit-in? o Yes/No/Don't Know • In the last 12 months, have you have you participated in a boycott? o Yes/No/Don't Know • Have you engaged in buycotting, that is buying a certain product or service because you like the social or political values of the company that produces or sells the product in the last 12 months? o Yes/No/Don't Know • In the last 12 months, have you written and sent an email or written a blog about a political issue, candidate or political party? o Yes/No/Don't Know • In the last 12 months, written an article or letter to the editor about a political issue or problem? o Yes/No/Don't Know
Cognitive Engagement (PARENTAL POLITICAL INTEREST3)	• In the last 12 months, have you talked with family or friends about a political issue, party or candidate? o Yes/No/Don't Know

Table 17: Alpha Scores for Dependent Variables

Dependent Variable	White Youth	Black Youth	Latino Youth
Civic Engagement	α=0.29	α=0.22	α=0.36
Political Engagement	α=0.53	α=0.44	α=0.29
Public Voice	α=0.58	α=0.57	α=0.51

While Cronbach Alphas do not reach traditional levels of internal consistency, each of the conclusions drawn in the body of this paper are supported by Tables 21-23, which highlight the impact of civic education courses on each individual activity. For example, the effect of civic education on *civic engagement* is driven by volunteerism among white and Latino respondents. The effect of civic education on *public voice* is driven by protests/demonstrations/sit-ins and writing politically-oriented blogs and emails among black youth. Among Latino respondents, this effect on *public voice* is driven by protests/demonstrations/sit-ins and petition signing (see Tables 19 and 20).

Table 18: Political Activities (White Youth)

	Dependent Variable:												
	Join Group	Give Money	Campaign	Contact Official	Volunteer	Local Issue	Protest	Boycott	Buycott	Blog/Email	Wrote Article	Petition	Talk
Civic Education	0.014	-0.006	-0.016	-0.012	0.128***	0.001	-0.002	0.006	-0.016	0.027	0.025	0.063	-0.009
	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.034)	(0.043)	(0.037)	(0.027)	(0.022)	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.024)	(0.044)	(0.034)
Age	0.007	0.002	0.0002	-0.003	-0.014**	0.022***	-0.001	0.001	0.008	-0.014**	-0.001	-0.002	0.013**
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.005)
Gender	-0.039	0.012	-0.030	0.007	-0.019	0.010	-0.011	0.006	-0.049	-0.020	-0.013	0.035	-0.038
	(0.030)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.032)	(0.040)	(0.035)	(0.025)	(0.020)	(0.039)	(0.036)	(0.023)	(0.041)	(0.032)
Religious Affiliation	-0.003	-0.011	0.015	0.004	0.036***	-0.012	0.001	-0.013	-0.008	0.016	-0.014	-0.006	-0.004
	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.007)	(0.014)	(0.010)
Group Affiliation	0.135***	0.010	0.100***	0.073**	0.310***	0.132***	0.090***	0.055**	0.020	0.055	0.049**	0.062	0.088***
	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.034)	(0.042)	(0.037)	(0.026)	(0.021)	(0.041)	(0.038)	(0.024)	(0.044)	(0.033)
Maternal Education	0.010	-0.003	0.004	0.017	0.036***	0.019	-0.002	0.008	0.023**	0.025**	0.004	0.025**	0.025***
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.009)
Parental Political Interest	-0.029*	0.018	-0.026	0.019	0.004	-0.014	-0.029**	0.001	0.008	-0.003	-0.020	0.012	0.083***
	(0.017)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.023)	(0.020)	(0.014)	(0.011)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.013)	(0.023)	(0.018)
Citizenship	-0.039	-0.044	0.067	-0.004	0.093	0.040	0.035	-0.001	0.068	0.268***	0.060	-0.104	0.038
	(0.084)	(0.077)	(0.077)	(0.092)	(0.115)	(0.100)	(0.072)	(0.058)	(0.110)	(0.104)	(0.065)	(0.118)	(0.090)
Internal Efficacy	0.071**	-0.014	0.032	0.015	-0.027	-0.005	0.053	0.071***	-0.006	0.039	0.001	0.016	-0.020
	(0.035)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.039)	(0.048)	(0.042)	(0.030)	(0.024)	(0.046)	(0.044)	(0.027)	(0.050)	(0.038)
External Efficacy	0.130***	0.068***	0.082***	0.100***	0.007	0.090***	0.047**	0.031	0.114***	0.114***	0.045**	0.150***	0.072**
	(0.028)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.030)	(0.038)	(0.033)	(0.023)	(0.019)	(0.036)	(0.034)	(0.021)	(0.039)	(0.030)
Constant	-0.545***	-0.129	-0.202	-0.381**	0.357	-0.575***	-0.087	-0.338***	-0.320	-0.202	0.032	-0.463*	-0.021
	(0.176)	(0.162)	(0.161)	(0.192)	(0.240)	(0.208)	(0.150)	(0.121)	(0.230)	(0.216)	(0.135)	(0.247)	(0.189)
Observations	494	494	494	494	494	494	494	494	494	494	494	494	494
R^2	0.119	0.025	0.080	0.074	0.218	0.075	0.053	0.057	0.045	0.108	0.036	0.073	0.130

Note: **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 19: Political Activities (Black Youth)

	Dependent Variable:												
	Join Group	Give Money	Campaign	Contact Official	Volunteer	Local Issue	Protest	Boycott	Buycott	Blog/Email	Wrote Article	Petition	Talk
Civic Education	0.023	0.001	0.029	0.038	0.053	0.020	0.075***	0.010	0.061	0.124***	0.008	0.056	0.053
	(0.026)	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.030)	(0.040)	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.016)	(0.038)	(0.034)	(0.020)	(0.034)	(0.039)
Age	-0.003	-0.005	0.0001	0.008	-0.008	0.010**	-0.003	-0.0002	0.003	-0.017***	-0.011***	0.010	0.002
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.007)
Gender	-0.026	-0.075***	0.011	-0.040	-0.007	-0.037	0.005	-0.019	-0.031	-0.003	0.014	-0.005	0.006
	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.030)	(0.040)	(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.016)	(0.038)	(0.033)	(0.020)	(0.033)	(0.039)
Religious Affiliation	0.003	0.023**	0.008	0.007	0.038***	0.005	-0.008	0.006	-0.011	-0.009	-0.007	-0.011	-0.015
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.013)	(0.011)	(0.007)	(0.011)	(0.013)
Group Affiliation	0.059**	0.004	0.010	0.095***	0.353***	0.039	0.059**	0.0002	0.130***	0.081**	0.026	0.097***	0.128***
	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.033)	(0.043)	(0.026)	(0.028)	(0.017)	(0.042)	(0.036)	(0.022)	(0.036)	(0.042)
Maternal Education	-0.0002	0.001	0.005	-0.016	0.018	0.006	-0.010	0.006	-0.016	0.005	0.005	0.009	0.014
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.011)
Parental Political Interest	-0.007	-0.003	0.007	0.024	0.032	-0.004	0.015	-0.003	0.010	0.013	-0.005	0.034**	0.071***
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.015)	(0.020)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.008)	(0.019)	(0.016)	(0.010)	(0.016)	(0.019)
Citizenship	0.028	0.010	0.032	-0.083	-0.013	-0.053	-0.057	-0.031	-0.139	0.032	0.007	0.049	0.047
	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.055)	(0.067)	(0.088)	(0.054)	(0.057)	(0.035)	(0.085)	(0.074)	(0.045)	(0.074)	(0.086)
Internal Efficacy	0.028	0.017	0.023	-0.004	-0.030	0.011	0.047	-0.013	0.006	-0.052	0.001	0.025	0.022
	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.028)	(0.035)	(0.045)	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.018)	(0.044)	(0.038)	(0.023)	(0.038)	(0.044)
External Efficacy	0.042	-0.028	0.022	0.058**	0.105***	0.014	-0.00004	0.015	0.055	0.075**	0.021	0.039	0.144***
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.029)	(0.038)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.015)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.019)	(0.032)	(0.037)
Constant	-0.045	0.261	-0.190	-0.202	-0.103	-0.199	-0.057	0.011	0.070	0.304	0.189	-0.443**	-0.232
	(0.146)	(0.148)	(0.137)	(0.169)	(0.222)	(0.135)	(0.142)	(0.087)	(0.213)	(0.187)	(0.112)	(0.187)	(0.216)
Observations	523	523	523	523	523	523	523	523	523	523	523	523	523
R^2	0.028	0.038	0.017	0.051	0.238	0.025	0.042	0.015	0.042	0.086	0.036	0.051	0.116

Note: **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 20: Political Activities (Latinx Youth)

	Dependent Variable:												
	Join Group	Give Money	Campaign	Contact Official	Volunteer	Local Issue	Protest	Boycott	Buycott	Blog/Email	Wrote Article	Petition	Talk
Civic Education	0.032	0.016	0.001	0.050	0.201***	0.072	0.070	0.016	0.041	0.094	-0.016	0.111**	0.182***
	(0.039)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.040)	(0.062)	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.023)	(0.058)	(0.053)	(0.030)	(0.052)	(0.059)
Age	-0.011	0.010	0.002	0.003	-0.011	0.016**	0.006	0.004	-0.004	0.001	0.004	0.011	0.018*
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.009)	(0.010)
Gender	-0.038	-0.055	-0.053	0.010	-0.014	-0.037	0.040	-0.002	-0.006	-0.040	-0.045	-0.108**	-0.103
	(0.036)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.038)	(0.059)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.022)	(0.055)	(0.050)	(0.028)	(0.050)	(0.056)
Religious Affiliation	0.002	0.0002	0.008	0.024	0.038	-0.004	0.017	0.018**	0.025	-0.026	0.014	-0.013	-0.004
	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.020)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.008)	(0.019)	(0.017)	(0.009)	(0.017)	(0.019)
Group Affiliation	0.075	-0.041	0.086**	0.063	0.262***	0.097**	-0.021	-0.010	-0.078	0.085	0.021	0.103	0.088
	(0.042)	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.043)	(0.068)	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.026)	(0.063)	(0.058)	(0.032)	(0.057)	(0.065)
Maternal Education	0.033***	0.005	-0.004	0.017	0.007	0.020**	0.002	0.007	0.014	0.016	0.002	0.022	0.022
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.015)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.006)	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.007)	(0.013)	(0.015)
Parental Political Interest	0.014	0.019	0.030	0.026	0.001	0.008	0.010	0.006	0.007	0.009	0.018	-0.018	0.059**
	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.029)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.011)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.014)	(0.024)	(0.027)
Citizenship	0.047	-0.0002	0.018	0.137***	0.016	0.045	-0.015	0.008	0.060	0.123	0.066	-0.053	-0.006
	(0.049)	(0.045)	(0.046)	(0.051)	(0.079)	(0.048)	(0.046)	(0.030)	(0.073)	(0.067)	(0.038)	(0.067)	(0.075)
Internal Efficacy	0.109**	-0.032	-0.006	0.012	-0.045	0.005	0.067	0.024	-0.107	-0.052	-0.022	0.046	-0.030
	(0.044)	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.045)	(0.071)	(0.043)	(0.041)	(0.027)	(0.066)	(0.061)	(0.034)	(0.060)	(0.068)
External Efficacy	0.073**	0.149***	0.073**	0.073**	0.048	0.074**	0.014	-0.034	0.062	0.108**	0.020	0.098**	0.056
	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.054)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.020)	(0.050)	(0.046)	(0.026)	(0.045)	(0.051)
Constant	-0.472**	-0.447**	-0.221	-0.568***	0.437	-0.584***	-0.499***	-0.160	0.285	-0.034	-0.085	-0.356	-0.024
	(0.204)	(0.188)	(0.193)	(0.211)	(0.329)	(0.198)	(0.190)	(0.124)	(0.306)	(0.281)	(0.157)	(0.278)	(0.314)
Observations	252	252	252	252	252	252	252	252	252	252	252	252	252
R^2	0.177	0.121	0.079	0.123	0.159	0.136	0.066	0.056	0.035	0.078	0.053	0.120	0.129

Note: **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 21: Political Attitudes-White Women

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.088	0.019
	(0.065)	(0.054)
Age	-0.021**	0.023***
	(0.010)	(0.008)
Religious Affiliation	0.047**	0.007
	(0.022)	(0.018)
Group Affiliation	0.068	0.017
	(0.068)	(0.056)
Maternal Education	0.020	0.006
	(0.017)	(0.014)
Parental Political Interest	0.120***	-0.015
	(0.035)	(0.029)
Citizenship	-0.061	-0.025
	(0.161)	(0.134)
Constant	2.389***	2.690***
	(0.266)	(0.221)
Observations	259	259
R^2	0.136	0.036
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 22: Political Attitudes-White Men

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.217***	0.060
	(0.083)	(0.061)
Age	-0.025	0.018
	(0.014)	(0.010)
Religious Affiliation	-0.007	-0.007
	(0.024)	(0.018)
Group Affiliation	0.137	0.063
	(0.080)	(0.059)
Maternal Education	-0.008	0.001
	(0.023)	(0.017)
Parental Political Interest	0.171***	0.030
	(0.041)	(0.031)
Citizenship	0.544**	-0.066
	(0.261)	(0.194)
Constant	2.484***	2.763***
	(0.347)	(0.257)
Observations	235	235
R^2	0.155	0.032
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 23: Political Attitudes-Black Women

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.022	-0.006
	(0.068)	(0.059)
Age	-0.015	0.009
	(0.011)	(0.010)
Religious Affiliation	0.002	-0.011
	(0.022)	(0.019)
Group Affiliation	0.114	-0.008
	(0.070)	(0.061)
Maternal Education	0.019	0.005
	(0.019)	(0.016)
Parental Political Interest	0.088***	-0.003
	(0.033)	(0.029)
Citizenship	-0.072	-0.011
	(0.150)	(0.131)
Constant	2.708***	3.047***
	(0.312)	(0.273)
Observations	293	293
R^2	0.067	0.006
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 24: Political Attitudes-Black Men

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.035	0.031
	(0.071)	(0.055)
Age	0.015	0.040***
	(0.012)	(0.009)
Religious Affiliation	-0.015	-0.009
	(0.025)	(0.019)
Group Affiliation	0.138	0.064
	(0.079)	(0.062)
Maternal Education	-0.023	-0.004
	(0.019)	(0.015)
Parental Political Interest	0.120***	0.035
	(0.033)	(0.026)
Citizenship	-0.057	-0.131
	(0.156)	(0.122)
Constant	2.261***	2.351***
	(0.302)	(0.237)
Observations	230	230
R^2	0.081	0.099
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 25: Political Attitudes-Latina

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.127	0.196***
	(0.099)	(0.074)
Age	-0.030	0.033***
	(0.015)	(0.012)
Religious Affiliation	-0.007	0.010
	(0.031)	(0.023)
Group Affiliation	0.084	-0.017
	(0.106)	(0.080)
Maternal Education	-0.014	0.009
	(0.025)	(0.018)
Parental Political Interest	0.055	0.004
	(0.047)	(0.035)
Citizenship	-0.133	-0.025
	(0.132)	(0.099)
Constant	3.245***	2.322***
	(0.370)	(0.278)
Observations	132	132
R^2	0.072	0.148
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 26: Political Attitudes-Latino

	Dependent Variable:	
	External Efficacy	Internal Efficacy
Civic Education	0.097	0.072
	(0.114)	(0.086)
Age	0.001	0.034**
	(0.019)	(0.015)
Religious Affiliation	-0.032	-0.034
	(0.040)	(0.030)
Group Affiliation	0.245	0.215**
	(0.134)	(0.101)
Maternal Education	0.015	0.034
	(0.029)	(0.022)
Parental Political Interest	0.088	0.013
	(0.053)	(0.040)
Citizenship	0.062	0.097
	(0.146)	(0.110)
Constant	2.381***	2.331***
	(0.484)	(0.365)
Observations	120	120
R^2	0.074	0.146
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 27: Political Participation-White Women

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	-0.028	0.025	0.001	0.049
	(0.027)	(0.039)	(0.023)	(0.045)
Age	-0.001	-0.007	0.005	0.016**
	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.007)
Religious Affiliation	-0.002	0.023	-0.005	-0.026
	(0.009)	(0.013)	(0.008)	(0.015)
Group Affiliation	0.073**	0.190***	0.070***	0.168***
	(0.028)	(0.040)	(0.024)	(0.047)
Maternal Education	0.006	0.032***	0.020***	0.023
	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.006)	(0.012)
Parental Political Interest	-0.021	0.009	-0.015	0.108***
	(0.015)	(0.021)	(0.013)	(0.025)
Citizenship	-0.033	-0.009	0.027	0.039
	(0.067)	(0.095)	(0.057)	(0.111)
Internal Efficacy	0.021	0.006	0.003	-0.080
	(0.032)	(0.046)	(0.028)	(0.054)
External Efficacy	0.075***	0.055	0.118***	0.092**
	(0.027)	(0.038)	(0.023)	(0.045)
Constant	-0.126	-0.096	-0.370***	-0.127
	(0.148)	(0.209)	(0.126)	(0.245)
Observations	259	259	259	259
R^2	0.083	0.236	0.202	--
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 28: Political Participation-White Men

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	0.027	0.100**	0.032	-0.102**
	(0.033)	(0.043)	(0.026)	(0.049)
Age	0.009	-0.010	-0.002	0.009
	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.008)
Religious Affiliation	0.006	0.017	-0.007	0.012
	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.007)	(0.014)
Group Affiliation	0.102***	0.192***	0.059**	-0.015
	(0.031)	(0.041)	(0.025)	(0.047)
Maternal Education	0.002	0.021	0.007	0.025
	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.007)	(0.013)
Parental Political Interest	-0.004	0.018	0.005	0.051**
	(0.017)	(0.022)	(0.013)	(0.025)
Citizenship	0.052	0.143	0.108	0.089
	(0.102)	(0.136)	(0.081)	(0.155)
Internal Efficacy	0.039	-0.020	0.040	0.056
	(0.035)	(0.046)	(0.028)	(0.053)
External Efficacy	0.104***	0.042	0.053**	0.075
	(0.026)	(0.034)	(0.021)	(0.039)
Constant	-0.564***	0.078	-0.177	-0.069
	(0.173)	(0.231)	(0.138)	(0.263)
Observations	235	235	235	235
R^2	0.157	0.213	0.125	--
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 29: Political Participation-Black Women

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	0.040	0.063	0.069***	0.057
	(0.023)	(0.034)	(0.019)	(0.052)
Age	-0.006	-0.006	-0.004	0.002
	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.003)	(0.009)
Religious Affiliation	0.006	0.003	-0.011	-0.011
	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.006)	(0.017)
Group Affiliation	0.036	0.263***	0.089***	0.127**
	(0.024)	(0.036)	(0.019)	(0.054)
Maternal Education	0.005	0.004	-0.003	0.022
	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.014)
Parental Political Interest	0.001	0.024	0.013	0.054**
	(0.011)	(0.017)	(0.009)	(0.026)
Citizenship	0.106**	-0.048	-0.0004	0.198
	(0.051)	(0.076)	(0.041)	(0.116)
Internal Efficacy	0.003	-0.005	-0.024	0.034
	(0.025)	(0.037)	(0.020)	(0.057)
External Efficacy	0.028	0.049	0.025	0.129***
	(0.022)	(0.032)	(0.018)	(0.050)
Constant	0.008	0.015	0.137	-0.223
	(0.131)	(0.194)	(0.106)	(0.296)
Observations	293	293	293	293
R^2	0.072	0.254	0.163	--
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 30: Political Participation-Black Men

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	-0.012	0.019	0.024	0.044
	(0.028)	(0.040)	(0.022)	(0.060)
Age	0.002	0.006	0.001	0.0005
	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.010)
Religious Affiliation	0.020**	0.051***	0.005	-0.020
	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.008)	(0.021)
Group Affiliation	0.008	0.166***	0.020	0.129
	(0.032)	(0.045)	(0.025)	(0.068)
Maternal Education	-0.001	-0.003	0.006	0.009
	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.006)	(0.016)
Parental Political Interest	-0.003	0.029	0.001	0.092***
	(0.014)	(0.019)	(0.011)	(0.029)
Citizenship	-0.065	-0.047	-0.057	-0.128
	(0.062)	(0.088)	(0.048)	(0.132)
Internal Efficacy	0.043	-0.026	0.053	0.003
	(0.034)	(0.049)	(0.027)	(0.074)
External Efficacy	-0.010	0.119***	0.047**	0.160***
	(0.027)	(0.038)	(0.021)	(0.058)
Constant	-0.095	-0.420	-0.283**	-0.200
	(0.151)	(0.214)	(0.118)	(0.324)
Observations	230	230	230	230
R^2	0.033	0.224	0.081	--
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 31: Political Participation-Latinas

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	0.013	0.095	0.046	0.183**
	(0.031)	(0.058)	(0.030)	(0.085)
Age	0.003	-0.002	0.010**	0.037***
	(0.005)	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.014)
Religious Affiliation	0.0005	0.031	0.006	0.006
	(0.009)	(0.018)	(0.009)	(0.026)
Group Affiliation	0.080**	0.179***	0.038	0.132
	(0.032)	(0.060)	(0.031)	(0.089)
Maternal Education	0.003	0.005	0.009	0.026
	(0.007)	(0.014)	(0.007)	(0.021)
Parental Political Interest	0.023	0.031	0.013	0.082**
	(0.014)	(0.027)	(0.014)	(0.039)
Citizenship	0.007	0.012	0.013	-0.106
	(0.040)	(0.075)	(0.038)	(0.110)
Internal Efficacy	0.054	0.027	0.003	0.015
	(0.037)	(0.068)	(0.035)	(0.100)
External Efficacy	0.055**	0.025	0.035	0.022
	(0.027)	(0.051)	(0.026)	(0.075)
Constant	-0.454***	-0.152	-0.341**	-0.793
	(0.160)	(0.300)	(0.153)	(0.440)
Observations	132	132	132	132
R^2	0.166	0.177	0.134	--
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 32: Political Participation-Latinos

	Dependent Variable:			
	Political	Civic	Public Voice	Cognitive
Civic Education	0.018	0.158***	0.065**	0.170**
	(0.037)	(0.055)	(0.031)	(0.084)
Age	-0.003	-0.008	-0.001	-0.008
	(0.006)	(0.010)	(0.005)	(0.014)
Religious Affiliation	0.009	0.034	0.002	-0.027
	(0.013)	(0.019)	(0.011)	(0.029)
Group Affiliation	-0.003	0.139**	0.019	0.068
	(0.044)	(0.066)	(0.037)	(0.101)
Maternal Education	0.021**	0.024	0.016**	0.021
	(0.009)	(0.014)	(0.008)	(0.021)
Parental Political Interest	0.014	-0.010	-0.004	0.028
	(0.017)	(0.026)	(0.015)	(0.039)
Citizenship	0.045	0.148**	0.058	0.090
	(0.047)	(0.070)	(0.040)	(0.107)
Internal Efficacy	-0.005	-0.057	-0.015	-0.080
	(0.041)	(0.061)	(0.035)	(0.093)
External Efficacy	0.140***	0.094**	0.065**	0.109
	(0.031)	(0.046)	(0.026)	(0.070)
Constant	-0.421**	0.042	-0.114	0.585
	(0.190)	(0.283)	(0.160)	(0.429)
Observations	120	120	120	120
R^2	0.247	0.246	0.159	--
Note:				**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Civic Education and Gender

Civic education courses are associated with significant gender effects within racial groups. As shown in Tables 28 and 29, civic education courses are associated with higher rates of civic engagement among white men ($p<0.05$), but not white women. This finding is particularly surprising given that most states include service learning in their education standards (see Figure 1). However, it may be possible that women are completing service learning requirements without opting into a civic education class. In fact, Niemi and Junn find that men tend to be more interested in the content of civic education courses and are subsequently more likely to opt into these courses (1998). Thus, these gender effects may actually reflect differing levels of interest or self-selection. Future work addressing this topic should consider whether a civics course is required whenever possible in order to address this ambiguity more thoroughly.

The strong relationship between civic education and acts of *public voice* among black women specifically necessitates a more nuanced examination of psychological mechanisms (see Tables 30 and 31). One plausible explanation is that in the rare instances when black women are featured in a civic education course, they are typically portrayed taking extra-systemic action (i.e. Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks). An alternative explanation, which I find more plausible since the effect of rare moments of descriptive representation in curricula are likely to be minimal, is that systemic marginalization has increased salience for black women, and thus that they are more likely to pursue acts of public voice when politicized. In other words, future work should explore whether young black women with access to these courses are modeling their behavior based on the figures presented in the class or whether the content of the courses increases awareness of the deeply-rooted nature of racial and gender inequality in the United States. Both hypotheses are plausible and should be explored in greater detail in future work.

While civic education courses are associated with higher rates of cognitive engagement among both Latinos ($p<0.01$) and Latinas ($p<0.01$), distinct gender effects emerge when examining other domains (see Tables 32-33). Specifically, while civic education courses are associated with higher rates of public voice ($p<0.05$) and civic engagement ($p<0.01$) among Latinos, this is not the case for Latinas. Future work must explore the extent to which the content delivered in civic education courses triggers different psychological responses among men and women. For example, García Bedolla finds that positive assessments of one's own group to be associated with higher rates of political participation among young Latinxs in Los Angeles (2005, 141-144). Thus, researchers should consider the extent to which the content of civic education courses either facilitates or inhibits the formation of positive group images along gender lines.

Appendix for Chapter 3

Table 1: Respondent Characteristics

Variables	Latino Youth		White Youth		Black Youth		Asian Youth	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Demographics								
Age ⟨μ⟩	16.4	16.3	16.7	16.7	16.3	16.3	16.8	16.9
Maternal Education ⟨μ⟩	4.1	4.2	5.9	5.9	5.2	5.0	5.8	5.4
Paternal Education ⟨μ⟩	4.1	3.7	6.0	6.0	5.5	5.2	5.8	5.6
Socialization								
Parental Political Interest ⟨μ⟩	3.1	3.0	3.9	3.9	3.2	3.0	2.7	3.1
Extra Curricular Activities ⟨% Yes⟩	72%	67%	90%	77%	73%	74%	88%	89%
Religious Attendance ⟨μ⟩	3.3	3.3	2.4	2.6	3.0	2.6	2.9	3.2
Attitudes Towards the Police								
Approval of Police ⟨μ⟩	2.5	1.85	2.7	3.2	2.2	2.2	2.8	3.1
Police Harder on People of Color ⟨% Yes⟩	87%	82%	94%	75%	94%	94%	95%	91%
Political Interest								
Interest in Local Politics ⟨μ⟩	1.9	2.0	2.3	2.1	2.3	2.1	1.9	1.7
Interest in National Politics ⟨μ⟩	2.5	2.7	3.6	3.7	2.4	3.0	3.1	2.8
Interest in the 2016 Election ⟨μ⟩	3.1	3.2	3.9	4.0	3.0	2.8	3.3	3.1
Overall Interest ⟨μ⟩	2.9	3.0	3.5	3.7	2.7	3.0	3.1	2.9
News Consumption ⟨μ⟩	4.1	4.0	4.7	5.1	4.0	3.8	4.1	4.2
Activist Knowledge ⟨% Correct⟩	33%	34%	39%	40%	55%	47%	48%	54%
Political Identities								
Ideology ⟨%⟩								
Liberal	52%	38%	75%	52%	49%	44%	73%	49%
Moderate	32%	47%	17%	23%	36%	38%	13%	23%
Conservative	6%	9%	6%	23%	7%	8%	10%	17%
Don't Know/Refused	10%	6%	2%	2%	8%	10%	4%	11%
Party Identification ⟨%⟩								
Democrat	73%	58%	81%	60%	60%	68%	64%	63%
Independent	20%	28%	4%	14%	19%	20%	29%	23%
Republican	0%	8%	10%	25%	4%	3%	4%	9%
Don't Know/Refused	7%	6%	5%	1%	17%	9%	3%	5%
Classroom Characteristics								
AP or Honors Course ⟨% Yes⟩	50%	55%	64%	68%	22%	1%	63%	54%
Social Studies Elective ⟨% Yes⟩	25%	19%	42%	35%	7%	10%	58%	63%

Table 1 provides a breakdown of demographic characteristics, other factors of socialization, attitudes towards the police, extant political interest, political ideology, party identification, and classroom characteristics by race and gender.

Table 2: Randomization

	Dependent Variable:
	Experimental Condition
Race	0.010
	(0.017)
School	0.001
	(0.012)
Age	0.043
	(0.035)
Gender	0.017
	(0.044)
Zip Code	-0.0003
	(0.0002)
Parental Political Interest	0.030
	(0.024)
Mother's Educational Attainment	0.018
	(0.018)
Father's Educational Attainment	-0.030*
	(0.017)
AP Course	-0.039
	(0.079)
Elective	-0.125*
	(0.076)
Activist Knowledge	0.009
	(0.038)
Religion	0.014
	(0.015)
Club	-0.044
	(0.056)
Trust of Police	0.103***
	(0.029)
Interest in Local Politics	-0.016
	(0.024)
Interest in National Politics	-0.017
	(0.032)
Interest in 2016 Election	0.017
	(0.026)
Ideology	0.010
	(0.020)
Reading Fluency	0.097*
	(0.058)
Constant	17.262
	(11.251)
Observations	580
R^2	0.062
Note:	*p**p***p<0.01

Table 3: Political Engagement (with School Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:		
	White Youth	Black Youth	Latinx Youth
Condition	-0.150	0.138	0.347***
	(0.137)	(0.141)	(0.130)
School Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	3.900***	2.669***	2.821***
	(0.895)	(0.135)	(0.295)
Observations	172	179	205
R^2	0.062	0.039	0.054
Note:			**p<0.05***p<0.01

Table 4: Public Voice (with School Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:		
	White Youth	Black Youth	Latinx Youth
Condition	-0.093	0.249*	0.499***
	(0.143)	(0.139)	(0.129)
School Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	3.218***	2.507***	2.806***
	(0.945)	(0.132)	(0.307)
Observations	177	168	202
R^2	0.010	0.118	0.095
Note:			*p<0.1 **p<0.05***p<0.01

Table 5: Cognitive Engagement (with School Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:		
	White Youth	Black Youth	Latinx Youth
Condition	-0.212*	-0.003	0.366**
	(0.123)	(0.159)	(0.143)
School Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	5.212***	3.878***	3.627***
	(0.827)	(0.151)	(0.311)
Observations	182	181	211
R^2	0.166	0.067	0.096
Note:			*p<0.1 **p<0.05***p<0.01

Table 6: Civic Engagement (with School Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable:		
	White Youth	Black Youth	Latinx Youth
Condition	-0.053	0.225	0.436***
	(0.175)	(0.186)	(0.163)
School Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	2.053*	2.919***	3.245***
	(1.177)	(0.177)	(0.357)
Observations	182	179	211
R^2	0.064	0.038	0.059
Note:			p<0.01

Table 7: Sample Size, Means, and Standard Errors for Each Condition (Main Study)

	Political Engagement	Public Voice	Cognitive Engagement	Civic Engagement
Black Control N=93	μ=2.60 Standard Error=0.1	μ=2.58 Standard Error=0.1	μ=3.98 Standard Error=0.1	μ=2.93 Standard Error=0.12
Black Treatment N=88	μ=2.79 Standard Error=0.1	μ=2.91 Standard Error=0,1	μ=3.99 Standard Error=0.1	μ=3.15 Standard Error=0.13
Latinx Control N=115	μ=2.57 Standard Error=0.09	μ=2.59 Standard Error=0.09	μ=3.83 Standard Error=0.1	μ=2.90 Standard Error=0.1
Latinx Treatment N=97	μ=2.91 Standard Error=0.1	μ=3.10 Standard Error=0.09	μ=4.20 Standard Error=0.1	μ=3.33 Standard Error=0.1
White Control N=85	μ=2.95 Standard Error=0.1	μ=2.84 Standard Error=0.09	μ=4.60 Standard Error=0.08	μ=2.93 Standard Error=0.1
White Treatment N=97	μ=2.81 Standard Error=0.09	μ=2.76 Standard Error=0.1	μ=4.38 Standard Error=0.1	μ=2.93 Standard Error=0.1

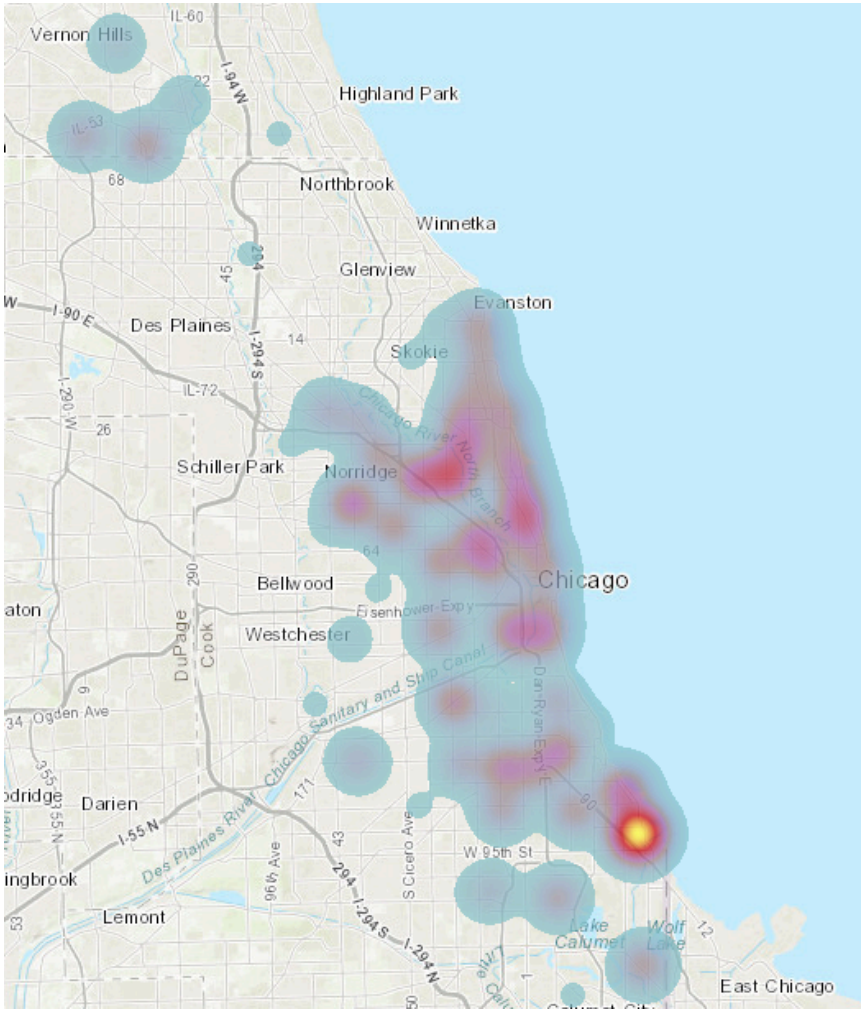
Table 8: Sample Size, Means, and Standard Errors for Each Condition (Pre-Treatment)

	Political Engagement	Public Voice	Cognitive Engagement	Civic Engagement
Traditional Pedagogy (Control) N=181	μ=2.64 Standard Error=0.07	μ=2.61 Standard Error=0.06	μ=3.99 Standard Error=0.08	μ=2.81 Standard Error=0.09
Traditional Pedagogy (Treatment) N=182	μ=2.85 Standard Error=0.07	μ=2.90 Standard Error=0.07	μ=4.21 Standard Error=0.08	μ=3.15 Standard Error=0.09
Critical Pedagogy (Control) N=155	μ=2.73 Standard Error=0.08	μ=2.70 Standard Error=0.08	μ=4.16 Standard Error=0.08	μ=3.03 Standard Error=0.09
Critical Pedagogy (Treatment) N=160	μ=2.75 Standard Error=0.07	μ=2.82 Standard Error=0.07	μ=4.10 Standard Error=0.09	μ=3.04 Standard Error=0.09

Table 9: Comparison of Means for Each Individual Activity

	White Youth			Latinx Youth			Black Youth		
Political Engagement	Control	Treatment	Difference in Means	Control	Treatment	Difference in Means	Control	Treatment	Difference in Means
Vote	4.43	4.16	p=0.14	3.50	3.90	**p=0.043**	3.40	3.81	p=0.08
Campaign	2.34	2.19	p=0.39	2.16	2.66	**p=0.004**	2.33	2.41	p=0.64
Give Money to a Campaign or Issue	2.31	2.28	p=0.88	2.29	2.49	p=0.21	2.31	2.40	p=0.64
Join a Political Group	2.74	2.72	p=0.93	2.36	2.61	p=0.12	2.39	2.53	p=0.41
Public Voice									
Protest	3.06	2.90	p=0.39	2.80	3.47	**p<0.001**	2.61	3.13	**p=0.008**
Boycott	2.82	2.78	p=0.81	2.64	3.33	**p<0.001**	2.63	3.17	**p=0.005**
Contacting a Public Official	2.60	2.26	p=0.09	2.10	2.38	p=0.07	2.14	2.21	p=0.70
Social Media Post	3.26	3.18	p=0.70	3.20	3.70	p=0.01	3.40	3.64	p=0.3
Signing a Petition	3.62	3.51	p=0.51	2.92	3.60	**p<0.001**	2.80	3.32	**p=0.04**
Sending an Email	2.54	2.49	p=0.44	2.22	2.46	p=0.15	2.46	2.45	p=0.99
Writing a Blog or Letter to the Editor	2.10	2.15	p=0.72	2.10	2.37	p=0.1	2.40	2.36	p=0.94

Figure 1: Geographical Distribution of Respondents



The heat map included above in Figure 1 maps each respondent by Zip Code with warmer areas corresponding to higher concentrations of respondents. Though the study was only conducted within nine communities, the map shows robust geographical distribution across the city.

Figure 2

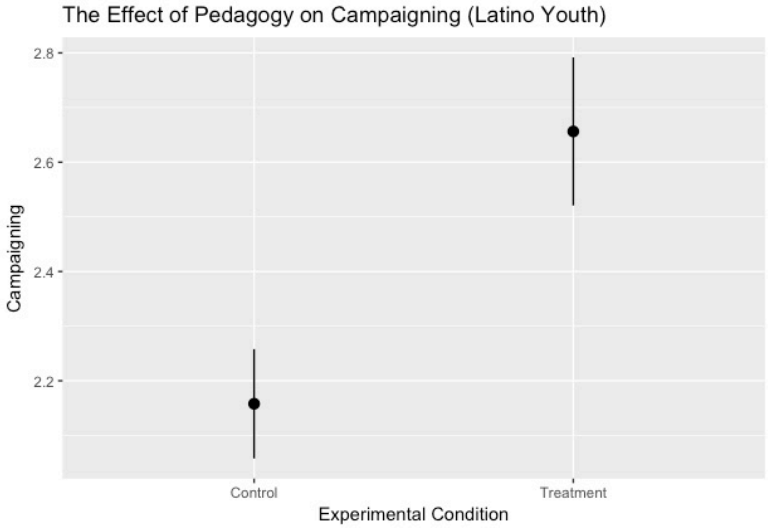


Figure 2 demonstrates that the effect of critical pedagogy on acts of political engagement is largely driven by willingness to campaign among Latinxs. Those in the treatment group are significantly more likely to say they intend to campaign in the future than those in the control group (p=0.004). Cohen's d=0.41.

Figure 3

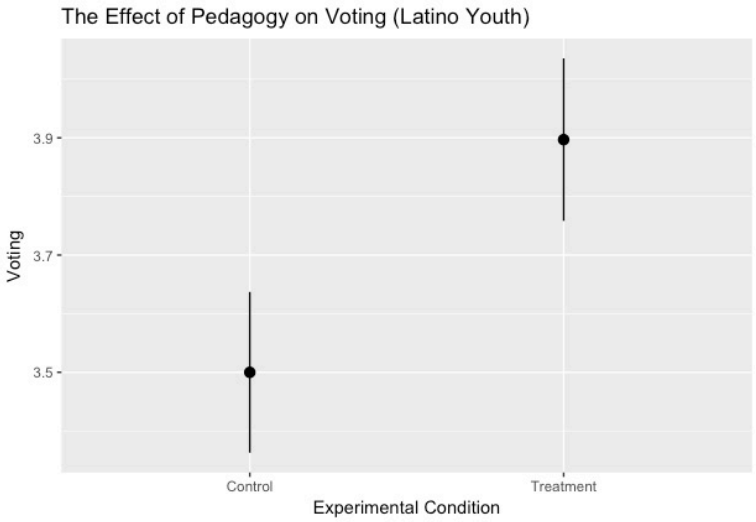


Figure 3 demonstrates that the effect of critical pedagogy on acts of political engagement is largely driven by willingness to vote among Latinxs. Those in the treatment group are significantly more likely to say they intend to vote in the future than those in the control group (p=0.004). Cohen's d=0.28.

Appendix for Chapter 4

Focus Group Questions

Note: Sections in red will only be asked if these themes do not emerge naturally during the open response section.

Open Response [15 minutes]:

1. What reactions did you have to the passages from "Textbook 1?"
2. What reactions did you have to the passages from "Textbook 2?"
3. Which passage is more interesting? Why?
4. Which passage is more informative? Why?

Empowerment Probe [10 minutes]

- Which passage provides better information about how to participate in politics?
- Which passage is more empowering? Why?

Role-Modeling Probe [10 minutes]

5. Do either of the passages talk about individuals you look up to? Which figures stand out most?

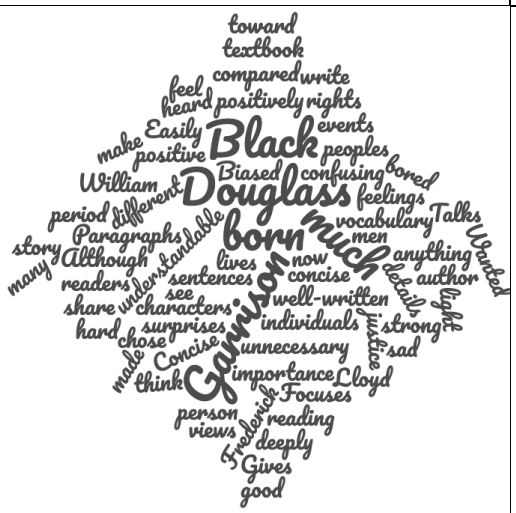
Evaluation [15 minutes]

6. Which of these textbooks would you prefer to use in your classroom and why?
7. Some people think that the things young people learn about in social studies classes shape how they think about politics. Do you agree?
8. Thinking about both Textbook 1 and Textbook 2, do you think one of these texts would be more likely to get young people like you more excited about participating in politics?

Individual Responses

Prior to each focus group discussion, students completed a close reading exercise, recording any reactions they had to the texts within the margins. Each of these responses was recorded verbatim and aggregated into word frequency tables to ensure that themes that emerged within the individual responses were similar to those that emerged in the focus groups. Visualizations of the individual responses are summarized in Table 2.

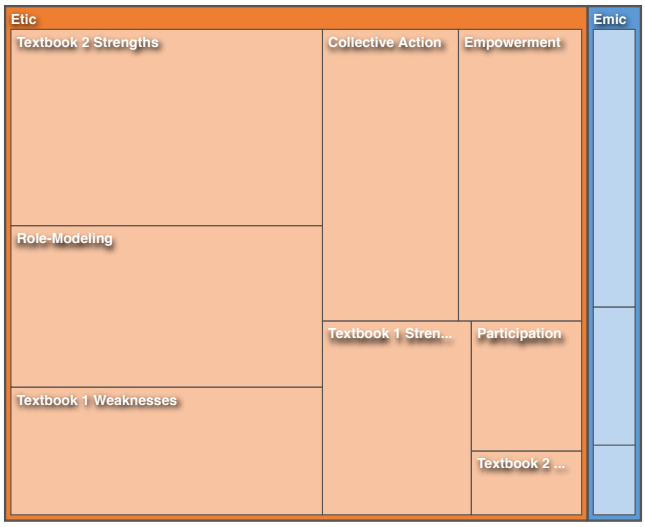
Table 2: Summary of Student Written Responses

	Traditional Textbook	*Critical Textbook*
Abolitionism		
Caesar Chavez		
Chinese Exclusion		

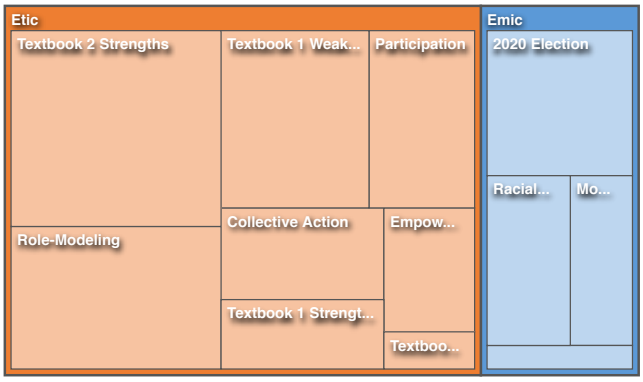
Coding Frequencies by Parent Node

The visuals presented below summarize coding frequencies broken down by focus group. Textbook 2 strengths emerged as the most frequently coded themes in each focus group. Textbook 2 is the more critical textbook described at length in the chapter.

Asian American Focus Group



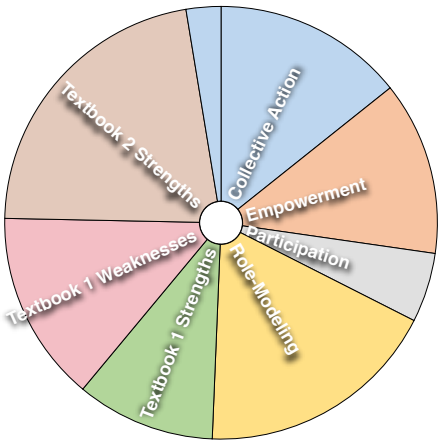
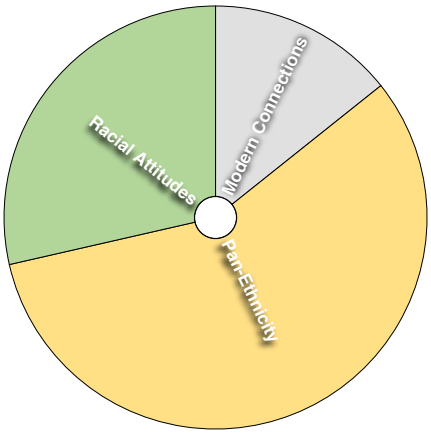
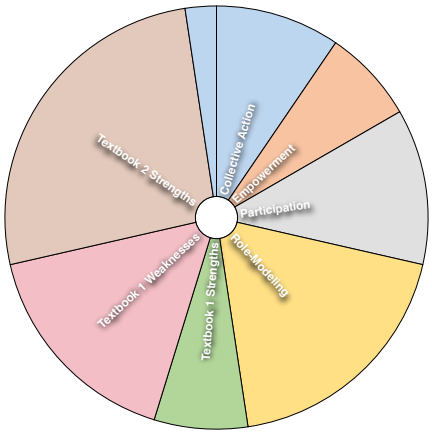
Black Focus Group



Latinx Focus Group

Themes by Parent Code

The visuals presented below summarize coding frequencies broken down by focus group. Specifically, these images provide a better sense of the unique Emic (insider) that emerged within each racial group.

	Etic (Outsider) Themes	*Emic (Insider) Themes*
Asian Youth		
Black Youth		

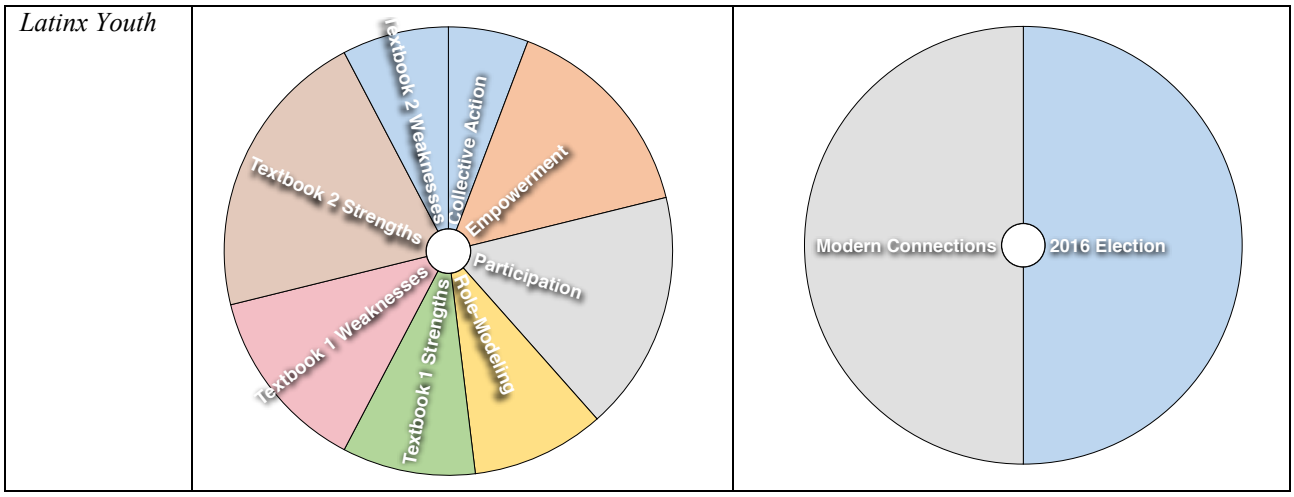


Figure 1

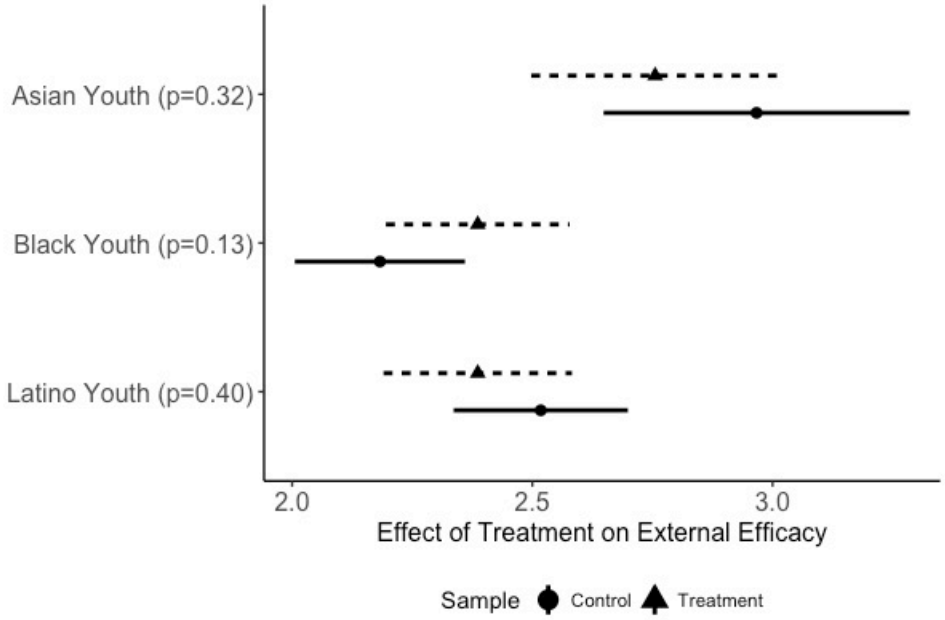


Figure 1 demonstrates that there were no significant differences in rates of reported efficacy among young people included in the experimental study. These results suggest that other mechanisms (e.g. empowerment) are activated when young people of color are exposed to the critical textbook.

Figure 2

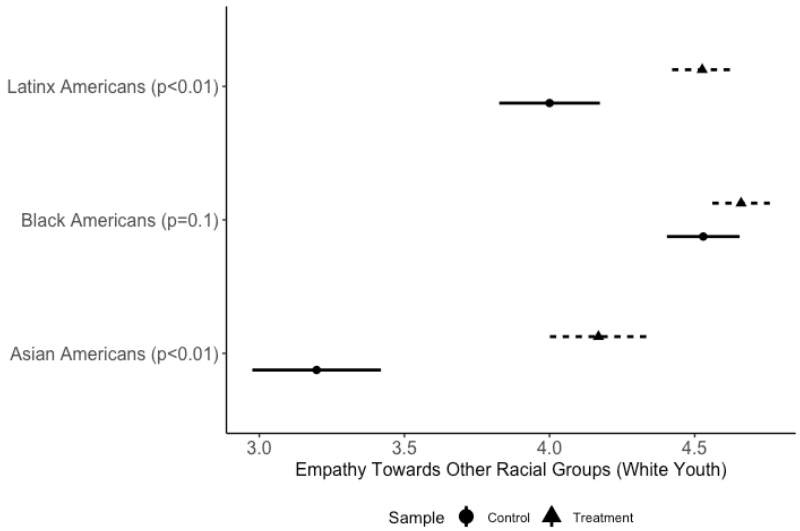


Figure 2 demonstrates that exposure to the critical textbook passages caused white youth to become more likely to agree that Asian, Black, and Latinx youth made a difference in society.

Appendix for Chapter 5

Table 1: Critical Pedagogy Battery

Index	Survey Items	Alpha	Mean
Open Classroom	• A teacher should participate in class dialogues and discussions as a learner among learners. • Teachers are **not** the only source of knowledge in the classroom. • Teachers must share their authority and responsibilities with students in the classroom. • Teachers should use dialogue and open communication as one of the main activities in the classroom for sharing ideas. • Learners should be involved in the process of selecting topics and activities that are focused on in the classroom.	α=0.81	μ= 3.8 (1-5 Scale)
Critical Thinking	• A teacher's main role is to teach students not only to learn more independently but also to think and act in a more independent way. • Teachers should encourage and help learners to create learning opportunities for themselves. • A major role of teachers is to improve learners' critical thinking skills.	α=0.82	μ= 4.2 (1-5 Scale)
Critical Content	• Teachers should decide on their teaching strategies and techniques based on learners' specific characteristics (e.g., age, race, gender, needs, and interests). • Ideal textbooks are those which are designed locally and in the light of learners' real life. • The content of courses and books which are commonly taught in Chicago are often unrelated to learners' real-life concerns and problems. • Teachers should be critical of the cultural, social, and political aspects of textbook content while working with students. • Environmental, social, and political issues are suitable topics to focus on in the classroom.	α=0.76	μ= 3.7 (1-5 Scale)
Analyses of power structures	• One of a teacher's main roles is to make students aware of inequalities in society. • A major role of a teacher is to help students develop their own understanding of whom they are and their place in the world.	α=0.81	μ= 4.2 (1-5 Scale)
Combined	--	α=0.90	μ= 4.0

Table 2: Independent Variables

Index	Survey Items	Alpha	Mean
Authoritarianism	• Please tell me which one you think is more important for a child to have: INDEPENDENCE or RESPECT FOR ELDERS? • Which one is more important for a child to have: CURIOSITY or GOOD MANNERS? • Which one is more important for a child to have OBEDIENCE or SELF-RELIANCE? • Which one is more important for a child to have: BEING CONSIDERATE or WELL BEHAVED?	α=0.71	μ= 1.6 (1-3 Scale)
Racial Liberalism	• To what extent do you oppose or support affirmative action programs designed to help blacks and other minorities get access to better jobs and education (e.g., a college education)? • How much do you disagree or agree with the following statements? Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America. **(Reverse Coded)** • Students from disadvantaged social backgrounds should be given preferential treatment in college admissions. • Schools should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus.	α=0.63	μ= 5.8 (1-7 Scale)
Neighborhood Value	• In the neighborhood where work, how much of a problem are things like drugs, violence, gangs, and crime? Would you say… • People often have a range of views about the neighborhood where they work. Considering things like the quality of schools, the types of businesses, and how well residents care for their properties, would you say the neighborhood you work in is a… • Now tell me how much you disagree or agree with the following statements: Working together with individuals within the neighborhood where I work can solve many of the neighborhood's problems. Do you… • People living in the neighborhood where I work do not value education. **(Reverse Coded)** • I feel safe in the neighborhood where I work.	α=0.72	μ= 3.5 (1-5 Scale)

Table 3: School Climate Variables

Index	Survey Items	Alpha	Mean
Open Classroom	• A teacher should participate in class dialogues and discussions as a learner among learners. • Teachers are **not** the only source of knowledge in the classroom. • Teachers must share their authority and responsibilities with students in the classroom. • Teachers should use dialogue and open communication as one of the main activities in the classroom for sharing ideas. • Learners should be involved in the process of selecting topics and activities that are focused on in the classroom.	α=0.81	μ= 3.8 (1-5 Scale)
Critical Thinking	• A teacher's main role is to teach students not only to learn more independently but also to think and act in a more independent way. • Teachers should encourage and help learners to create learning opportunities for themselves. • A major role of teachers is to improve learners' critical thinking skills.	α=0.82	μ= 4.2 (1-5 Scale)
Critical Content	• Teachers should decide on their teaching strategies and techniques based on learners' specific characteristics (e.g., age, race, gender, needs, and interests). • Ideal textbooks are those which are designed locally and in the light of learners' real life. • The content of courses and books which are commonly taught in Chicago are often unrelated to learners' real-life concerns and problems. • Teachers should be critical of the cultural, social, and political aspects of textbook content while working with students. • Environmental, social, and political issues are suitable topics to focus on in the classroom.	α=0.76	μ= 3.7 (1-5 Scale)
Analyses of power structures	• One of a teacher's main roles is to make students aware of inequalities in society. • A major role of a teacher is to help students develop their own understanding of whom they are and their place in the world.	α=0.81	μ= 4.2 (1-5 Scale)
Combined	--	α=0.90	μ= 4.0

Table 4: Factor Analysis for Critical Pedagogy Index

Factor 1 Open Classroom	Factor 2 Critical Thinking	Factor 3 Critical Content	Factor 4 Power
6.2007307	0.6636795	0.5393402	0.2602349
1.5628173	0.6056158	0.4557373	0.1909718
1.2246016	0.5632582	0.4068083	
0.9088997		0.3721977	
0.7446183		0.3004887	

Table 5: Control Variables

Teacher-Level Variables	Teacher Evaluations of School Climate	School-Level Variables	Neighborhood-Level Variables
• Age • Gender • Race • Ideology • Years Teaching • Alternative Certification • Teach For America Corps Member • Educational Attainment	• School Discipline • School Leadership	• School Type • School Quality Score • Principal Race • Racial Demographics of School • Teacher's Race Matches School's Racial Majority/Plurality	• Teacher Lives in Neighborhood • Percent Low-Income Residents in Neighborhood • Neighborhood Mobility Rate • Neighborhood Violent Crimes

Table 6: Regression Model with all Controls

	Dependent Variable:	
	Critical Pedagogy	Textbook Choice
Racial Attitudes	0.130***	-6.657***
	(0.041)	(2.304)
Authoritarianism	-0.035	9.539**
	(0.082)	(4.643)
Neighborhood Value	0.130**	-0.012
	(0.058)	(3.294)
Age	0.005	-0.128
	(0.003)	(0.179)
Woman	-0.123	-5.269
	(0.070)	(3.939)
Non-Binary	0.191	-2.131
	(0.241)	(13.607)
Teacher of Color	-0.028	2.197
	(0.098)	(5.545)
Educational Attainment	0.070	1.726
	(0.080)	(4.478)
Political Ideology	0.015	0.143
	(0.033)	(1.852)
Years Teaching	-0.001	-0.003
	(0.004)	(0.245)
Teach For America	0.098	10.401
	(0.148)	(8.257)
Alternative Certification	-0.031	-19.279***
	(0.115)	(6.314)
School Discipline	0.055	2.747
	(0.054)	(3.063)
School Leadership	0.217***	3.957
	(0.055)	(3.106)
Charter School	-0.087	-1.543
	(0.122)	(6.877)
Vocational School	-0.085	6.741
	(0.152)	(8.718)
Selective Enrollment School	0.266	3.936
	(0.149)	(8.368)
Military Academy	-0.020	-3.082
	(0.189)	(10.592)

Magnet School	0.185	-2.986
	(0.190)	(10.134)
Suburban School	0.498	-18.757
	(0.264)	(14.670)
School Quality Score	0.056	-3.812
	(0.080)	(4.428)
Principal of Color	0.230***	0.939
	(0.087)	(4.856)
Principal Gender	-0.110	1.206
	(0.080)	(4.474)
Percent White	0.001	0.750
	(0.009)	(0.485)
Percent Black	0.004	0.571
	(0.006)	(0.350)
Percent Latinx	0.006	0.614*
	(0.006)	(0.349)
Percent Asian	0.006	0.382
	(0.009)	(0.486)
Race Match	-0.116	5.077
	(0.111)	(6.346)
Live in Neighborhood	0.132	3.193
	(0.094)	(5.317)
Neighborhood Mobility	-0.008	0.298
	(0.007)	(0.407)
Neighborhood Violent Crime	0.0002	-0.005
	(0.0001)	(0.008)
Constant	0.858	-46.863
	(0.891)	(50.009)
Observations	235	237
R^2	0.281	0.206
Note:		**p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Table 7: Critical Pedagogy by Domain

	Dependent Variable:			
	Open Classroom	Critical Thinking	Critical Content	Power
Racial Attitudes	0.103**	0.095	0.177***	0.139**
	(0.041)	(0.049)	(0.055)	(0.056)
Authoritarianism	-0.126	0.047	-0.074	0.033
	(0.082)	(0.099)	(0.110)	(0.113)
Neighborhood Value	0.097	0.113	0.095	0.209***
	(0.058)	(0.070)	(0.078)	(0.080)
Age	0.008**	0.007*	0.002	0.004
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Woman	-0.125	-0.115	-0.176	-0.092
	(0.070)	(0.083)	(0.093)	(0.095)
Non-Binary	0.058	-0.076	0.093	0.653
	(0.241)	(0.289)	(0.323)	(0.332)
Teacher of Color	-0.018	-0.155	0.073	0.016
	(0.098)	(0.118)	(0.132)	(0.135)
Educational Attainment	0.107	0.113	0.019	0.059
	(0.080)	(0.095)	(0.106)	(0.109)
Ideology	0.032	-0.004	0.036	-0.013
	(0.033)	(0.039)	(0.044)	(0.045)
Years Teaching	-0.003	0.004	-0.002	-0.002
	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Teach For America	0.099	0.296	-0.041	0.106
	(0.148)	(0.175)	(0.198)	(0.201)
Alternative Certification	-0.158	-0.261	0.095	0.134
	(0.115)	(0.134)	(0.153)	(0.154)
School Discipline	0.120**	0.081	-0.002	0.011
	(0.054)	(0.065)	(0.073)	(0.075)
School Leadership	0.217***	0.142**	0.226***	0.293***
	(0.055)	(0.065)	(0.073)	(0.075)
Charter School	-0.004	-0.007	-0.217	-0.103
	(0.122)	(0.146)	(0.163)	(0.168)
Vocational School	0.215	0.148	-0.297	-0.388*
	(0.152)	(0.181)	(0.203)	(0.208)
Selective Enrollment School	0.151	0.264	0.229	0.439**
	(0.149)	(0.178)	(0.199)	(0.204)

Military Academy	-0.048	-0.145	0.152	0.034
	(0.189)	(0.225)	(0.252)	(0.258)
Magnet School	0.168	0.126	0.125	0.167
	(0.190)	(0.215)	(0.255)	(0.247)
Suburban School	0.324	0.116	0.583	0.877**
	(0.264)	(0.311)	(0.353)	(0.357)
School Quality Score	0.060	0.037	-0.041	0.127
	(0.080)	(0.094)	(0.107)	(0.108)
Principal Race	0.348***	0.202	0.155	0.173
	(0.087)	(0.103)	(0.116)	(0.118)
Principal Gender	-0.171**	-0.0001	-0.173	-0.122
	(0.080)	(0.095)	(0.108)	(0.109)
Percent White	0.011	0.004	-0.001	-0.009
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Percent Black	0.007	0.007	-0.002	0.003
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.009)
Percent Latinx	0.010	0.009	-0.00002	0.003
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.009)
Percent Asian	0.013	0.015	-0.013	0.010
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Race Match	-0.081	0.027	-0.151	-0.263
	(0.111)	(0.133)	(0.149)	(0.153)
Live in Neighborhood	-0.020	0.149	0.271**	0.109
	(0.094)	(0.112)	(0.126)	(0.129)
Neighborhood Mobility	-0.005	-0.007	-0.011	-0.010
	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Neighborhood Violent Crime	-0.0001	0.0002	0.0004**	0.0003
	(0.0001)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
Constant	0.613	0.840	1.777	0.535
	(0.891)	(1.062)	(1.193)	(1.220)
Observations	238	238	235	238
R^2	0.267	0.211	0.212	0.257

Note: **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Figure 1: Textbook Excerpts

Excerpt 1	Excerpt 2
On New Year's Day, 1831, a shattering abolitionist blast came from the bugle of William Lloyd Garrison, a mild-looking reformer of twenty-six. The emotionally high-strung son of a drunken father and a spiritual child of the Second Great Awakening, Garrison published in Boston the first issue of his militantly anti-slavery newspaper, *The Liberator*. With his mighty paper broadside, Garrison triggered a thirty-year war of words and in a sense fired one of the opening barrages of the Civil War. Stern and uncompromising, Garrison nailed his colors to the masthead of his weekly. He proclaimed in strident tones that under no circumstances would he tolerate the poisonous weed of slavery, but would stamp it out at once, root and branch: *"I will be harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice...I am in earnest-I will not equivocate-I will not excuse-I will not retreat a single inch-and I WILL BE HEARD!"* The greatest of the black abolitionists was Frederick Douglas. Escaping from Bondage in 1838 at the age of twenty-one, he was "discovered" by abolitionists in 1841 when he gave a stunning impromptu speech at an antislavery meeting in Massachusetts. Thereafter he lectured widely for the cause, despite frequent beatings and threats against his life. In 1845, he published his classic autobiography, *Narrative Life of Frederick Douglas.* It depicted his remarkable origins as the son of a black slave woman and a white father, his struggle to learn to read and write, and his eventual escape to the North.	There were tactical differences between black abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison, white abolitionist and editor of *The Liberator.* Blacks were more willing to engage in armed insurrection, but also more willing to use existing political devices-the ballot box, the Constitution-anything to further their cause. They were not as morally absolute in their tactics. Moral pressure would not do it alone, the blacks knew; it would take all sorts of tactics, from elections to rebellion. Blacks had to struggle constantly with the unconscious racism of white abolitionists. They also had to insist on their own independent voice...In 1854, a conference of African Americans declared: ". . . it is emphatically our battle; no one else can fight it for us...Our relations to the Anti-Slavery movement must be and are changed. Instead of depending upon it we must lead it." Certain black women faced the triple hurdle-of being abolitionists in a slave society, of being black among white reformers, and of being women in a reform movement dominated by men. When Sojourner Truth rose to speak in 1853 in New York City at the Fourth National Woman's Rights Convention, it all came together. There was a hostile mob in the hall shouting, jeering, threatening: *"I know that it feels a kind o' hissin' and ticklin' like to see a colored woman get up and tell you about things, and Woman's Rights. We have all been thrown down so low that nobody thought we'd ever get up again; but ... we will come up again, and now I'm here... we'll have our rights; you can't stop us from them; see if you can."*

Figure 2:

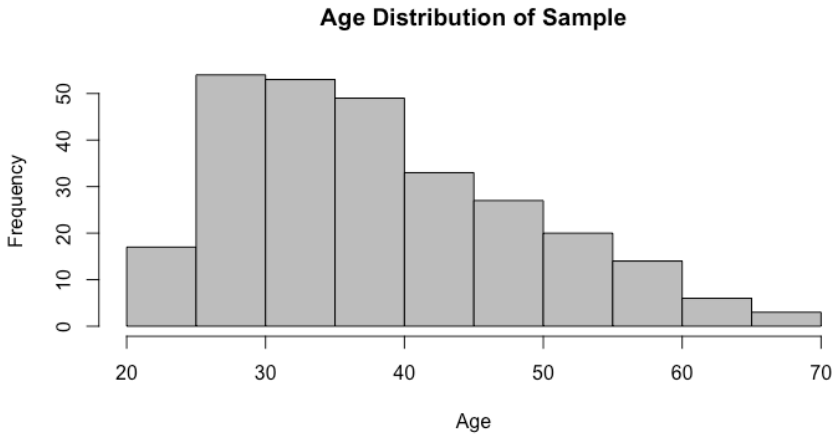


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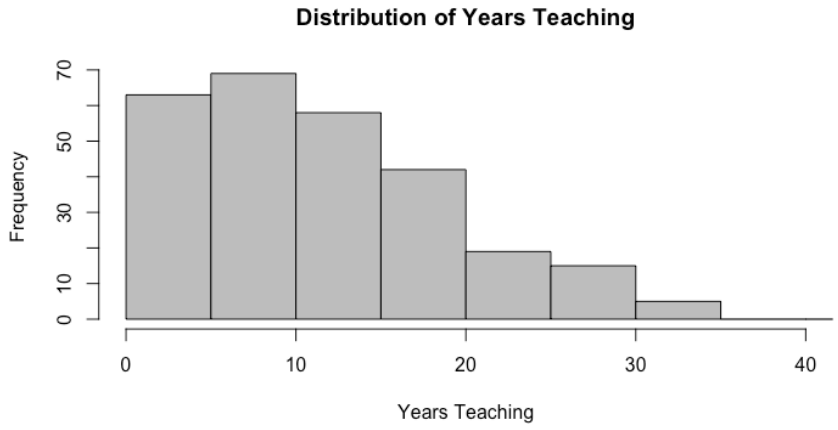
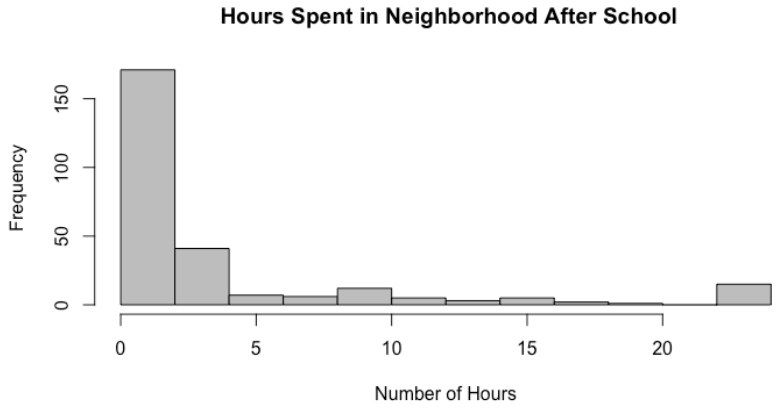
Figure 3:



μ= 13

Figure 4:



μ= 4

TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for agreeing to an interview with me. I'm looking forward to learning more about your experiences as a teacher in Chicago. I'd like to take a brief moment to tell you a little about myself before we proceed. I'm a researcher at Northwestern University and am interested in learning more about how social studies teachers in Chicago decide how and what to teach in their classrooms. This project is part of dissertation research, which addresses how schools contribute to how young people participate in politics. For this reason, I will be very interested in your individual experiences as a social studies teacher in Chicago. You are the expert here, and I am the learner. And if you don't like one of my questions, you do not have to answer. Do you have any questions before we get started? (Answer questions if they come up) Ok, great, let's get started. I will start the recording now.

Note: All subpoints are follow-up questions that can be asked if the primary question does not illicit a rich response. Given the semi-structured nature of the protocol, the interviewer will invoke these questions as they see fit.

Teacher Training and Experience (10 Minutes)
RQ: How does teacher training shape how teachers decide how and what to teach in their classrooms?

1. Why did you decide to go into teaching?
    a. Follow-up: Why did you decide to teach social studies specifically?
2. What do you like most about your job?
3. What do you find most challenging about your job?
    a. Follow-up: With these challenges in mind, do you think you'll continue teaching for the rest of your career?
4. How would you describe your teacher training?
    a. Follow-up: were you traditionally trained or did you go through an alternative teaching program?
5. How many schools have you taught at in your teaching career?
    a. Follow-up: what factors caused you to change schools?
    b. Follow-up: do you plan to remain at your current school for the foreseeable future? Why or why not?

School Environment, Autonomy, and Behavior Management (10 Minutes)
RQ: How does school culture and disciplinary expectations shape how teachers decide how and what to teach in their classrooms?

Now I want to ask you some questions about the school you currently teach at and how this affects your practice in your classroom.

1. What do you like most about the school you teach at?
    a. Follow-up: are you happy with the school you teach at? Why or why not?
    b. Probe: Do you feel connected to your school community?
    c. Probe: Do you feel your school is place that makes teachers and students feel safe and respected?
    d. Probe: Do you feel that parents and students at your school value education?
2. Do you feel like you have sufficient autonomy at school?

   a. If yes: how so?
   b. If no: how does this affect what you ultimately teach in your classroom?
   c. Probe: Are there things you would like to teach about in class that you feel would not be allowed by the school's administration?

3. What are some challenges you think your school faces?
   a. Follow-up: how do these challenges affect your teaching?
   b. Follow-up: how do you deal with these challenges?
   c. Do you think race play a role in the challenges your school faces? If so, how?
   d. Follow-up: does inequality affect some in your school more than others? Why do you say that? What about along racial lines?
4. How important is discipline at your school?
   a. How do these disciplinary structures impact your students?
   b. How do these disciplinary structures affect your teaching style within your classroom?
5. Would you say your teaching style is more discussion-based, lecture-based, or a mixture of both? How do you typically structure your lessons?
   a. How important is discipline in your classroom?
   b. How much say do your students have in the material that is discussed in class?
   c. Do you allow your students to challenge you in class?
   d. How autonomous are the students in your classroom?
   e. Is your classroom laid out in a way that helps achieve your teaching goals?

Neighborhood (5 Minutes)

RQ: How does a teacher's perception of their neighborhood shape how and what they teach in their class room?

Now I want to ask you some questions about the neighborhood where you work and how this affects your practice in the classroom.

1. What do you like most about the neighborhood that you teach in?
   a. Follow-up: How much time do you spend in your neighborhood outside of the school day?
   b. Follow-up: Would you ever consider living in the neighborhood where you teach? Why or why not?
2. What are some of the challenges facing the neighborhood where you teach?
   a. Follow up: do these challenges affect how you teach in your classroom?
   b. Follow up: How do those challenges affect your students?
   c. Follow up: how often are neighborhood challenges discussed within your classroom?
   d. Probe: Do you think the neighborhood where you teach is a safe place to live? Why or why not?
   e. Probe: How is this neighborhood different from where you live?

Civic Attitudes (10 Minutes)

RQ: How do the attitudes and beliefs of teachers translate into the content that they ultimately teach in the classroom?

Now I want to ask you some questions about what you hope your students will take from your class.

1. What do you want you students to walk away from your class having learned?
    a. Follow-up: What knowledge do you want them to learn?
    b. Follow-up: What skills do you want them to learn?
    c. Follow-up: How do you want them to behave as citizens?
2. Given that we are at the end of the school year, do you think you students have met these goals? Why or why not?
    a. What would it take for them to meet these goals?
3. What does being a good citizen mean to you?
    a. Follow up: To what extent do you want to help your students become good citizens?
    b. Follow up: Do you think your students share your conception of good citizenship?
    c. Follow up: Are you open to allowing your students challenge your conception of good citizenship?
4. Do you think the curriculum that you use helps your students become good citizens?
    a. Follow up: Would you change this curriculum if you could?
5. Are your students on tract to be good citizens?
6. Do you think it's important to teach young people to question authority?
    a. Follow-up: Do you encourage your students to question the information presented to them in the textbook you use in class?
    b. Follow-up: Last year, thousands of Chicago Public School students walked out of school to protest gun violence. Do you see any value in allowing students to protest instead of attending class?

Course Content (10 Minutes)

RQ: What content is important for teachers to teach in their classrooms?

Now I want to ask you some questions about the specific content you use in your classroom.

1. What lesson is your favorite to teach in your classroom?
    a. Follow up: Why is this your favorite lesson?
    b. Follow up: How did students respond to this lesson?
    c. Follow up: How do you think this lesson affected how you students think about civic or political engagement?
    d. Probe: Do you see your own interests or values embedded into this lesson?
2. How important is it for you to discuss racial/ethnic, gender, and sexual inequalities in your classroom?
    a. Follow up: why do you think this is the case?
    b. Follow up: how do students respond when you discuss these subjects?
3. How frequently do you discuss women or people of color in your lessons?
    a. Follow up: do you feel comfortable teaching about these individuals?

   b. Follow up: do you feel that you have the necessary resources to teach this content?
4. Are there any topics in class that you are not supposed to teach, but teach anyway?
   a. If yes: why do you choose to do this?
   b. If no: do you feel like you have little say over what you are allowed to teach?
5. Are there any topics that you are supposed to teach, but decide not to?
   a. If yes: why do you choose to do this?
   b. If no: are there topics that you would prefer not to teach if you had more say/?
6. To what extent does your school's administration and the school district limit what you teach in you class?

Textbook Analysis (10 Minutes)

Now that we are nearing the end of our time, I am hoping to get your opinion on two texts that could be used to teach about The Underground Railroad and the Abolitionist Movement in the United States. I am going to give you a few minutes to read each excerpt before asking you a final set of questions.

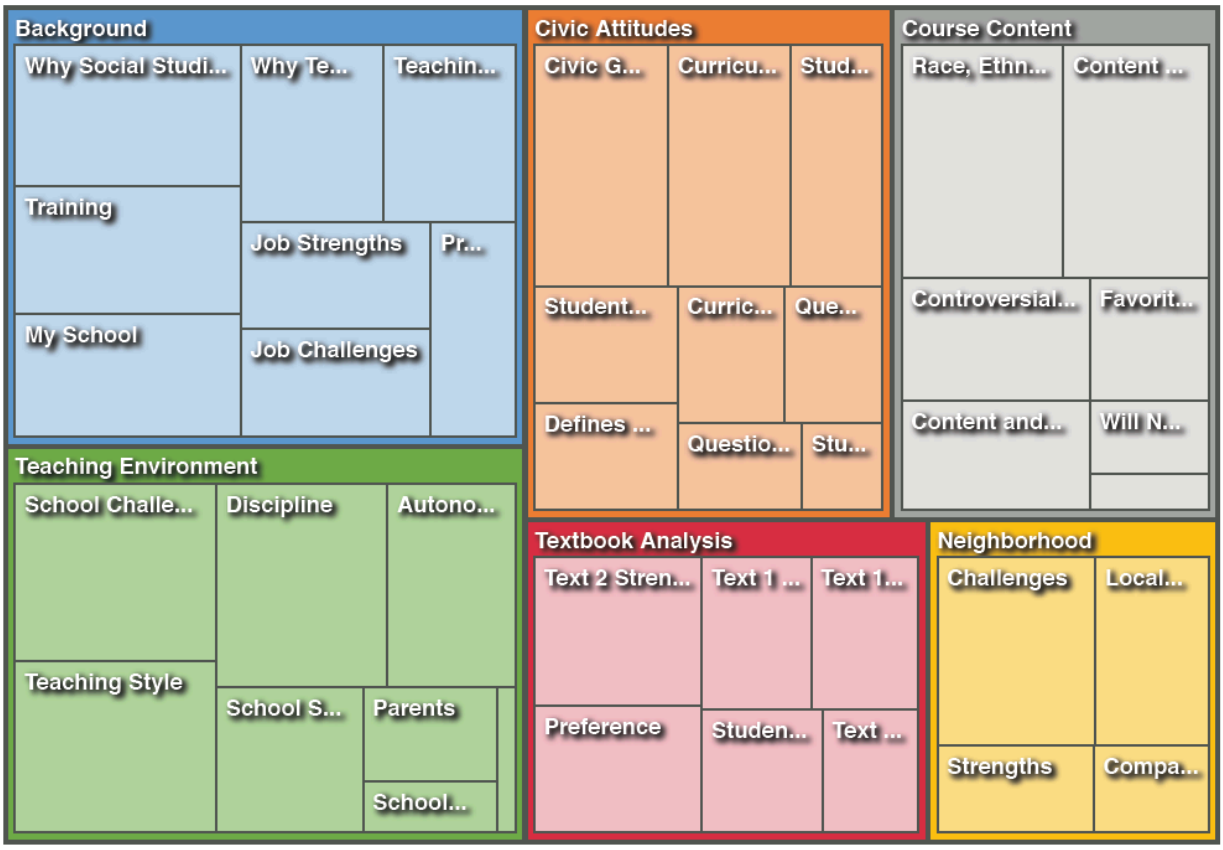
Participants will be provided with two short excerpts from two separate texts (These texts are the same experimental conditions used in the survey experiment distributed to students).

1. What information stands out to you after reading each text?
2. How likely would you be to use the first text (*The American Pageant)?*
   a. What did you like/dislike about this text specifically?
3. How likely would you be to use the second text (*A People's History of the United States?*)
   a. What did you like/dislike about this text specifically?
4. Which text do you think would resonate more with your students? Why?

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. This completes our interview. Was there anything that you wanted to mention that we did not discuss? If yes, please feel free to share. Again, thank you very much for your time!

Coding Frequencies by Parent Node

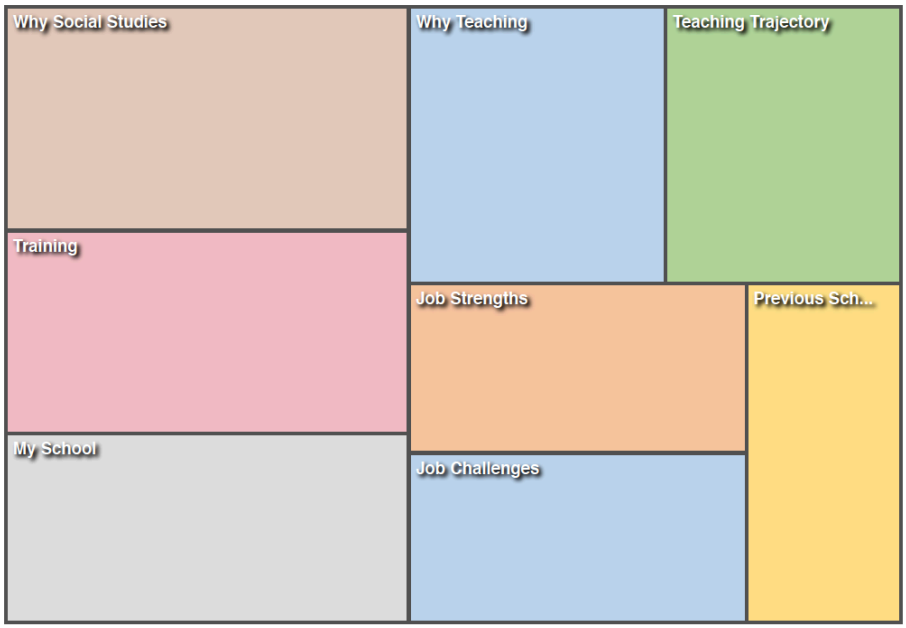
The image presented below provides a visual representation of the coding frequencies broken down by parent node. Teaching background and school environment emerged as the most frequently coded themes within the interviews. More nuanced breakdowns of the child nodes nested within each parent node are included later on in the Appendix.



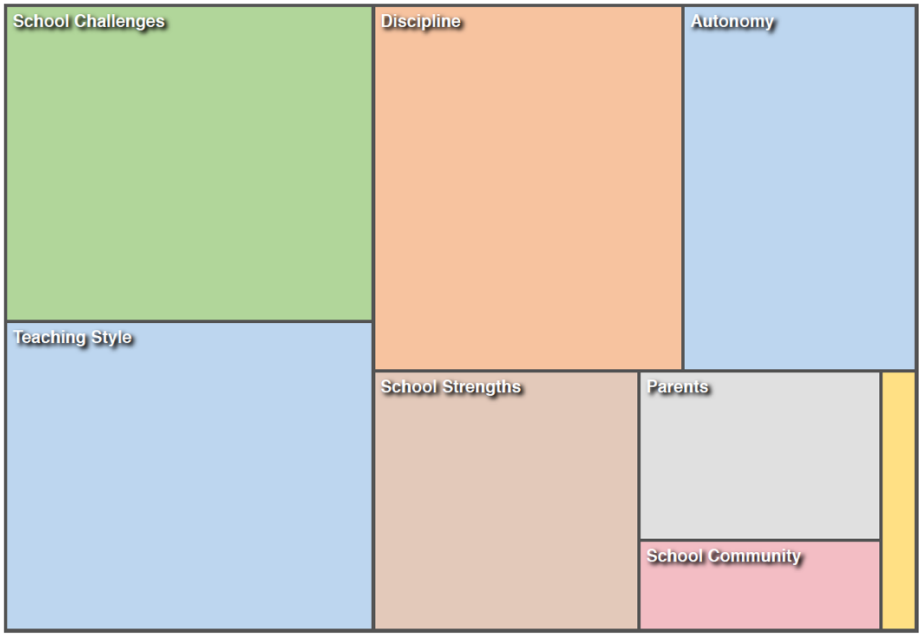
Themes by Child Code

The images presented below provide visual representations of the coding frequencies broken down by each child node.

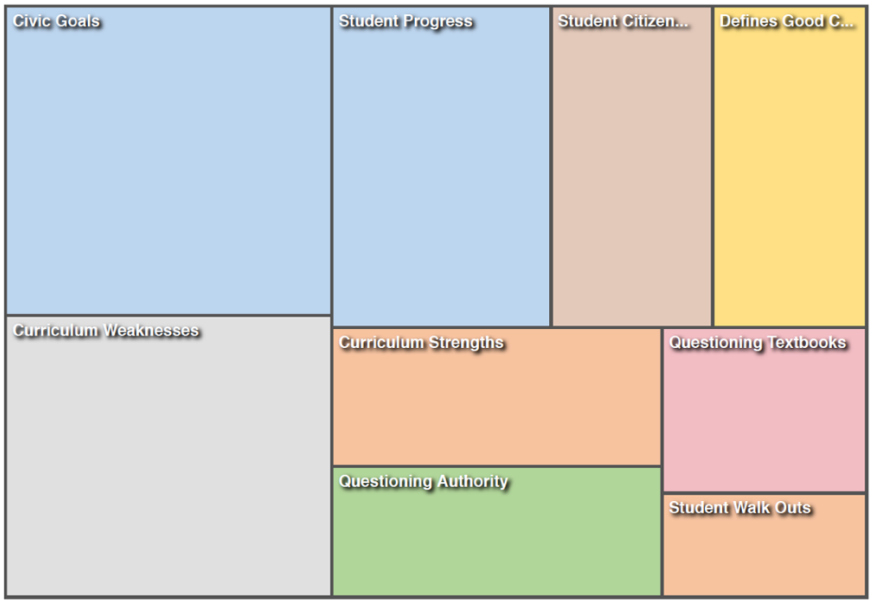
Background Themes



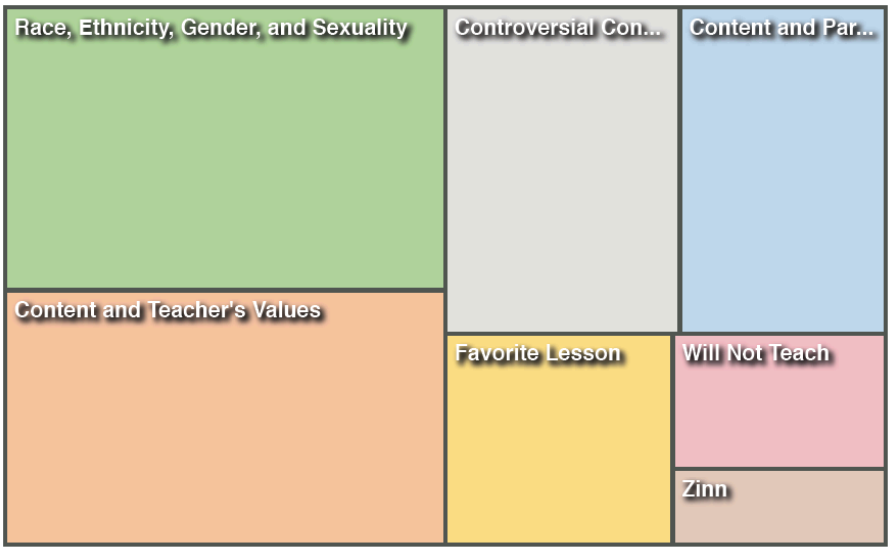
Teaching Environment Themes



Civic Attitudes Themes



Course Content Themes



Textbook Analysis Themes

Neighborhood Themes