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Curriculum, Knowledge, and Power: A Critical Race Approach to Content Analysis of Social Studies Textbooks

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CURRICULUM, KNOWLEDGE, AND POWER:

A CRITICAL RACE APPROACH TO CONTENT ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOKS

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract……...5

Chapter One: Introduction…….7

Chapter Two: Review of Literature……..…14

What is Critical Race Theory (CRT)?

Empirical Data: CRT in Social Studies Texts

Chapter Three: Methodology……..….42

Choice of Study

Materials and Selection Process

Developing Rubric

Chapter Four: Data…….59

Textbook Content and Rubric Evaluations

Other Themes Found

Chapter Five: Conclusion……90

Rubric Evaluation Themes

Lack of Counter Narrative

Lack of Nuance of Knowledge

Lack of Self-Critique and Unacknowledgement of Hypocrisy

Diminishing Slavery Realities and Cultural Memory

Connection to Present Day

Implications

Bibliography……104

Tables:

Table 3.1: CRT Rubric for Textbook Evaluations

Table 4.1: Textbook Evaluations

ABSTRACT

This study uses Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a theoretical framework to examine the portrayal of the U.S. Revolutionary War in three 5th grade social studies textbooks approved by the state of Florida's curriculum standards. Textbooks have been a focal point for political debate, most recently influenced more by politicians than by educators. A qualitative rubric was developed to evaluate the textbooks, examining the extent to which they include a CRT telling of the Revolutionary War. This rubric was informed by the tenets of CRT in educational research as described by Solorzano and Yosso (2002). Consistent themes arose from the rubric evaluations, including a diminishment of slavery realities, a patriotic rhetoric that masks the nation's hypocrisy, and a lack of counter narrative that doesn't allow students to question, challenge, or criticize history. Examining textbooks' portrayal of history is important in understanding the narrative of the nation that exists today.

Chapter One; Introduction

While social studies textbooks in the United States are designed to teach students about the history of the nation and its place in the larger world, the textbooks, themselves, are political documents. The stories that are told in textbooks, or *not told* in textbooks, paint narratives of what is valued to a nation's people. Especially in light of mandatory school attendance in the United States, what is in textbooks becomes extremely powerful in shaping the ideologies of a nation. Although textbooks cannot necessarily show us what kind of learning occurs inside of classrooms, these texts are often the dominant source for which millions of students in the U.S. learn about history (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Goodlad, 1984). Deciding what constitutes textbooks is largely a political debate and often molded by the most powerful members of society; most recently influenced more by politicians than educators (Black, 2020).

Social studies curriculum, in particular, has a certain responsibility to prepare students to remake and transform their society. As described by the National Council for Social Studies (2017), the purpose of a social studies education is for students to understand, participate in, and make informed decisions about their world. Students deserve a social studies curriculum that is inclusive, incorporating multiple, nuanced perspectives that allow them to not only examine relationships that exist today, but to question, inquire, and challenge history.

The narratives that textbooks tell have significant power to shape ideologies of a nation and need to be taken into careful consideration. Required school attendance coupled with the curriculum creates public memory, as Hess (2005) describes, by telling

particular narratives that are memorialized. Textbooks often describe historical events as "solved truths," and "facts to be learned" which is dangerous. This Honors Thesis takes on the epistemological approach that knowledge is not fixed, but rather dependent upon both historical and social constructions. Hence, there are often controversies over the portrayal of certain events, and any nod to "truth" contained in textbooks can be problematic (Alridge, 2006; Hess, 2005; Zimmerman, 2002). This sort of essentialism has caused there to be debate over the portrayal of United States history in social studies textbooks.

The standardization of knowledge and vast use of standardized tests has also contributed to controversy over views of history in textbooks in recent years. Standardization, as it exists today, often causes the teaching of history to become a series of names, dates, and facts often stripped from their context, and thus becomes political (Vasquez, Brown, & Brown, 2012). The creation of standards reflects ideological interests. The use of these standards can cause omission of important contextualizing information, often in an attempt to divert responsibility for historical wrongs, or to achieve certain political ends. For example, through standardizing the teaching of William Lloyd Garrison, a White abolitionist, another Black abolitionist figure, such as David Walker, is forgotten, which minimizes Black leadership in resistance efforts (Swartz, 1992). The political end in minimizing Black voices in curriculum, as Gordy & Pritchard (1995) describe, is to allow Whiteness to dominate. Through using a Critical Race Theory (CRT) lens, this research will investigate whether certain textbooks do, in fact, maintain Whiteness in telling the founding story of the United States.

Critical Race scholarship first emerged in the post-Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s as an outgrowth of Critical Legal Studies by authors such as Derrick Bell, Kimberle Crenshaw, and Richard Delgado (Ladson-Billings, 2003). It, since, has been applied to other fields such as education. Solorzano and Yosso (2002) note that a Critical Race Methodology in education has at least the following five tenets: (1) The intercentricity of race and racism with other forms of subordination, (2) the challenge to dominant ideology (3) a commitment to social justice, (4) the centrality of experiential knowledge, (5) having a trans disciplinary perspective. These five tenets will inform this study's evaluation of curriculum.

Despite much support for CRT arguments, CRT has become highly politicized in the field of education. Proponents of CRT in education suggest that adopting this theoretical framework for teaching history is needed to understand how the historical oppression of people of color and Indigenous peoples in the United States continues to exist. To combat racism in the present day, we must acknowledge how racism is deeply ingrained in American life. Opponents of CRT claim that such a framework indoctrinates children into believing a far-left agenda, shames White children about their race, and causes students to have animosity towards their nation.

Thus, Critical Race Theory comes with great opposition. Although this school of thought has been around since the 1980s, it has only recently become the ideological boogeyman for the Republican party. There has been particular tension over CRT after the COVID-19 pandemic, where there became an overlap between parents protesting both CRT and mask and vaccine mandates in schools. Former President Donald Trump

played a large role in manufacturing this educational crisis, pushing the notion that patriotic education was in jeopardy and needed to be restored. In 2020, President Trump issued Executive Order 13950, outlawing the teaching of "divisive concepts," which included Critical Race Theory and its claims that the United States is fundamentally racist (Alexander, 2023). Trump attacked Nikole Hannah-Jones's 1619 Project and countered this with his own 1776 Commission, which tried to rewrite history through erasing Black contributions and also through lessening the brutality of enslavement (Love, 2023). Executive Order 13950 has since been revoked by President Joe Biden; however, there have been anti-CRT efforts in all but one of the fifty states (Alexander, 2023). What is ironic, however, is that CRT is not even being taught in most of these states. Nonetheless, politicians evoked a national hysteria over CRT, causing mobs of parents to storm school board meetings, trying to "catch" teachers for discussing racism in the classroom.

The ideology of powerful states, such as New York, Florida, and California, can greatly influence the content of the curriculum throughout the nation. This Honors Thesis will focus on the curriculum and standards in the state of Florida, which has been a state of recent political contention regarding this matter. The state of Florida has received an immense amount of media coverage over its legislative actions to ban Critical Race Theory in schools and in the workplace, with many conservative states following suit. Due to the national attention Florida has received, Florida's legislative actions concerning the K-12 curriculum may have a greater impact on the actions of those in other states and thus was chosen as the state of study in this Honors Thesis.

Ron DeStantis became the governor of Florida in January of 2019. Since then, DeSantis has passed a series of legislation to control curriculum in the state, most notably the Stop the Wrongs to Our Kids and Employees (W.O.K.E.) Act, which weaponized the word “woke” as a threat to White people. This act codifies the Florida’s Department of Education’s prohibition on teaching Critical Race theory in K-12 schools (Staff, 2022). DeSantis warned against the “far-left agenda” that was supposedly working to “shame,” “discriminate,” “segregate,” and “indoctrinate” children (Staff, 2022). Although Florida has received significant media attention, the classroom restrictions that Governor DeSantis initiated have inspired other conservative states to duplicate these laws, including Texas, Tennessee, Alabama, and Arkansas (Quilantan, 2023). From January 2021 to February 2022, thirty-five states introduced 137 bills banning the teaching of historical accuracy, racism, and other relevant topics (Love, 2023). More recently, in January of 2023, DeSantis banned an Advanced Placement African American Studies course. Like many other conservative politicians, DeSantis wishes to stick to a “common” American narrative that advances freedom, patriotism, liberty, and justice to be cohesively held as dominant national ideals. Fear over CRT has led to national hysteria over a supposed anti-White “woke” liberal agenda, a series of book bans, and attacks on educators’ lives and careers (Love, 2023).

In light of CRT hysteria, critical race scholars point to the revolutionary role that curriculum could instead have. As described by Bettina Love, “Curriculum is one of the most powerful tools in education to teach all children that people like them and people from whom they are different are beautiful, powerful, and valuable, and so were their

ancestors" (Love, 2023, p.102). Curriculum tells the next generation of children who they are, and who we want them to be. Thus, these stories, as described by Denise Taliaferro, need to, "acknowledge both the beauty and the complexity of our society" (Love, 2023, p.128).

In the wake of the CRT debate, the following research will investigate Critical Race Theory, or the lack thereof, in fifth grade social studies curriculum in Florida to understand how certain parts of U.S. history are portrayed to the nation's youth. This project particularly focuses on the portrayal of the Revolutionary War. The Revolutionary War was selected due to it being a pivotal moment in history contributing to the American celebratory narrative; additionally, its counter narrative remains largely untold. As Gerald Horne (2014) describes, the Revolutionary War is commonly thought of as a war to free the colonies from British rule. However, colonists largely had an interest in the war due to wanting to continue the establishment of slavery. At the time, the British were looking to abolish slavery in their territories, and colonists feared abolition occurring within Britain's American colonies. Instead of viewing the United States as a country built upon principles of freedom, liberty, and justice as the story of "freeing" themselves from the British empire would allow, this counter narrative shows how the United States was *founded* upon slavery and oppression, requiring a complete framework shift. The details of these two different historical interpretations, and their implications, will be researched in this study. The specific research question for this study is as follows: How have fifth grade social studies textbooks portrayed the American Revolutionary War in terms of a Critical Race perspective, or the lack thereof?

The following chapter is a comprehensive review of literature on Critical Race Theory, its application to education, and recent empirical data of CRT studies in social studies textbooks. Chapter 3 explains the methodology of the study, including the process of choosing textbooks and materials and the development and presentation of the rubric that was used to evaluate the textbooks. Chapter 4 reviews the findings from rubric evaluation of the textbooks, including individual textbook scores and additional themes found throughout the texts. Chapter 5 concludes the study by connecting the data to other empirical studies and theory, and looking toward how this study fits within today's realities. The study finds that the three chosen textbooks maintain White supremacy. The textbooks' lack of Critical Race perspectives aid the current conservative agenda in the state of Florida to use CRT as an ideological boogeyman to attack and harm Black lives. This has implications for students, teachers, and the wider nation as will be explored in Chapter 5.

Chapter Two; Literature Review

The following chapter is a literature review divided into two sections: the first is a review of critical race theory as a theoretical framework, and the second section is a review of empirical research that evaluates the portrayal of certain historical events, figures, and eras in K-12 textbooks from a critical race perspective. The theoretical portion reviews articles on the history of Critical race theory, its definition and tenets, applications in education, and its challenges to master-narratives through storytelling. The empirical half of this chapter begins by explaining the importance of evaluating the K-12 curriculum, followed by an examination of concepts such as the portrayal of racial violence, Brown v. Board of Education, slavery, and Martin Luther King Jr. in K-12 social studies textbooks. Lastly, this chapter reports on a study that analyzes social studies standards and their influence on curriculum, which sets the scene for subsequent analysis of Florida's social studies state standards in Chapter Four.

What is Critical Race Theory (CRT)?

CRT Definition and Tenets

Before defining Critical Race Theory, racism itself must be defined. In his text, *How To Be an Antiracist*, Kendi (2023) describes racism as a marriage between racist policies and racist ideas that *normalizes* racial inequities. Ladson-Billings (2003) shows how the idea that racism is *normal* in American society is foundational to Critical Race Theory. In order to respond to the normalcy of racism, CRT employs storytelling, critiques liberalism and its inability for change, and faults civil rights legislation for the way it often benefits Whites (Ladson-Billings, 2003). The term "Critical Race Theory"

was coined by scholar Kimberle Crenshaw. Although Critical Race Theory has an evolving definition, central to its conception is its critique of the social construction of race and the ways that institutionalized racism has imposed second-class citizenships on Black Americans (George, 2021). Ladson-Billings (2003) also emphasizes that there are no singular set of tenets that confine Critical Race Theory, but agrees that, as cited by Crenshaw (1995), there are two common interests: (1) CRT tries to understand how white supremacy is maintained in America and (2) the relationship between the law and race needs to change. Working from these premises, CRT evolves in its specific application to different areas of social life, such as schools.

History of CRT

Critical race theory began as an outgrowth of Critical Legal Studies (CLS), which criticizes the American legal system and how it legitimizes the present class stratification (Ladson-Billings, 2003). Legal scholars of color became discontent with CLS, as they felt that CLS failed to include a critique of racism in its critique of classism (Ladson-Billings, 2003). These scholars branched off from CLS to develop Critical Race Theory. Thus, Critical Race Theory was first defined by scholars such as Mari Matusda through how it was used to try to eliminate racism in American law (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). In the mid-1970s, legal thinkers such as Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman led the first wave of CRT scholarship, frustrated with the civil rights era strategies that caused slow-moving racial reform (Ladson-Billings, 2003). However, CRT was more widely introduced to the public discourse when Lani Guinier, a law professor at the University of Pennsylvania, was scrutinized for including Critical Race Theory in her legal writing in

the 1990s. Guinier was criticized for advocating for critical race ideas, such that minority votes should have more weight than their numbers. Although Critical Race Theory began in the field of legal studies, it has since been applied to many other fields, such as education, women's and gender studies, and sociology. McCoy & Rodricks (2015) discuss the descendants theories of critical race since, such as LatCrit, AsianCrit, and TribalCrit.

CRT In Education

This study focuses on CRT's definition within education. Since CRT is a combative approach founded upon the idea that racism is normal in American society, the definition of CRT does have as its aim the elimination of racism in education (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Critical Race Theory in education is defined by how it challenges structural aspects of education that maintain racial positions in and outside of the classroom (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

Solorzano & Yosso (2002) show how critical race theory can be used as a methodology in education. When applied to educational settings, Solorzano and Yosso (2002) maintain the following five elements, including:

(1) Intercentricity of race and racism with other forms of subordination. This means that the elimination of racism is centered, though its elimination is also a part of the larger goal of eliminating other forms of subordination based on race, gender, class, sexual orientation, language, and national origin.

(2) A challenge to dominant ideology, meaning that a critical race method will challenge the structure of social science research, which often promotes ideas of "objectivity" and "neutrality" that silence people of color.

(3) A commitment to social justice, meaning that a critical race methodology focuses on a liberatory response to oppression.

(4) Centrality of experiential knowledge, which means legitimizing experiential knowledge and using methods such as counter-storytelling, family histories, and parables in teaching racial subordination.

(5) Incorporation of trans-disciplinary perspectives, meaning that race must not be viewed in isolation, and instead must be analyzed in historical contexts. For example, other disciplines such as ethnic studies and women's studies must also be used to understand the effects of racism (Solorzano & Yosso, 2022).

As exemplars of CRT in education, Solorzano & Yosso (2002), Ladson-Billings (1995, 2003), and Swartz (1992) focus on the application of Critical Race Theory to education and how it should be used to address educational inequity. Class and gender alone cannot explain educational achievement differences (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Institutional racism, for example, can explain differences in school performance in African American families (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Thus, examining assessment practices, Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that a critical race approach must be taken. Among other features of school life, CRT scholars are critical of current school assessment practices. CRT scholars critique the 'scientific rationalism' of contemporary assessment and the ways in which it legitimizes Black student deficiencies (Alienikoff,

1991; Gould, 1981). A critical race approach, instead, challenges claims of neutrality, objectivity, color-blindness and meritocracy within educational practices.

Swartz (1992) explains that critical race theorists also see the American school curriculum as a vehicle for maintaining the White supremacist master script. Ladson-Billings (2003) gives examples of stories that have been silenced or misconstrued through the White master script, such as Rosa Parks who is painted as a tired seamstress instead of highlighting her work as a social justice activist. Another example of curriculum misconstruing historical figures is Martin Luther King Jr., whose portrayal within curricula will later be further explored by Alridge (2006) below. Generally, Martin Luther King Jr. is portrayed as a "hero" for all Americans through his use of nonviolence, without mentioning the ways that Martin Luther King Jr. became more radical in his views of the United States and politics internationally. Likewise, Ladson-Billings (2003) explains how curriculum maintains a White master script through the existence of a colorblind rhetoric with a "we" mentality in celebrations of diversity. Examples mentioned by Ladson-Billings (2003) are the equation of the Middle Passage with Ellis Island by textbooks and also the idea that "we are all immigrants" in the United States (King, 1992). Ladson-Billings also cites the shortcomings of other movements to improve the curriculum. One such example is the multiculturalism movement, which doesn't truly deconstruct the White supremacist master narrative told through schools, as teachers simply added ethnic songs, ethnic food, and ethnic dances to their classrooms. Further, faulty classroom and textbook narratives will be explored in the empirical studies in the second half of the chapter.

The Property Issue

One of the central connections between race, citizenship, and education is what Ladson-Billings describes as the "property issue" (2003). According to CRT scholars, the United States is built upon property rights, and such property rights are a prerequisite to citizenship. Since its beginning, the United States has had property tension, with the removal of Indigenous Peoples from their lands, the military conquest of Mexico, and the construction of Africans as property. In these historical events, any sort of "natural" or "human" rights do not have legal standing as the U.S. government was built to protect property, not people. Property, however, has become racialized, with Whiteness considered the ultimate property (Bell, 1987, p.239). In order to understand school inequity and the need for Critical race theory, Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that the notion of the U.S. as based on property rights instead of human rights must be considered. Accordingly, property-based citizenship, with Whiteness as property, works to advantage White interests and disadvantage Black interests. For example, Ladson-Billings (2003) argues that both Dred Scott and Plessy v. Ferguson decisions were ways that person-as property, and whiteness as property, was inscribed against Black folx.

Critical Race Theory was founded in frustration over the slow racial progress of civil rights legislation, such as the Dred Scott (1857) and Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) decisions. There was slow racial progress because civil rights legislation focuses on the rights of the individual, and rights of the individual are unable to evoke change in a

country based upon property (Bell, 1987). This disconnection has rendered civil rights era legislation and racial progress slow.

Thus, many critical race scholars argue that racial progress was only made when civil rights legislation converged with White interests or white property. For example, the 1954 Brown v. The Board of Education had “convenient” convergence with the U.S.’s interest in stopping the spread of communism by improving the U.S.’s reputation among Third World countries (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The U.S. was interested in improving their reputation, not necessarily school desegregation. When civil rights laws converge with state interests, although it is made to seem like Black folx are benefitting, Whites are actually primary beneficiaries. For example, school desegregation, although posed as a way to end school inequities, actually advantaged Whites by providing a rationale for excluding themselves from the desegregation process through private school attendance.

Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes the relationship of property to education. First, property taxes based on home values pay for the public school system, and those with “better” property are entitled to “better” schools. There are different funding levels depending on the location and population of schools. With wealth often being concentrated in white communities, school funding is hoarded for White children. Although all Americans have a right to education, the extent and quality of their education is still based on property. Ladson-Billings (1995) also claims that curriculum is a form of intellectual property, whose access can be limited through a person’s identity. This can be seen, for example, in the difference between course offerings of schools, where often there are few elective courses offered at African-American schools.

Ladson-Billings (1995) claims that intellectual property is based upon the concept of real-property, such as science labs, computers, and other technologies.

Master-Narratives and Counter-Storytelling

Another key component of Critical Race Theory is the critique of the master, or majoritarian, narrative. In master narratives, racial privilege appears as "natural," and thus is not questioned. The existence of master-narratives is often unacknowledged by those with White privilege. Those with White privilege therefore knowingly and unknowingly benefit from racism. This dynamic is true especially for White men of middle/upper class status, as they are considered normative points of reference within a racialized system that caters to their needs. However, these master narratives are harmful as their claims of "neutrality" and "objectivity" disguise how they link people of color with negative stereotypes while linking White, middle/upper class people with positive stereotypes.

Racism justifies the use of the master narrative in storytelling about educational achievement and experiences of students of color, such as deficient mindset model teaching (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Solórzano & Yosso (2002) also discuss how eugenics ideas are often conveyed through majoritarian stories, where biological and cultural deficits are used, incorrectly, to explain educational failures of students of color. For example, certain races or cultures may incorrectly be linked to having a "anti-intellectual strain," which has been used to try and explain differences in student outcomes on the Scholastic Aptitude Test.

Critical race scholars see counter-storytelling as a mode through which these sorts of structural racism can be challenged (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Storytelling has been traditionally used by oppressed groups such as African American, Chicana/Chicano, and Native American communities for liberation (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). One form of storytelling is counter-storytelling, which challenges the White upper-class and middle-class stories that have been privileged, preserved and reproduced. Counter-storytelling inserts voice, as stories of people of color are silenced, or if told, distorted. Thus, using the same methodology through which they have been silenced and marginalized, people of color can use counter stories as a means of liberation. Counter-storytelling can happen in multiple different ways, such as through telling personal stories, telling other people's stories, or telling composite stories where story data is compiled from multiple real-life experiences. Counter storytelling serves many functions including building community among marginalized folks by creating a personable, familiar story through which others can relate to, challenging standard belief systems, showing possibilities of different realities, and lastly constructing other, richer worlds (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Ladson-Billings (1995, 2003), like Solórzano & Yosso (2002), focuses on the importance of storytelling in Critical Race Theory and the role of the "voice" in bringing power to minority groups. Ladson-Billings (1995) cites Delgado (1989), and the importance of naming one's reality, as stories allow those in outgroups to have psychic self-preservation, and exchanging stories can disrupt ethnocentrism. Storytelling can also affect the oppressor. Oppression can often be invisible to the perpetrator, as their reality

is constructed in ways that maintain their privilege, and thus storytelling can disrupt this pattern. Thus, Ladson-Billings (1995) claims that the voices of people of color are required to analyze the educational system through a critical race lens. Through the ahistorical nature of law, science, and westernized knowledge in general, such voices have been silenced.

Similarly, McCoy & Rodricks (2015) describe the importance of experiential knowledge, through stories, family histories, biographies, and testimonies to inform and strengthen research. Experiential knowledge can legitimize minority groups' lived experiences, making it a powerful lens in analyzing how racism operates. The sharing of such stories can cause change, allowing people of color's experiences to be valued. Critical race methodology, especially through storytelling, challenges the master narrative, which seeks to universalize and maintain dominant groups' positions.

Swartz (1992) agrees with the aforementioned authors, arguing that public schools teach a Euro-centric, hegemonic master script that critical race scholars seek to disrupt. However, Swartz (1992) extends the master script beyond the curriculum, arguing that the master script also includes classroom practices, pedagogy, and instructional materials, and the theoretical paradigms guiding these educational components. Through theoretical paradigms, White, upper-class male voices are considered the "standard knowledge," against whom all others are compared, delegitimizing other voices and perspectives. Standard knowledge in instructional material is Eurocentric, meaning that it centers and lauds people of European descent while silencing knowledge from people from all other lands of origin.

The debate that the authors describe over the content of curricular knowledge, however, has been going on for decades, as the American national democratic ideology conflicts with the need for justice for the multitude of social inequities in the country (Swartz, 1992). There have been efforts to include previously unmentioned groups in school curricula, but Swartz (1992) describes these as "sanitized" and "monovocal" portrayals. Without a deeper reconceptualization of content that, from its core, reflects collective origins of knowledge, Western knowledge remains in power.

Conclusion

In this section, the theoretical elements of Critical Race Theory were explored. I reviewed CRT's history, definition and tenets, application to education, and how it challenges master narratives through storytelling. As described by Ladson-Billings (2003) and Solórzano & Yosso (2002), Critical Race Theory is founded upon the idea that racism is considered normal in society, and thus focuses on eliminating it. CRT critiques civil rights legislation, noting that its progress was far too slow, and that such legislation was only passed when it converged with White interests (Bell, 1987; Ladson-Billings, 2003). When applied to education, critical race theory critiques commonly employed methods of assessment and curricula. For example, CRT challenges objectivity and the scientific rationalism of assessment (Alienikoff, 1991; Gould, 1981; Ladson-Billings, 1995;). It also examines how schools maintain the White master script through curriculum (Swartz, 1992). Lastly, CRT uses counter stories, voice, and "naming's one's reality," to challenge these master-narratives, which are often unacknowledged by those with racial and class privilege (Ladson-Billings 1995, 2003; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015;

SolLadson-Billings, 1995; rzano & Yosso, 2002). Storytelling can become a form of liberation. The following section looks at some of the most common uses of certain master-narratives within U.S. social studies textbooks, and challenges them from a critical race perspective.

Empirical Data: CRT in Social Studies Texts

The remainder of this chapter reviews empirical data on the content of social studies textbooks in the United States, analyzed by scholars from a critical race perspective. The scholarly work described below explores the portrayal of certain historical figures, events, and principles common to textbooks throughout the United States. These include racial violence, Brown v. Board of Education, slavery, and Martin Luther King Jr.. Each scholar agrees on the importance of evaluating the content of K-12 curricula and textbooks, given its impact on students, and schools. Before examining their studies in this chapter, I consider the authors' individual and collective intentions in analyzing K-12 textbooks.

Importance

In his discussion of Brown v. Board of Education, Hess (2005) highlights the importance of schools in shaping the present, arguing that schools persuade students to accept particular national narratives. Hess (2005) notes the importance of analyzing textbooks, as this is the primary source of learning for millions of students. Although textbooks alone may not show all knowledge taught in classrooms, they can show what teachers primarily teach, and thus can give us insight into what narratives children are learning (Hess, 2005). Further, Hess (2005) reminds the reader that teaching, as a field, is very demanding and does not allow much time for independent research to supplement faulty curriculum. Thus, teachers often heavily rely upon textbooks. Hess (2005) critiques these textbooks, calling them "predictable," "solved," and "settled." Aldridge (2006), in his evaluation of the portrayal of Martin Luther King Jr. in textbooks, suggest

similar problems, arguing that many history textbooks provide one-dimensional interpretations of history, with celebratory master narratives that are framed as free of controversy or contradictions. Aldridge (2006) alerts readers of the consequences of such practices, noting that when American history textbooks pass along master narratives, they deny students a critical lens for understanding American history and society today.

Other scholars agree that textbooks, typically framed as objective tellings of history, erase discussion on the racialized nature of many historical stories and are especially harmful for students of color. Hess (2005) claims that neglecting discussions of race in certain historical events and legislation ignores the histories, experiences, and realities of students of color while making White students feel as if these harmful histories do not concern them. In this vein, Gordy & Pritchard (2015) discuss how curriculum is often used for political purposes, satisfying the interests of dominant White male groups, and thus can be a form of social control that legitimizes the position of those in power. Gordy & Pritchard (2015) talk about the importance of curriculum, as it is children's first exposure to reading and history, and how it can be particularly harmful for curricula to neglect the concerns of White women, the poor, and people of color. On the other hand, Brown and Brown (2010), in their analysis of racial violence in textbooks, show that curriculum also has the potential to promote social justice efforts, allowing students to make sense of their existing conditions and envision different realities. The authors Brown and Brown (2010) emphasize that the K-12 curriculum has a large impact on how African American students, along with other minoritized groups, see themselves (Banks, 1992; Banks, 2003). Thus, having an inclusive curriculum is especially

important for minoritized students, as harmful portrayals of minoritized students and their heritage can affect their self-worth and achievement levels (Brown & Brown, 2010). Many scholars agree that having a curriculum that aligns with students' own cultural knowledge and experiences allows them to achieve at higher levels (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Critical Race Analysis of Historical Events in Textbooks

Many critical race scholars have turned to textbooks to critically analyze the portrayal of certain historical events in the United States. This includes critiques of the portrayal of activist figures, such as Martin Luther King Jr., civil rights legislation and events, such as the Brown v. Board decision and wider concepts such as the portrayal of slavery and racial violence. Swartz (1992) gives an overview of the shortcomings of textbooks, from a critical race perspective, while other authors focus on the particular portal of one historical event or person.

According to Swartz (1992), African Americans, such as Frederick Douglas, Sojourner Truth, and Harriet Tubman, are often heroized and decontextualized, mentioned without giving comprehensive characterization of who they are. This lack of context furthers marginalization of these individuals, not providing a full inclusion of them in textbooks. Even when included, the presence of marginalized individuals can also be obscured in texts, such as the portrayal of Crispus Attucks, where his status as a former slave is emphasized along with his death in the Boston Massacre, rather than his role as a symbol of colonial independence and African American liberation during the Revolutionary War time period. Likewise, Martin Luther King Jr. is frequently obscured

in texts; painted as someone who preaches about democratic values and brotherhood instead of someone who actually carried more radical views on the inequitable power relations in the U.S..

More largely, Africans and African Americans are most extensively included in the subject of slavery. African presence being extensively in the context of slavery dehumanizes the enslaved and their descendants by prioritizing African American roles in history to their enslavement. Portrayals of slavery within school texts are often inappropriate, obscured, and inaccurate. Some texts justify slavery by claiming that cotton planters depended on slave labor, or try to dismiss slavery by mentioning that some slaves were a part of a "plantation family." Both of these examples disguise the absolutely oppressive, brutal system that are the hallmarks of slavery. African American resistance, in general, is presented as violent, threatening, and a failure. Additionally, an example of an inaccurate portrayal of Black resistance is that of Nat Turner, as explained by Swartz (1992). Turner's story often omits the writing and organizing he coordinated far before the revolt. When told in contemporary texts, these recounts also frequently focus on White deaths, rather than the Black people who died in Turner's revolt and the others who were murdered from White mobs following the revolt. Slave revolts and petitions, which go back to the 16th century, also are largely omitted, or, in the case of John Brown, descriptors such as "criminal" are used to make antislavery efforts seem violent. Likewise, textbooks that discuss slaves escaping to the North focus on how escapes caused issues for Southern planters, rather than a discussion about how free and enslaved Black Americans worked against the expansion of slavery in new states.

Another topic that is frequently described, through the guise of the White master script, is the abolition movement, Swartz (1992) contends. White men are typically highlighted for their "lead" roles in the movement, subordinating African Americans to supporting roles in this narrative, even though the first anti slavery organizations were created and led by African Americans. For example, there is a focus on William Lloyd Garrison's abolition work in *The Liberator*, but as described by Swartz (1992), this work was largely taken from David Walker's (a Black man) pamphlet called *Appeal*. Even when Black abolitionist figures are mentioned, such as Frederick Douglas or David Walker, information is still omitted, notably any description of their array of accomplishments. Such an inclusion and contextualization would empower these individuals and bring their voice to life.

Lastly, Swartz (1992) looks at Reconstruction in school texts, noting that the sort of terror Black people experienced in the South during the Reconstruction era is not mentioned, along with the labor of African Americans to build and fund new schools. Texts also emphasize how White people from the North felt during Reconstruction, not mentioning how Reconstruction was affecting African Americans. Without mentioning the experiences of Black people, texts fail to tell a more complete version of history of the Reconstruction era. Swartz (1992) thus shows a wide variety of examples of master-narratives present within textbooks, some of which are expanded upon by other studies below.

Racial Violence

Brown and Brown (2010) conducted a study on elementary and middle school social studies textbooks, examining the portrayal of racial violence toward African Americans. The authors sought to understand what the current representation of racial violence is in school texts to understand what curriculum should look like for historically underserved groups. Brown and Brown (2010) note that while there have been efforts to expand narratives about African Americans in school materials, such as including histories of enslaved Africans prior to their capture and humanizing the lives of slaves, there is still not enough of a change within the curriculum, and this change hasn't been as wide as needed. They argue that a limited representation of racial violence has a harmful effect on the sociocultural memory and knowledge that is acquired from textbooks in terms of the history of race and racism.

Brown and Brown (2010) build off of other scholarly texts from the 1990s that came to conclusions about historical narratives of race within school curriculum. Aldridge (2006) and Carlson (2003) find that there is heroification of social justice figures and one-dimensional narratives within topics dealing with race in curriculum. McCarthy (1990) and Wynter (1992) find that race is positioned as an essentialized construct in school curriculum. Many other scholars have found partial, inaccurate and misrepresented stories pertaining to race (King, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 2003; Swartz, 1992; Yosso, 2002).

Given these partial and inaccurate stories, Brown and Brown (2010) seek to understand what sociocultural and historical knowledge is needed in school texts to fully understand racial inequities and to critique these faulty narratives. The authors examine

this aim by employing Critical Race Theory and cultural memory. Cultural memory is founded upon the ideas that it is the stories, texts, and discourses of cultural groups that create an understanding of a group's experience. School texts shape the cultural memory of not only African American history, but also other racial and ethnic groups. Critical Race Theory, as previously described, can point to typical racial equality narratives found in textbooks, such as Brown v. The Board of Education and the Civil Rights movement, and show how conventional portrayal of these events disguise racial realities and the fac that the events occurred in convergence with white interests.

In their empirical analyses, Brown and Brown (2010) examine four fifth grade history textbooks and six eighth grade history textbooks. Using a literary analysis method, they analyzed the texts' themes. By investigating table of contents, index, and page-by-page analysis of textbooks to find relevant text excerpts, Brown and Brown (2010) found five common time period themes throughout the textbooks that included African American histories, that being the Middle Passage and slavery, reconstruction, Jim Crow, civil rights/black power, and the post civil rights era.

Through in-depth analysis of each of these time periods, Brown and Brown (2010) conclude that portrayals of racial violence are ubiquitous throughout school texts. In descriptions of the Middle Passage, texts, for instance, frequently failed to show its racialized nature. The Middle Passage's role in the larger, racialized economic system was lost in its description of certain crew members acting in a corrupt way, for example. These corrupt ways are disconnected from the institutionalized nature of the Middle Passage, which may cause students to believe that these harmful acts were isolated, rather

than seeing actions as a part of the racialized, forced removal of Africans through the Middle Passage. Likewise, in examining slavery, Brown and Brown (2010) found that its portrayal is frequently waged as an individual practice. The texts often discuss the differences in cruelty of masters, and including such a discussion makes it seem as though the livelihood of individual slaves was dependent on the power of their individual master. A critical race perspective, in comparison, would show how the nature of the enslaved individual was based on the power of institutions and state-sponsored racial violence (Brown & Brown, 2010). This type of individualization of violence was also found in how the texts portrayed the Reconstruction era, where there were limited discussions about organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan and de emphasis on the violence being between individual Southerners and African Americans.

Through analysis of all of these time periods, Brown and Brown (2010) discuss the harm in portraying racial violence as individualized, as these narratives affect the cultural memory of racism in the United States and also sociocultural knowledge. These narratives make racism appear de-institutionalized and disconnected from years of systemic oppression. In their concluding remarks, Brown and Brown (2010) critique the multicultural education movement, noting how narratives still fall short in illustrating racial violence in the United States. They point to teacher education programs, professional development workshops and masters programs as places of change, where teachers should learn how to more adequately teach for underserved populations and be able to engage critically about the role of race and racism in United States history.

Brown v. Board of Education

Hess (2005) investigates secondary school curriculum's portrayal of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. This case, frequently painted as one of the most significant democratic achievements in U.S. history, is included in more state standards and official educational policies for K-12 education than any other Supreme Court ruling (Hess, 2005). Despite its popularity, teachers are also often unaware of its controversies. Hess's survey found that of sixty teachers, most thought it would be racist to treat Brown as a controversy, although this is the opposite case. Hess (2005) argues that Brown, instead, needs to be understood in a less celebratory fashion, and its controversy and shortcomings also understood.

In this study, Hess (2005) reviewed sixteen widely adopted history and government textbooks in U.S. secondary schools, according to the American Textbook Council. Hess (2005) analyzes descriptions of Brown v. Board, finding that most textbooks used words such as "important," "historic" and "landmark" to emphasize the centrality of this case as an example of American democracy. Brown v. Board, Hess (2005) concludes, is described as a historic democratic achievement, important for students to remember. However, after celebrating Brown, all but one of the textbooks neglected to describe how Supreme Court decisions after Brown slowed down the process of desegregation. Such an example offered by Hess (2005) that should be included in textbooks is Milliken v. Bradley, which rejected busing as a method for school desegregation. In all of these examples, Hess (2005) finds an incomplete narrative given of U.S. history.

Like Ladson-Billings's (2003) point that civil rights legislation was only enacted when it converged with white interests, Hess (2005) discusses how the Brown decision converged with state interests. Hess (2005) argues that the Brown v. Board decision had advantages for Whites in policy-making positions, such as enhancing America's reputation in the world. The decision would also allow African Americans to serve in the military, along with allowing full economic growth in the South, which racist policies had held back. Thus, Hess (2005) concludes that Brown is an example of civil rights being enacted because of the convergence of White and African American interests. This explanation, however, is not given within textbooks. With Brown being painted as uncontroversial, students will be unable to see the importance race has, and continues to have, after Brown, particularly in law but also in United States society.

Despite the ways that the textbooks fall short in their ability to connect Brown to larger racial regimes, Hess (2005) points to how schools might be one of the most productive places for race to be discussed. Discussing Brown, Hess (2005) argues, allows other contemporary issues of race to be discussed. Students can feel seen through being able to connect contemporary issues that are a consequence of Brown. In contemporary textbooks, most historical events involving race, however, are not connected to issues of the present day, which diminishes their impact. This diminishment of present and historical realities of Black folx is likewise done through descriptions of slavery.

Slavery

Gordy & Pritchard (1995) conduct a content analysis of the presentation of slavery in fifth-grade social studies textbooks in Connecticut, looking for the inclusion of

diverse perspectives within the telling of the history of the United States. The textbooks that Gordy & Pritchard (2015) used were chosen based upon the popularity of their use in Connecticut. Books were coded for themes related to slave trade, slave life, life after emancipation, and reconstruction. Gordy & Pritchard (2015) organized the textbooks in an outline format for analysis. For example, under the "slave life" theme, "abolitionists" is a subtheme, and William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglas, Sojourner Truth, and the Grimke sisters are listed as subheadings.

In their analysis, the authors address the question of whether the curriculum includes diverse perspectives. Gordy & Pritchard (2015) conclude that discrimination was discussed, but not explained, nor were discussions of resilience of Black individuals included. As mentioned by Vasquez, Brown & Brown (2010), elementary texts often do not discuss discrimination directly, and instead allude to it, or discuss it indirectly. Without addressing discrimination, ideas of meritocracy are upheld, Gordy & Pritchard (2015) argue. Oftentimes, in order to try and achieve "inclusion," texts will highlight a few select women, or people of color, and add them to the historical narrative. The authors argue that this instead makes it seem as if women's role, or people of color's role, is peripheral or abnormal. Thus, Gordy & Pritchard (2015) conclude that these school texts are ignoring concerns of people of color in their portrayal of slavery. The lack of diverse perspectives that Gordy & Pritchard (2015) find within textbooks can likewise be seen through the one-dimensional portrayals of Black figures, such as Martin Luther King Jr..

Martin Luther King Jr.

Alridge (2006) examines the master narrative of Martin Luther King Jr. in high school history textbooks, finding that there are oversimplified and objective narratives of King. Aldridge (2006) uses literary analysis on six widely used American history textbooks for high schools, according to the American Textbook Council. From these, Aldridge determined the different, harmful master narratives about King that were being told in these texts which are explained below.

The first master narrative that Alridge (2006) describes is, “King as Messiah.” The way that King was described in these texts appeals to Americans with Judeo-Christian beliefs. However, textbooks neglect to show the real tensions between civil rights leaders and Christian organizations, which is important. King is presented as a messiah, or superhuman, and his role in leading the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Birmingham campaign, and the March on Washington are emphasized, with the omission of a more nuanced story of his development as an activist, which came with missteps and critique. This sort of heroization does not allow students to see King as a real person; nor does it show students his struggles and development over time. This master narrative was used for King as well as other figures, Alridge (2006) notes. Often, in school texts, exceptional individuals are highlighted as the leader of a movement, neglecting focus on collective efforts and organizing by others included in their movements. This is harmful and dehumanizing, making such individuals seem supplementary.

The second master narrative of King found in these texts is that he was portrayed as the embodiment of the civil rights movement. King is painted as the primary spokesperson for the movement, which silences many voices, such as the Black Panthers,

Robert Franklin Williams, Leroy Jones, and Peniel Joseph, as named by Aldridge (2006). Aldridge (2006) notes how the textbooks briefly mention the roles of Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Dubois, Ida B. Wells, and many other Black figures in the Civil Rights movement, effectively de-historicizing the movement altogether. Indeed, these figures are central to the creation of important movements such as Black economics and pan-Africanism. Additionally, there is also limited discussion or critique of how King fell short in his failure to advocate for female leadership within the movement. This portrayal of King is consistent with other history textbooks, focussing on "great men and events," emphasizing certain people, or principles, to show only progress that fits within their patriotic master narratives. Instead of viewing King as the pinnacle of the movement, Aldridge (2006) believes that the struggle of Black folk should be viewed as a tumultuous, continuous river with all of the waves, or people and events, recognized for their significance.

The third master narrative that Aldridge (2006) finds is the idea of King as a moderate, which allows texts to avoid discussing his more radical views about the injustices in the United States. The texts barely acknowledge the United States's surveillance of King, as his beliefs were actually believed as a threat by the U.S. government. For example, King critiqued American capitalism, the Vietnam war, the Poor People's campaign, and compensation for historically oppressed groups (Aldridge, 2006). Instead, the texts cherry-picked his speeches for parts that evoke American patriotism and idealism, rather than his more radical stances. Aldridge (2006) also

describes how King's increasing radicalism in his later years, or his tension with other Black radicals in his early years, is not typically shown in most textbooks.

Instead of changing textbooks, Alridge (2006) concludes by suggesting that teachers move away from textbooks as the primary source material for teaching history. Textbooks, Alridge (2006) argues, continue to retell master narratives that not only obscure and distort, but are harmful by denying students a true, critical understanding of the history of the United States. The decontextualization of history in holistic, critical telling of history can be partially attributed to recent standardization of knowledge, which will be explored in the following section.

Social Studies Standards

Apple (1992), Sleeter (2002), and Vasquez Heilig, Brown, and Brown (2012) demonstrate how standards are also important to examine for evidence of ideological interests. Standards, by nature, create over generalizations and absences, which is counterproductive to achieving a critical race perspective. While curricular standards are written as politically neutral, there has been a "cultural war" in social studies standards over the inclusion or exclusion of multicultural perspectives.

Vasquez Heiling, Brown, and Brown (2012) conducted a textual analysis of social studies standards in Texas and how they address *race*, *racism*, and communities of color. Vasquez Heilig, Brown and Brown (2012) advocate for a critical race framework to challenge the ideology of standards, taking the position that to fully understand history, race must be at the center of analysis.

In this study, the authors used a constant comparative method. The first phase included counting the number of times content standards involve individuals/groups of color, and also counting the number of times the term *race, racism,* or related terms were used. The second phase was coding these counts for a specific individual, group of color, and distinguishing them between instances of *race* or *racism*. Next, they further coded for the selected pieces as being either related to racial conflict or racial identity. Lastly, the final set of coding was to distinguish racism as either structural/institutional, or as an individual bias or prejudice. The authors also took note of how topics of race were contextualized and the race of the individuals that students were required to learn.

There are a series of findings from Vasquez Heilig, Brown, and Brown's (2012) analysis of the standards. First, they found that there was limited description of the role of individuals and/or groups of color in the historical narrative of the United States, especially of Native Americans and Asian Americans. These researchers conclude that standards did recognize race and racism in history, albeit in obscured and distorted ways. For instance, they noted a differentiation between the knowledge students must learn and the knowledge they *can* learn, which is made clear through words such as "including" and "such as" as a particular content standard. Content involving individuals and/or groups of color was often considered to be additional or supplementary to the primary aim of the standard. This practice, of course, makes the knowledge of marginalized groups seem less important, and it also gives teachers a chance to avoid discussing race. In the context of high-stakes testing environments, teachers are incentivized to neglect to teach this "supplementary" knowledge, further marginalizing the histories of

underrepresented groups. The authors also found a limited use of the actual terms “race” and “racism” within the standards, with the standards often used softened language that alluded to racism. Additionally, when individuals and groups of color were mentioned, the context of the racial projects or activities they were involved in was frequently omitted. For example, the authors argue that instead of calling figures like DuBois “reform leaders,” the distinct ways that figures like DuBois impact race relations should be mentioned (Vasquez Heilig et. al, 2012).

Similarly to Alridge (2006), Vasquez Heilig et. al (2012) finds that racial progress is distorted by standards, as historical leaders are often solely highlighted instead of the collective, grassroots efforts that really fueled racial progress. Similarly, federal intervention programs are frequently highlighted to the detriment of explanations of the discrimination that made such interventions necessary, and constitutional amendments are highlighted without discussions of the racism that occurred and led to their passage (Vasquez Heilig et. al, 2012).

In their examination of elementary and middle school level social studies textbooks, Brown and Brown (2010) came to multiple conclusions, including that curricular standards make the role of race seem nonexistent or tangential to United States history. Taking a Critical Race Theory approach to evaluate these standards, Brown & Brown (2010) conclude that there should not simply just be a recognition of race and racism, but a wider contextualization of such. The lack thereof shows how standards can fail to provide the complex nature of racial inequality. Standardization effectively turns history into a series of names, dates, and facts, which ultimately presents history as an

objective truth, thus making curriculum more susceptible to harmful political agendas. In light of this study, Solorzano & Yosso (2002), Vasquez Heilig, Brown and Brown (2012) note the importance of including "people's histories," meaning that collective experiences that have been silenced need to be heard.

Conclusion

The empirical data displayed in this chapter shows the importance in evaluating K-12 curricula and textbooks and content area standards for evidence of obstruction of, or partial, narratives of U.S. history. Textbooks have a powerful role in shaping student perceptions of certain historical figures, events, and themes of the United States. Scholars' examinations of textbooks reveal common critiques, including the objective, one-dimensional nature of many of these narratives and the erasure of nuanced understandings of race and its impact on U.S. history. Textbooks today also tend to heroicize particular historical persons and events. Without context, figures of color appear supplementary, obscured, and dehumanized. Likewise, racial violence and slavery are individualized by texts, disconnecting them from larger, racialized institutions of power. The guise of the White master script in curriculum does not allow room for controversy, nuance, or questioning within historical retellings. Curricular standards also play a significant role in such presentations of knowledge, often listing individuals and/or groups of color as additional or supplementary to the "primary" curricular goal, again, giving teachers an excuse to not talk about race. In all of these empirical studies, race is best understood as a tangential subject to the history of the United States, as argued by Vasquez Heilig, Brown and Brown (2012). Race being tangential is particularly harmful

for minoritized students, affecting their cultural memory and perceptions of self. As for White students, they may assume that the histories of non-White peoples do not concern them.

The empirical studies described here connect back to the earlier half of the chapter, which examined the history of Critical Race Theory, its definition and tenets, application in education, and ways in which it challenges master-narratives through storytelling. These theoretical studies called for a challenge to master narratives and to dominant ideology in all aspects of life, to which the empirical studies pointed to specific instances of such master-narratives within textbooks and their resulting harm.

All of this raises the question, when states pass laws that explicitly endorse texts on the basis of their omission of CRT, what ends up happening to the nation's historical narrative? To investigate this question, the next chapter looks toward developing a methodology, grounded in Critical Race Theory, to evaluate Revolutionary War narratives in three fifth grade social studies textbooks. This methodology is similar to those described in the empirical studies above but differs in that it relies on a rubric with a scoring system. This rubric and its development will be expanded upon below.

Chapter Three; Methodology

The following chapter includes a discussion of methods used to answer this study's question: how do approved fifth grade social studies textbooks in the state of Florida portray the American Revolutionary War in terms of a Critical Race perspective, or the lack thereof? The chapter begins with describing the process of choosing the three textbooks, drawing upon the specifications for adoption of Florida social studies curriculum. It then discusses the historical texts that were used to build a counter narrative of the Revolutionary War and explores what elements were chosen as criteria for the CRT counter narrative. The chapter ends with a developed rubric, including eight criteria, which were used to evaluate the three 5th grade social studies textbooks chosen. When developing the criteria of this rubric, the five tenets developed by Solórzano & Yosso (2002) were used as a framework, focusing on challenging the dominant ideology and using counter storytelling.

Choice of Study

Due to my own educational experiences and limited perspectives offered in my K-12 education, I became particularly interested in the role of curriculum and how it shapes students' beliefs. This caused me to want to look at history curriculum through textbooks, and how certain historical portrayals might influence students' beliefs, causing some to hold racist ideas. Without inclusive narratives in textbooks, students will not be prepared to remake society, which should be a central goal of social studies education. Although textbooks do not necessarily encapsulate all the learning that occurs in a classroom, as Apple & Christian Smith (1991) suggest, textbooks often dominate what

students learn, and are their first exposure to history and thus are an important focus of study.

As of early 2024, eighteen states, such as Alabama, Arkansas, and Florida, banned CRT from textbooks. This is cause for alarm, textbook content could become breeding grounds for racist ideas among youth, with students learning inaccurate, White supremacist versions of history (Critical Race Theory Ban States 2024, n.d.). Especially because of its immediate relevance, I was motivated to look at what was happening inside some of these textbooks, namely those used in Florida textbooks. Ron DeSantis, the governor of Florida, has used legislation to control curriculum in the state, most notably the Stop the Wrongs to Our Kids and Employees (W.O.K.E.) Act. In April of 2022, Governor Ron DeSantis codified the prohibition on teaching Critical Race theory in K-12 schools through this act, as mentioned in Chapter 1, and received much attention from the media for doing so (Staff, 2022). When considering what textbooks to evaluate in Florida, fifth grade textbooks were of interest, as this is often a time where students start to have individual subject teachers for history and science.

Materials and Selection Process

After looking through the Florida adoption/rejection lists, three textbooks were chosen to be subjects of this study. The textbooks chosen were based on the June 26th, 2023 adoption list and also due to their coverage of the Revolutionary War (Solodev, 2023). This list, however, has been continually updated, with the last update being on March 29th, 2024. All three textbooks chosen are still on the approved list and have not been moved to the “not recommended” list. As stated by the adoption list, “All grade

levels K-5 must meet standards alignment and scoring criteria for adoption" (Solodev, 2023). Each textbook on this adoption list is given a subject-specific standards score, along with a percentage of alignment with state curricular standards. The three textbooks chosen for this study from the adoption list are as follows:

1.) Analytic Orange, Inc.'s Florida History Makers: Our United States (grade 5), 2022
2.) McGraw Hill LLC's Florida Social Studies, United States History (grade 5), 2024
3.) Teachers' Curriculum Institute's Social Studies Alive! America's Past (Florida Series, Grade 5), 2022

The textbooks chosen had the following values (Solodev, 2023):

Publisher	Textbook	Subject-specific standards score	Percentage of alignment
Analytic Orange, Inc.	Florida History Makers: Our United States (grade 5), 2022, 1st Edition	4.4	88.3%
McGraw Hill LLC	Florida Social Studies, United States History (grade 5), 2024	4.2	100%
Teachers' Curriculum Institute	Social Studies Alive! America's Past (Florida Series, Grade 5), 2022	4.5	87.5%

In order to be on the adoption list, as these three textbooks are, the Florida Department of Education includes a document with standards for the 2022-2023 Florida Instructional Materials Adoption. On top of meeting these standards, the texts must also

meet the new Addendum from House Bill 7, signed into law on April 22, 2022 by Governor Ron DeSantis (also known as the STOP W.O.K.E. Act). As quoted by the Addendum, which is directed towards Social Studies publishers, the bill "includes provisions to prevent discriminatory instruction in the workplace and in public schools, and amends section 1003.42, Florida Statutes, to update required instructional topics. Please ensure your instructional materials are in compliance with this bill as you prepare to submit your materials in July" (Solodev, 2023). The priorities that constitute the "core questions" rubric for the evaluation of instructional materials are content, presentation, learning, Next Generation Sunshine State Standards Alignment, and B.E.S.T. Standards Alignment. The Specifications for Adoption include a corresponding "Core Questions" document that serves as a rubric for evaluation of all instructional materials bid for state adoption.

The rubric includes general requirements for curriculum. For example under the "content" subheading, materials must "include connections to life in a context that is meaningful to students" (Solodev, 2023). Interestingly, however, the Specifications for Adoption document refers to a required Instruction Statute s.1003.42, F.S., saying that this statute requires the prohibition of Critical Race Theory, and its applied principles (such as social justice) and social emotional learning. It then goes on to state banned CRT components. If any of these components are included, the Florida Department of Education would call for an immediate negation of the text. These critical race components are stated below:

- Members of one race, color, sex, or national origin are morally superior to

members of another race, color, sex, or national origin;

- An individual, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously;
- An individual's moral character or status as either privileged or oppressed is necessarily determined by his or her race, color, sex, or national origin;
- Members of one race, color, sex, or national origin cannot and should not attempt to treat others without respect to race, color, sex, or national origin;
- An individual, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex or national origin, bears responsibility for, or should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment because of, actions committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, sex, or national origin;
- An individual, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment to achieve diversity, equity, or inclusion;
- An individual should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress on account of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin; and
- Such virtues as merit, excellence, hard work, fairness, neutrality, objectivity, and color-blindness are racist or sexist, or were created by members of a particular race, color, sex, or national origin to oppress members of another race, color, sex, or national origin (Solodev, 2023).

The document also refers to subsection 3 of Rule 6A-1.094124, which states,

“Critical Race Theory, Social Justice, Culturally Responsive Teaching, Social and Emotional Learning, and any other unsolicited theories that may lead to student indoctrination are prohibited.” It the outlines that the following must be abided by, regarding culturally responsive teaching:

- Instructional materials should not attempt to indoctrinate or persuade students to a viewpoint inconsistent with Florida standards. Social Justice is closely aligned to CRT.
- Potential Social Justice components include:
    - Seeking to eliminate undeserved disadvantages for selected groups.
    - Undeserved disadvantages are from mere chance of birth and are factors beyond anyone’s control, thereby landing different groups in different conditions.
    - Equality of treatment under the law is not a sufficient condition to achieve justice.
- SEL in instructional materials are considered extraneous, unsolicited strategies prohibited in the specifications for the texts and are not part of the subject-area standards. These include:
    - Identity and identity identification concepts
    - Managing emotion
    - Developing relationships
    - Social awareness

  While one might assume that a product such as a textbook would be widely

available if one had the money to purchase the product, interestingly, gaining access to the textbooks on the Florida adopted list proved to be more difficult than imagined. When asking Analytic Orange about purchasing their textbook, they said that they would only sell through the Florida School book depository, which only sells to residents of Florida. However, they eventually put Bucknell's Education Department's Academic Assistant in contact with someone who allowed her to purchase the textbook. However, they emphasized that it must stay at Bucknell University and not go to an individual student. After contacting McGraw Hill, they said that the book from the approved list had not yet been released, but they guided us in purchasing the most recently used edition, that being the 2018 version. The Teachers' Curriculum Institute student workbook was able to be purchased without interference.

Developing Rubric

To develop the rubric for assessing the degree of Critical Race Theory present within 5th grade Revolutionary War narratives, I consulted Gerald Horne's *The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America* (2014), Nikole Hannah-Jones' *The 1619 Project* (2019), and Ibram X Kendi's *Stamped From The Beginning* (2016). Triangulating the content from each of these historical texts, and gathering the relevant features of CRT to apply to a 5th grade historical examination, I developed a rubric (Table 3.1) as a way to evaluate Critical Race Theory, or the lack thereof, in the textbooks. The rubric is scaled from 0-3, with 0 being no inclusion of CRT, and 3 being the most sophisticated inclusion of CRT. Through reading the three historical texts, I developed a series of eight criteria of what should be

included in a Critical Race telling of the Revolutionary War. Listed below are brief descriptions of these criteria, looking at how textbooks might be scored against them:

1. **Defending Rights to Own Slaves as Justification for War**

As described by Horne (2014), colonists chose to succeed from Britain in order to continue their practice of enslavement. A low score in this criteria means that defending slavery is not mentioned as a cause of the Revolutionary War, with only mentions of other causes such as the British Taxation Acts, Boston Massacre, and Boston Tea Party. Mentioning slave revolts, along with blame for these revolts being ascribed by colonists to London, would be the first step towards inclusion of a critical race perspective (earning score 1), as it acknowledges that London might have motives for the enslaved to take back their power, or freedom, colonists. This might include mentioning that when Jefferson scolds the British for "exciting those very people to rise in arms among us" in the Declaration of Independence, he is referring to African people (Horne, 2014, p. 234). A more developed CRT perspective would discuss how plans of abolition were being made by Britain leading up to the Revolution (earning score 2), and the most developed would connect these plans to the colonists' motive for succession (earning score 3). This includes stating that the origins of the Revolutionary War were based upon rebels wanting to defend their rights to own slaves and their rejection of Britain's plans for abolition. Similarly, a score of 3 might include mentioning that colonists' frustration with Britain cutting off their trade was due to wanting to have freedom in buying and selling African people, along with selling their slave-grown crops and manufactured goods (Kendi, 2017). Describing this motivation creates a counter narrative to the traditional American

narrative, as the origins of the war are antithetical to American political tradition and ideas of freedom, liberty, and justice. The colonists existed in contradiction, still defending enslavement while talking of liberty for themselves. Ideally, authors would criticize the celebratory narrative of the origins of the United States as portrayed today.

2. Fear of the Enslaved and Enslaved Resistance

An important aspect of the critical race narrative of the Revolutionary War is showing the power that the enslaved had, including their many forms of resistance and fear that they incited among colonists. Having no mention of enslaved resistance would score a 0 for this criterion. The more instances of enslaved resistance mentioned, or instances of things such as enslaved conspiracies, the higher the ranking would be according to this rubric. This may include, for example, disturbances among the enslaved in Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York during months leading up to 1776, or poisonings by the enslaved as early as the 1760s. This might also include mentioning an alliance between enslaved peoples and Britain, such as describing how in the Battles of Lexington and Concord, British troops were accompanied by the enslaved (earning score of 1). A more developed critical race perspective (earning score of 2) would make this fear and alarm from colonists clear, however, giving power to the enslaved, their abilities, and their humanity. Examples of this fear might be mentioning how the Continental Congress met in Philadelphia and forbade slave importation into the colonies out of the fear of the enslaved becoming redcoats, or the fear of war with Spain, aided by the internal force of enslaved Africans. Other examples include correspondence from London, such as in May 1775, when the

Continental Congress received word from Arthur Lee that the Crown was planning to deploy indigenous allies and the enslaved against settlers, or on May 29th, 1775 when a local periodical reported a plan by London to ship 78,000 guns and bayonets to the colonies for use by Africans, “Indigenes,” Roman Catholics, and Canadians against settlers. The most sophisticated explanation of enslaved revolts, from a critical race perspective (earning score 3), would acknowledge enslaved peoples abilities to assert themselves, through things such as running away and setting up their own governments on the frontier. Admitting that the enslaved were self reliant enough, and also successful in, affecting their own freedom is often not mentioned by texts. This is purposeful, as it avoids the possibility of students perceiving any lack of power within the United States. A sophisticated critical race narrative would also examine previous entanglements, such as Manhattan 1712, Antigua 1736, Stono 1739, Manhattan 1741, and the Jamaican Maroons and connect this to the fear that colonists had in losing the colonial project. This fear could also be connected to the present day, showing how anxiety of Black people by White settlers has been passed down by generations.

3. White Identity Development

Discussion of Whiteness identity development within textbooks, from a critical race perspective, should be incorporated as a central theme and revisited throughout the story of the United States. If Whiteness is not mentioned, texts would earn a score of 0. Identifying the differences in race between African slaves and White colonists would earn texts a score of 1. A score of 2 would be earned if the textbook connected slavery to racial difference, describing slavery as being based upon racial hierarchies. The most

developed CRT narrative, earning a score of 3, requires textbooks to explain the idea of Whiteness fully and how Whiteness was based on the detriment, hatred, possession, and enslavement of Africans.

4. Somerset v. Stewart

James Somerset was enslaved by Charles Stewart, who purchased him in Boston. However, when Stewart returned to England, bringing Somerset with him, Somerset escaped. Somerset was recaptured, and in 1772, Lord Mansfield ruled that this imprisonment was unsupported by British common law. A critical race perspective of the Revolutionary War will speak of the Somerset Case, showing how this case was a stepping stone towards revolution. Rejection of the ruling increased colonial support in separating to protect slavery in the colonies. Not mentioning this case would earn a score of 0 according to the rubric. Mentioning the ruling of Somerset v. Stewart in an objective way, without connecting it to its impact on slavery both in Britain and in the colonies would earn a score of 1. A more developed CRT perspective will show how Somerset v. Stewart created a legal framework that caused slavery to crumble (score of 2), but the most developed perspective would describe how Somerset's case effectively outlawed slavery, and the colonists rejection of this caused their to be unity in feelings of succession (score of 3). A sophisticated CRT telling would also describe the aftermath of Somerset's case in the colonies, explaining how the enslaved saw this as a sign to flee or to mutiny, thus causing colonists to fear an insurrection among the enslaved. After Somerset's case, it could also be mentioned that Africans met together and conspired with redcoats, hoping to be rewarded with their freedom, which colonists feared. This brings

to light the colonists' hypocrisy and thus is often avoided by texts. It was the settler's goal to escape *from* London for their own freedom, and yet it was the Africans' goal to escape *to* London, which they believed would afford them more freedom than the colonists had.

5. Lord Dunmore's Edict

In 1775, Lord Dunmore of Virginia threatened to free enslaved peoples if the colonists rebelled against Britain. Later that year, Lord Dunmore offered freedom to enslaved people who left their masters and joined the British army. A CRT perspective would mention Lord Dunmore's edict (starting with a score of 1), showing how Dunmore's Edict was seen as a threat among colonists would earn a score of 2, along with explaining how colonists reacted to this by promising death to Africans who joined Dunmore. The most developed version of this CRT narrative, however, would explain how this edict solidified opposition against London (earning a score of 3). A CRT perspective would also provide context of Lord Dunmore's Edict, looking at how it followed similar tensions expressed after the Somerset case. It could also be noted that Dunmore also opposed colonists moving westward to seize the land of indigenous peoples, which caused similar anger that colonists expressed after the Proclamation of 1763.

6. Hypocrisy of Nation's Founders

Founding fathers such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin are classic figures to mention in the American Revolution story, but a CRT narrative would mention how they were also slaveholders (earning a score of 1). Not

mentioning their slaveholding status would earn a score of 0. A more developed CRT perspective would call the founding fathers racist (earning a score of 2), but a sophisticated CRT perspective would acknowledge that the founding fathers were hypocritical in the ways that they heralded the American philosophy of freedom while holding enslaved peoples captive (earning a score of 3). The founding fathers were also aware of their own hypocrisy, with Jefferson stating that even God would likely side with enslaved people in a revolt (Horne, 2014). The founding fathers also consistently talked about feeling "enslaved" by London, which, as White men, they believed was unjust, demonstrating that they did not see Black people as people deserving of freedom or human rights. Benjamin Franklin said, for example, that England was making "Americans whites black," showing how he was aware of the racialized nature of slavery, yet saw no issue with it (Horne, 2014, p.242).

7. Surveillance & Carcerality

The inclusion of slave codes (score of 1), patrols, and the Negro Act of 1740 (score of 2) are important in understanding how aspects of Black lives are and were policed. From a CRT perspective, it is important to understand this history and how it applies to life today (score of 3), including mass incarceration of Black communities. Not mentioning any of this information would earn the text a score of 0. Slave codes were justified by believing that social and economic order would be preserved if Black people were objects of surveillance and control, and this sort of thinking still exists today. Slavery was the start of government surveillance and punishment of Black people, but the underlying pattern of slavery remains today, just with forms of repression and control

changing over time. A full CRT perspective would acknowledge this.

8. Indigenous Fear

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 is central to explaining colonists' fear of Indigenous peoples, but the extent in which this connection is made earns the textbooks different scores on the rubric. The Proclamation of 1763 was issued by King George III and forbade colonists' from expanding into Indigenous lands beyond the Appalachian mountains. Not mentioning the proclamation would earn the textbook a score of 0, while mentioning it would earn the textbook a score of 1. Further explaining how colonists rejected the proclamation would earn the textbook a score of 2. A full critical race inclusion of the proclamation, earning a score of 3, would connect the colonists' rejection of the proclamation to their secession from Britain. The textbook needs to explicitly state that the colonists rejected the protection of Indigenous peoples, and that Indigenous protection by Britain caused them to want to secede. A score of 3 would also require the textbook to connect this proclamation to the present day, showing how the rebels continued to crush indigenous politics after their 1776 victory and throughout history. The rebels feared Indigenous revolts and also Indigenous alliances with the enslaved, causing them to exert control over Indigenous lands and peoples.

Conclusion and Rubric Introduction

Throughout this chapter, the three textbooks chosen for the study are identified, along with the context of how these textbooks were, in light of recent legislation, seeking to control curriculum and its inclusion of Critical Race Theory. Some of the rubric criteria were then explained more in depth. The chapter ends with a developed rubric,

including eight criteria, that were used to evaluate the three fifth grade social studies textbooks chosen. When developing the criteria of this rubric, the five tenets developed by Solorzano & Yosso (2002) were used as a framework, focusing on challenging the dominant ideology and using counter storytelling. The chapter begins with describing the process of choosing the three textbooks, looking at the specifications for adoption of Florida social studies curriculum and recent legislation, then looking at historical texts that were used to build a counter narrative of the Revolutionary War. Criteria from these historical texts are identified in the rubric.

The rubric is included in the following two pages, labeled Table 3.1: CRT Rubric for Textbook Evaluations. Each of the nine criteria for a Critical Race telling of the Revolutionary War is labeled on the left most column. Horizontally, across the top of the rubric, is a scale from 0-3, with 0 being no inclusion of CRT, and 3 being the most sophisticated inclusion of CRT, to evaluate each of the criteria. The rubric developed and tested here is an original contribution that could be refined for other historical analyses.

Table 3.1: CRT Rubric for Textbook Evaluations

	0	1	2	3
Defending Rights to Own Slaves as Justification for War	Not mentioned, or other reasons are given.	Colonists were angry about enslaved revolts, which they blamed on London. .	Discussion of how plans for abolition in London were being made, but not stated as a reason for succession.	Origins of the Revolutionary War based upon rebels wanting to defend their rights to own enslaved peoples and rejecting Britain's doubts about enforcing slavery.
Fear of the Enslaved and Enslaved Resistance	Not mentioned. Resistance by Africans mentioned as a justification for slavery.	Few instances of enslaved resistance, mentioned. British troops accompanied by the enslaved.	Fear and alarm incited in colonists by enslaved revolts.	Racist planters did not want to admit that the enslaved were self reliant enough to affect their own freedom. Previous entanglements, and future consequences, over anxiety of Black people.
White Identity Development	Not mentioned.	Differences in race of African slaves and White colonists identified and elaborated upon.	Slavery described as being based upon racial hierarchies.	Whiteness unifying Europeans on the basis of detriment, hatred, possession, and enslavement of Africans.

Somerset v. Stewart	Not mentioned.	Somerset v. Stewart's ruling is mentioned, but without connection to its impact on slavery.	Somerset's case is explained to be the legal framework that caused slavery to crumble.	Somerset's case effectively outlawed slavery in England, and colonists rejected this. The enslaved in the colonies took Somerset's case as a call to flee or to mutiny.
Lord Dunmore's Edict	Not mentioned	Dunmore's Edict mentioned, but not contextualized in its effects on colonists.	Edict seen as a threat. After a revolt in Williamsport, Dunmore issued another edict saying that he would declare the enslaved free.	Edict solidified opposition to London. Dunmore was seen as a villain by colonists.
Hypocrisy of Nation Founders	Not mentioned	Founding fathers were mentioned as slaveholders, but excused due to the "times" they lived in.	Exploration of how founding fathers held racist beliefs.	Founding fathers heralded the American philosophy of freedom while holding the enslaved captive with no plans to free them.
Surveillance & Carcerality	Not mentioned.	Slave codes mentioned.	Slave Patrols and the Negro Act of 1740 mentioned, explaining how they caused policing on more	Slaves codes were enacted because it was believed that social and economic order would be preserved if Black people were objects of surveillance and control and this idea continues today.

			aspects of Black lives.	
Indigenous Fear	Not mentioned	Royal Proclamation of 1763 mentioned.	The Royal Proclamation of 1763 was rejected by colonists.	Royal Proclamation of 1763 ignited revolution since it forbade land ownership beyond the Appalachian Mountains, and colonists rejected the protection of indigenous peoples. Proclamation connected to how the rebels continued to crush indigenous politics after their 1776 victory and throughout history.

Chapter Four; Analysis

The following chapter evaluates how the McGraw Hill, TCI, and Analytic Orange textbooks perform in their ability to provide students with a critical race perspective on the Revolutionary War, according to their rubric evaluations. On the next page is Table 4.1: Textbook Evaluations, which scores each of the textbooks against the rubric introduced in Chapter Three, with their average scores calculated on a scale of 3.0. The majority of this chapter includes a close analysis of how each of the critical race criteria identified by the rubric appear, or do not appear, in the three textbooks. The chapter then transitions into discussing other themes that emerged throughout the textbooks that relate to Critical Race theory, including justification and diminishment of slavery, along with a patriotic, American rhetoric.

Table 4.1: Textbook Evaluations

	Defending Rights to Own Slaves (Justification for War)	Fear of Slaves and Slave Resistance	White Identity Development	Somerset v. Stewart	Lord Dunmore's Edict	Hypocrisy of Nation Founders	Surveillance & Carcerality	Indigenous Fear	Average Scores (out of 3)
McGraw Hill	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0.625**
Analytic Orange	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0.25**
Teacher's Curriculum Institute	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0.75**

Textbook Content and Rubric Evaluations

Defending Rights to Own Slaves as Justification for War

The colonists' desire to continue the institution of slavery in the colonies is a necessary part of a critical race telling of the Revolutionary War. This serves as a foundation for other crucial events such as Lord Dunmore's Edict and the Somerset v. Stewart case. However, no textbooks listed defending the right to own slaves as a motivation for the colonists' succession from Britain.

In listing the reasons for war, the McGraw Hill text mentions the Stamp Act, Townshend Acts, Boston Massacre, Boston Tea Party and the Coercive and Intolerable Acts, failing to mention the continuance of slavery in the colonies (Banks et al., 2018, p.162-163). The main reasons for war focused on in the McGraw Hill text are taxation without representation and rights being violated. Failing to mention the doubts about slavery occuring in Britain and colonists' desire to continue slavery in the colonies earns the McGraw Hill text a score of "0" for this category.

In the McGraw Hill text, controlling colonial trade is included in the colonists' grievances, although this trade is not explicitly connected to the trade of enslaved people (Banks et al., 2018, p.140). Thus, this detail must have been purposefully neglected, as describing colonists' grievance to being "controlled" through slave trade would appear hypocritical to the very control they were exercising over enslaved people through such trade. McGraw Hill mentions that in the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson attacked the slave trade, and that representatives from the Southern colonies, who dependended upon slavery, removed this part of the writing in the document (Banks et

al., 2018, p.170). Importantly, this is the only place where trade controls are specified as *slave* trade controls. However, Horne (2014) argues that Jefferson attacked Britain for *inciting revolution* among the enslaved in the Declaration, not attacking Britain for the institution of slavery itself. By stating that Jefferson attacked slavery in the Declaration of Independence, McGraw Hill makes the founding father Jefferson appear more "just" than he was, not mentioning his own status as a slaveholder. Similarly, another reason given as motivation for war in the McGraw Hill text was the protection and defense of property (Banks et al., 2018, p.159). However, the connection that the enslaved were considered property was not made in the text. Including this detail would have made it clear that one of the reasons for colonists' succession was a protection of the colonists property, or the enslaved. If control of trade and defense of property both had been connected to slavery, then the McGraw Hill textbook would have earned higher score on the rubric.

Continuing the institution of slavery was not listed in the Analytic Orange text as a reason for revolt. The events that are described as leading up to the revolution are the Proclamation of 1763, the Sugar Act, the Currency Act, the Stamp Act, the Quartering Act, the Townshend Act, the Boston Massacre, the Tea Act, the Boston Tea Party, and the Coercive/Intolerable Acts (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.83). According to Analytic Orange, the reasons for succession listed in the Declaration of Independence are (1) unfair taxes (2) lack of representation in government (3) trade controls (4) putting British soldiers in the colonies and (5) not allowing fair trials (Banks et al., 2018, p.97). Again, when describing trade controls, like McGraw Hill, Analytic Orange fails to mention the trade of

enslaved people. Thus, this text earns a score of "0."

Teacher's Curriculum Institute (TCI) depicts an "Unrest-O-Meter," describing the events that led up to colonists revolt, those being The French and Indian War, the Proclamation of 1763, The Quartering Act, The Stamp Act, The Boston Massacre, The Boston Tea Party, and The Intolerable Act (Lasser et al., 2022, p.209). However, *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine is also mentioned as something that caused colonists' minds to change towards revolution (Lasser et al., 2022, p.244). Similarly to McGraw Hill, TCI discusses Jefferson's supposed statement that attacked slavery in the Declaration of Independence, saying, "Delegates from two southern colonies, where plantation owners used enslaved people, objected to statements about slavery. Congress removed Jefferson's statement that slavery was a 'cruel war against human nature'" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.250). Again, this statement makes it appear as though the colonists were separating from Britain due to their disgust with slavery, which Horne (2014) would argue to be the exact opposite of the case. The TCI text also scores a "0" in this category. None of the textbooks mention the enslaved revolts as a reason for succession, nor do they discuss plans of abolition being made in London. This makes the texts nowhere near a sophisticated, critical race narrative in this category, as the colonists' defense of their rights to own slaves is even briefly mentioned, nor the colonists' rejection of Britain's doubts about enforcing slavery.

Fear of the Enslaved and Enslaved Resistance

Although there is some mention of enslaved throughout the three texts, the power of the enslaved, including their self-reliance and ability to affect their own freedom, is

wholly discredited. In the McGraw Hill text, there is one mention of enslaved revolts, which says, “Colonists constantly feared violent revolts as well. Revolts were rare, but they sometimes happened as people struggled to be free” (Banks et al., 2018, p.144). Describing these revolts as “rare,” and also describing slavery as something that “most enslaved people never escaped” portrays the enslaved as helpless. This neglects the fact that it was enslaved resilience and power that caused genuine fear and alarm in the colonists, producing an anxiety that continues today. When describing enslaved resistance in the McGraw Hill text, only organizations that helped *free* African Americans are mentioned, such as the Brown Fellowship Society of South Carolina (Banks et al., 2018, p.145). There are no mentions of anti-slavery efforts among the enslaved themselves. Since enslaved revolts are mentioned, McGraw Hill will earn a score of “1,” although the text gives absolutely no power toward the enslaved or mentions how they revolted in successful ways.

In the Analytic Orange text, there is not a mention of fear of the enslaved or enslaved revolts. Instead, there seems to be a strong emphasis on the enslaved who sided with the Patriots, even though, in actuality, most sided with the British. The Continental Army is described as having a diverse population with both African Americans and Native Americans, and at the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Analytic Orange text mentions how, “Both enslaved and free African American soldiers joined the other colonists” (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.101). There is no mention of how Native American and African American communities often sided with Britain instead, who promised either respect to their lands or freedom, respectfully. The Analytic Orange text has a graphic for the

Battle of Yorktown, showing how the First Regiment of Rhode Island had a large percentage of African American men in the unit (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.107). This seems to try and further create the association among readers that African Americans sided with the motivations of the colonists. Likewise, Peter Salem, an enslaved man who became a member of the Continental Army, is honored for the way he "fought at the side of the people who had enslaved him" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.95). Salem Poor, another freed enslaved person, is described as a "devoted Patriot" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.95). Again, the number of times that the association is made between African Americans and the Continental Army in comparison to African Americans or Native Americans joining the British creates an inaccurate assumption of where their support lay throughout the war.

Other Black figures are highlighted in the war by Analytic Orange, but only for their devotion to the Patriot cause, such as James Armistead. Armistead, a runaway enslaved person, is mentioned in the text for serving as a spy on the British side (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.107). Mammy Kate, another spy, is highlighted for helping her enslaver escape from jail (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.110). By giving multiple examples of stories of enslaved who sided with the Patriots, it makes student readers feel as though enslaved people agreed with the colonists' cause. These stories are not countered with stories of enslaved resistance, anger, and revolt against the colonists, which would create a more accurate depiction of the feelings of the enslaved. The Analytic Orange text thus earns a score of "0."

In the TCI text, more instances of enslaved resistance are mentioned. There is a

specific mention of an enslaved revolt, that being the 1739 revolt in South Carolina where a “group of about 60 fugitives … seized guns from a store and started on a march to freedom, killing any White people who tried to capture them” (Lasser et al., 2022, p.164). More general instances of resistance are mentioned as well, such as the enslaved causing attacks with weapons they made, pretending to not understand what they were being told to do, breaking tools, setting buildings on fire, and some even killing themselves (Lasser et al., 2022, p.164). The presence of resistance from the enslaved is reiterated through a Hands-On Activity in the lesson, which asks students to list three ways that Africans rebelled against their enslavers (Lasser et al., 2022, p.167). This earns the TCI text a score of “1,”since it mentions a few instances of enslaved resistance, but it does not show the fear and alarm of colonists from these revolts, nor does it admit that the enslaved were self-reliant enough to affect their own freedom.

However, like Analytic Orange, TCI also emphasizes enslaved people who supported the Continental Army. This includes mentioning Peter Salem and Salem Poor and their roles in fighting for the Continental Army (Lasser et al., 2022, p.264). TCI states, “African Americans served for relatively long periods in the army, and many played important roles in battles” (Lasser et al., 2022, p.264). Again, a more accurate narrative would also include a description of how African Americans and Native Americans joined forces with the British, and without such, mentioning examples such as Peter Salem and Salem Poor puts too much emphasis on those who did join the Continental Army, as they were in the minority.

White Identity Development

Out of all of the rubric categories, the inclusion of White identity development earned the highest scores, with McGraw Hill and TCI earning a score of “2” and Analytic Orange earning a score of “0.” In Analytic Orange, the racial differences between enslaved Africans and White colonists is not even identified, earning it a score of “0.” However, both the McGraw Hill and TCI texts include some, although limited, discussions on race. For example, McGraw Hill discusses how ideas began to be associated with race, saying, “Colonists developed false ideas about the intelligence and the value of enslaved people in order to justify their actions. Today we call these ideas racism” (Banks et al., 2018, p.144). Through this statement, there is an acknowledgement of the existence of racism, slavery is connected to race, and it explains how slavery was justified through racist ideas. This is a step toward a critical race narrative, earning the textbook a score of “2.”

However, although McGraw Hill includes these ideas, it does not describe Whiteness as an entity nor the unification of Europeans through racial hatred of Africans. The American identity is discussed, but the connection of Whiteness to the American identity is not made. For example, the McGraw Hill text notes that during the Revolutionary War, “They now saw themselves as Americans, fighting for their rights and freedom. They were the Patriots” (Banks et al., 2018, p.164). However, in this sentence, “they” is not identified, and if it were to be, it would be White men. Here, the idea of “Americans” is tied to“rights” and “freedom,” which, at this time, were only granted to White men. Thus, subconsciously, readers may begin to tie the idea of being American to being White and having rights.

TCI has a more developed description of the White identity than McGraw Hill, specifically mentioning the race of White enslavers. In comparison, the McGraw Hill and Analytic Orange do not mention the race of enslavers. Through not identifying this, Whiteness appears as the standard in those two texts. TCI also includes information about African people before their enslavement, providing more humanization of the enslaved than the other texts. In other textbooks, the first introduction to African people is through the context of their enslavement, which again, would make it appear as if their use by White colonists is the only thing that produces their importance and relevance. After describing African culture, TCI gives a background of how slavery started, with Portuguese trading in West Africa (Lasser et al., 2022, p.154). TCI shows how slavery is racialized by saying, "The Portuguese racialized slavery by targeting Africans. Many Europeans justified their actions by claiming that West Africans were meant to be enslaved and to serve them" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.154). Later on, this notion is reiterated by saying, "Many viewed West Africans as inferior because of their race. They believed that Black Africans were not fully human and were meant to be enslaved. Because of these false ideas, Europeans racialized slavery" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.159). Like McGraw Hill, the inclusion of this statement allows readers to see how slavery is connected to race and explains how slavery was justified through racist ideas. It also shows how the enslaved were viewed with less humanity than White counterparts. The text also mentions how enslaved people were sold and gathered like animals, saying, "They were sold and treated like cattle. White traders did not see them as people" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.163). This earns TCI a score of "2." TCI admits to the

dehumanization of the enslaved by the colonists' through this description, which is not done by the other textbooks.

However, in the TCI text, like McGraw Hill text, there is a tie between the colonists, Patriots and "Americans." TCI states, "The Patriots had won the war. From this time forward, the former colonists would be known simply as Americans" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.271). Through this statement, White colonists are tied to having American citizenship. However, there is no mention of how the enslaved, some of whom were Patriots, were not granted this American citizenship.

Whiteness is also reinforced in the TCI text by tying enslaved to property. When describing losing enslaved people on the Middle Passage, TCI states, "losing enslaved people meant losing money" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.162). In this sense, the person-as-property status of enslaved is upheld through describing the loss of enslaved as a loss of "money" rather than humanity. This makes the enslaved use as labor for the benefit of White colonists appear more important than their lives. Although McGraw Hill and TCI make strides towards a critical race inclusion of Whiteness identity development, they fail to unfold the structure of Whiteness that is tied to the American identity, rights, and freedom.

Somerset v. Stewart

A critical race telling of the Revolutionary War would ideally explain the Somerset v. Stewart case, and the colonists' rejection of this ruling slavery as a stepping stone toward revolution. However, none of the textbooks mentioned James Somerset, nor did they mention the Somerset v. Stewart case. This yielded a score of "0" for all

textbooks. McGraw Hill did mention that, “Overtime, movements against slavery grew in Great Britain and America” (Banks et al., 2018, p.145). This statement does not explicitly mention Somerset v. Stewart's case, nor is there a connection to how “movements against slavery” in Great Britain impacted slavery in the colonies. A sophisticated version of this narrative would show how the Somerset case is connected to enslaved uprisings and the larger notion that defending rights to own slaves was a justification for war for colonists against Britain.

Lord Dunmore’s Edict

McGraw Hill and Analytic Orange received a “0” on the rubric for their extent of explaining Lord Dunmore’s edict, as it is not mentioned by either, while TCI earns a score of “1.” In the McGraw Hill and Analytic Orange text, Lord Dunmore himself is not mentioned, nor is there any mention of the edict’s implications, such as the enslaved joining British forces. Instead, as described in the “Fear of the Enslaved and Enslaved Resistance” section, there are only mentions of African Americans joining the Continental Army. This has the opposite effect compared to including Lord Dunmore’s edict, which would instead show how many enslaved joined forces with the British in hopes of freedom following this edict.

In the TCI textbook, there is a section devoted to Lord Dunmore, which describes his role as the Loyalist Governor of Virginia. However, his edict is not mentioned explicitly. Instead, Dunmore is described as a “wealthy man who dressed in fancy clothes that showed off his wealth and importance” (Lasser et al., 2022, p.237). However, the content of the edict is indirectly mentioned when the TCI text states, “He

promised to free any enslaved by the rebels if the enslaved people fought against the Patriots. A number of enslaved Africans joined the fighting to gain their freedom" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.237). It is then further explained that "some men of African descent" fought for the British, and also that some Native Americans fought for the British as well in hopes of protecting their lands (p.267). Although the text does not connect Britain's promise of freedom to Lord Dunmore and the colonists' succession, it is mentioned that, "Dunmore thought that being tough would frighten the colonists into accepting British rule. Instead, his firm action angered many people in Virginia" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.267). Describing the anger that colonists felt *could* be assumed by readers as a motivating cause to rebel, but this is not explicitly stated as a reason for succession in any of the textbooks. This cleverly avoids the conversation surrounding the hypocrisy of colonists' cause of fighting for freedom against British rule, who in turn were promising freedom to the very people colonists were denying such freedom to. However, because Lord Dunmore's edict is mentioned, TCI earns a score of "1." Although the edict is indirectly explained, if it would have been connected to its impact on slavery on the colonies, this would have yielded the textbook a higher score.

Hypocrisy of Nation Founders

It was surprising to find that none of the textbooks mentioned that some of the founding fathers were slave holders. Instead, in the McGraw Hill text, slave holding figures such as Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Hancock are all described as "well-respected colonial leaders" (Banks et al., 2018, p.168). The McGraw Hill text includes an entire section on Jefferson, where he is explained to be "one of the

most influential men in the history of the United States," who "was a man of many talents, interests, and skills" (Banks et al., 2018, p.188). His home Monticello is described, but without mentioning the slaves he had there. In the TCI text, Benjamin Franklin is described as a "thoughtful Patriot" who "often dressed in plain suits" and was admired for being "knowledgeable, funny, and wise" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.238). As will be described in the American spirit section later in the chapter, there is a distinct difference between how these texts characterize the colonists versus the Englishmen. Franklin is described as plain, perhaps to appeal to and garner American spirit from working-class Americans today. However, describing him in this way, without noting the ways in which Franklin was unjust and racist, creates wrongful pride among readers.

In describing basic rights that people deserve in the Declaration of Independence in the McGraw Hill text, the text fails to mention how these rights were, at the time, being denied to a large group of people (Banks et al., 2018, p.170). It is important that such texts *do* acknowledge the double-standard, and how "rights" in the Declaration were reserved solely for White men. McGraw Hill also discusses John Locke and his ideas of people being "born free and equal" and having the rights to "life, liberty, and the right to own property" (Banks et al., 2018. p.170). The idea of owning property is not expanded upon, however, or tied to the idea that the enslaved were considered property at the time. Thus, Locke's "rights" that he speaks of could be tied to the rights for White men to own enslaved as property. The colonists are being praised for fighting for rights and liberty, but under the surface, those rights that they speak so highly of include the right to capture, enslave, and control African people. Including this fact, however, would be

antithetical to the “freedom” and “liberty” language that is so often used in describing the Revolutionary War.

Something interesting in the McGraw Hill text appears in its description of the Declaration of Independence, where the authors discuss the words “all men are created equal” in the document, saying that this “gave African Americans hope that the new nation would treat all people equally” (Banks et al., 2018, p.175). The McGraw Hill text should then acknowledge that this new nation *did not*, in fact, treat all people equally, and continues not to. This is not mentioned, however, and students are left with an aspirational feeling towards their “just” and “free” country, not understanding that this is largely a facade. Thus, the McGraw Hill text earns a score of “0” for acknowledging the nation’s hypocrisy.

The Analytic Orange text displays hypocrisy itself. The text includes talk of metaphorical “chains” in regards to the colonists' condition with Britain, while real, actual chains were being used by these colonists on the enslaved. For example, the Analytic Orange text describes how Patrick Henry spoke about “how it felt like the king held the colonists in chains” (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.91). It is not acknowledged that Henry, however, only knows of this metaphor because of the colonists’ own oppression of African people. Moreover, the fact that Henry would choose this metaphor shows how he viewed chains and capture as something that was unjust when used on (or actually only *metaphorically* used upon) White folk, but justified when used on Black folk. In this statement, Henry not only shows hypocrisy but racializes enslavement. Analytic Orange takes part in continuing this racialization by including this statement without

explaining the racist idea behind it.

Following a description of the Declaration of Independence and its statement of rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, the Analytic Orange text says, “This section was and is very important to Americans. It explains who we are and what we value. It means that every person is born with human rights they deserve, which cannot be taken away” (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.97). However, following this statement, there is no acknowledgement about how human rights were being denied to an entire racial population. This is a particularly dangerous move from Analytic Orange, as it is so strongly stated that these human rights “cannot be taken away,” when in fact, they were being taken away at that very moment in time (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.97). This may make students feel as though human rights were, in fact, being upheld, and subconsciously cause students to view those of African descent as “othered” and not included in these discussions of human rights. Student readers might associate human rights only with those who were granted them at the time of the Declaration. This earns Analytic Orange a score of “0.” Like Analytic Orange, TCI mentions that the Declaration states rights that “all people should have” such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and also states that all people are created equal (Lasser et al., 2022, p.253). Again, a critical race perspective on the Declaration would indicate the hypocrisy of this statement, pointing to how enslavement was simultaneously happening in the colonies. Since no hypocrisy is acknowledged, TCI also earns a score of “0.”

Surveillance & Carcerality

There is no discussion of surveillance nor carcerality of Black folk in the Analytic

Orange and TCI texts, earning them both a score of “0.” McGraw Hill was the only text that mentioned surveillance of the enslaved through slave codes, describing these by saying, “slave holders had total power over enslaved workers, whom they often treated brutally. Enslaved people could be beaten, sometimes without reason” (Banks et al., 2018, p.144). However, the McGraw Hill text does not connect the surveillance of enslaved through slave codes to present day surveillance of Black folx and mass incarceration, which would have earned it a higher score on the rubric. Although, the McGraw Hill text makes a small connection to the present day. The text says, “Even so, slavery would not end for a long time. It left lasting effects on our country” (Banks et al., 2018, p.145). What these lasting effects of slavery are, however, are not expanded upon, and thus the text could not be given a higher score. Since slave codes are only mentioned briefly and their impact is not expanded upon, McGraw Hill will earn a score of “1” for this category.

Indigenous Fear

Each textbook touched on tensions with indigenous people, but there is no attribution to indigenous power and resultant fear among colonists by the textbooks. For example, all three textbooks specifically mention the Proclamation of 1763, and colonists’ rejection of that proclamation. A critical race perspective, however, would show the fear, and power, that Native nations had. A CRT perspective would also include admitting that colonists rejected British protection of Native American lands, which was wrong and antithetical to ideas of freedom and justice, and showing how fear of indigenous peoples continued past the revolution, with the rebels continuing to crush

indigenous politics for centuries to come. Because none of the textbooks had an explanation to this extent, they all earned a score of "2" from the rubric.

In the textbooks, it seems that in an effort to connect issues of the past to the present day, the texts try to relate the Proclamation of 1763 to an everyday experience that students face. Although this may have been well-intentioned, it only minimizes and disrespects indigenous people, their rights, and their land. For example, McGraw Hill states, "French land claims in the west limited the growth of the British colonies. Imagine that a group of kids said you and your friends couldn't use a part of the playground. Your play area would be limited. How would you feel?" (Banks et al., 2018, p. 158). First of all, this analogy implies that indigenous land was owned by the colonists, or "part of their playground," which is not true. Second, it tries to make students feel that it was unjust for colonists to not be granted this land, even though in reality, colonists were taking over land that was not theirs. McGraw Hill also includes another activity, asking students to identify personal and political hardships and their effects. An example of a personal and political hardship given was, "They [indigenous peoples] fought alongside the British to protect their homelands," with the result being, "Americans considered them enemies and took their lands" (Banks et al., 2018, p.185). The nature of this activity makes it seem as if taking indigenous land was a logical reaction. Again, this is disrespectful towards indigenous peoples and their lands, and may cause students to also not respect indigenous peoples, their rights, and their land.

McGraw Hill mentions the colonists' reaction to the Proclamation of 1763, describing how having "land set aside for Native Americans groups…angered the

colonists" which earns the text a score of 2 on the rubric, rather than 1, as this anger is given as a reason for succession from the British (Banks et al., 2018, p.159). However, although the Proclamation of 1763 is listed as a reason for succession, the texts give students no guidance on whether or not colonists *should* have been angered about protection of indigenous lands. The colonists' anger over the proclamation is dangerously stated in an objective, matter-of-fact fashion. A critical race perspective would explain to students that this was wrong of the colonists, and that the colonists' entitlement to Native lands was rooted in American imperialism, and also antithetical to American ideals.

In the Analytic Orange text, the Proclamation of 1763 is presented in a slightly different way, saying that the Proclamation was placed to stop colonists from expanding westward and for Britain to "control the colonists better in a smaller area" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.81). This explanation places the blame on the British, making the Crown seem tyrannical and controlling, although they were the ones protecting Native lands. Just like McGraw Hill, Analytic Orange speaks to the colonists' "anger" toward the proclamation, saying, "The Proclamation angered many, including George Washington. His wealth was tied to his lands" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.81). This anger is given as a reason for succession. This quote, however, shows how property rights, wealth, and land are valued above the humanity of indigenous people through talking about Washington's anger about the effects the Proclamation would have on his wealth and lands, not the effects it would have on indigenous peoples. When describing the proclamation, the Analytic Orange text also says that, "Colonists thought that the king was favoring the Native Americans. They

believed Britain gave the Native Americans land rights" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.81). Such a statement makes student readers believe that Native Americans did not deserve land rights, which is indicative not only of the harmful ideas of the colonists of the time, but of the Analytic Orange text itself, which restates such an idea without explaining that this idea was wrong. The lack of respect toward indigenous peoples and their lands is never discussed by the texts. Also, Analytic Orange mentions how Native Americans would struggle for autonomy and independence, not mentioning that such struggle only existed because of colonial action (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.112).

In the TCI text, similarly to Analytic Orange, the Proclamation of 1763 is described as protecting colonists from attacks on their homes and forts by Native Americans, noting that nearly 2,000 settlers, soldiers, and traders had died through the fighting (Lasser et al., 2022, p.212). The TCI text stresses the importance of protecting colonists, without noting the importance, or protection of, Native American lands through this proclamation. In describing the colonists' reaction to the proclamation, TCI describes that, "The colonists disliked this law because they did not like the way in which Great Britain was trying to control the colonies" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.212). Again, the idea that Britain was being controlling, or "controlling the playground" as described by McGraw Hill, puts blame on Britain and makes Britain appear as an unreasonable, unjust enemy. In reality, Britain was acting more justly than the colonists by protecting Native lands. Interestingly, TCI uses a very similar playground example as described by McGraw Hill to describe the Proclamation of 1763. The Proclamation of 1763 is compared to when "the principal paints a line on the playground and does not let students

cross it to play on the swing set" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.224). Again, such an analogy minimizes how traumatic and devastating the stealing and invasion of land was for indigenous peoples, and makes students feel as though the colonists had an absolute right to Native lands like they have a right to a swing set.

Other Themes Found

Below are three additional themes that emerged from a qualitative analysis of the textbooks, those being the justification of slavery, diminishment of slavery realities, and patriotic rhetoric related to the American spirit and the Continental Army's "underdog" status. These are elaborated below.

Justification of Slavery

Each textbook, when introducing slavery, gave a justification as to why such an institution was needed in the colonies. McGraw Hill gave the most extensive explanation of slavery, by saying,

> "Growing cash crops requires a lot of labor – more labor than colonial planters could do themselves. Planters needed workers. At first, the planters hired indentured servants to do the work … Not enough indentured servants came, though. Planters looked for other sources of labor. To meet the demand for labor, traders began seizing and enslaving people in West Africa" (Banks et al., 2018, p.139).

McGraw Hill presents slavery as a logical next step, as if there were no other options for colonists with a shortage of indentured servants. This explanation makes slavery look as though it was a need, rather than something that was produced to support

American economic ventures. The idea that slavery was a need is reinforced through asking students to, “Explain the importance of the Triangular Trade” in the McGraw Hill text, which essentially asks students to justify the Triangular Trade (Banks et al., 2018, p.141). McGraw Hill also stresses that, “From Maryland to Georgia, settlers in the Southern Colonies viewed slavery as very important to their way of life” (Banks et al., 2018, p.143). The importance of slavery to Southern colonies is also given as the reason for slavery to continue past the Revolutionary War.

Likewise, in Analytic Orange, the need for slavery is described by saying, “Tens of thousands of enslaved Africans helped the colonies survive” (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.77). Although it is true that slavery was essential to the colonial economy, a critical race narrative would point toward how the colonial economy was a want, not a need, rooted in colonists’ greed and economic imperialism mindsets.

A few of the texts also excuse slavery by mentioning its normalcy in that historical time period. For example, Analytic Orange admits that slavery was wrong for denying people their human rights, but follows this by saying, “Enslaving people occurred many times and in many cultures worldwide” (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.77). Any justification of slavery will produce harmful ideas among student readers.

Diminishment of Slavery

The oppressive nature of slavery is lessened by all three textbooks. McGraw Hill diminishes slavery’s nature by describing positive work that the enslaved did, fictionally quoting an enslaved person as saying, “There were many different jobs to do, and they varied by region. Some of us were skilled laborers, such as carpenters, blacksmiths, and

cooks. Others worked in the homes of the slaveholders. I was a sailor on a ship" (Banks et al., 2018, p.142). Including the various jobs that an enslaved person had could be appropriate, but only if it was countered with descriptions of brutality experienced by enslaved people on plantations, which is not done by McGraw Hill. The McGraw Hill text also includes a small graphic that says, "DID YOU KNOW?" with the caption, "Some of the first Africans in the colonies were treated more like indentured servants than enslaved people" (Banks et al., 2018, p.139). Again, without having this statement balanced with descriptions of the horrors of slavery that the student readers leave the text with a much more positive, incorrect idea of what slavery entailed.

Another way that McGraw Hill diminishes the oppressive and brutal nature of slavery is by individualizing slavery. For example, the McGraw Hill text asks students to describe the role that shipowners played in the slavery system (Banks et al., 2018, p.142). By focusing on the roles that individual people played in slavery, blame is placed on an individual rather than on an organized, institutionalized system orchestrated through racist ideas. A CRT perspective would point students to these systems and also challenge them to consider ways that racism is still institutionalized today.

In the Analytic Orange text, the word "slavery" is not included in any lesson heading, and instead, the topic of slavery is discussed under the title of "Week 18: Economy," with the subheading, "Introduction, Role, and Impact of Enslavement in the Colonies" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.77). Immediately following this section is a page titled, "Time for a Brain Break!" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.78). No other "Brain Breaks" are included elsewhere throughout the unit. The activities on the "Brain Break" page

include having students try eyebrow tricks and silent silly tongue twists. Is this “Brain Break” an effort to minimize shame from White students about the institution of slavery? It is concerning how brief the description of slavery is in the Analytic Orange text, only lasting the singular page, and not even included as its own lesson heading. The Analytic Orange page on slavery does not include the Triangular Trade or Middle Passage, let alone any other specific forms of brutality or exploitation of slavery

In comparison, the TCI text describes slavery for an entire lesson that lasts 16 pages, giving a much more in-depth description of slavery. However, it still does not fully describe the true extent of brutality of the institution. Some examples included in the TCI text show the use of harsh vocabulary and details, that are not found in the other textbooks. Examples are below:

> “They were put on ships and endured harsh conditions as they crossed the Atlantic Ocean … They were forced to work in miserable conditions” (Lasser et al., 2022, p. 154)
>
> “First, other West Africans put them in chains and marched them, sometimes hundreds of miles, to Africa’s west coast. Many people died along the way or after reaching the coast” (Lasser et al., 2022, p. 161)
>
> “[The Middle Passage] was a living nightmare … pairs of men chained together … Some people tried to kill themselves … brutal methods, whipped, tortured. The enslaved people from West Africa were treated with such cruelty that a number of them thought their captors would eat them!” (Lasser et al., 2022, p.162)

> ”Africans who learned to read and write described the experience as degrading … First, enslavers gave each enslaved person a new name. Next, an overseer shouted orders at them in an unfamiliar language. If they did not understand what they were supposed to do, or if they disobeyed the overseer, they might be whipped … Sometimes, all they had for a bed was a bundle of straw with some rags for a blanket. Oftentimes, they were not able to communicate with the other people in their cabin because they did not speak the same language” (Lasser et al., 2022, p.163)

Looking at the details given in the TCI text about slavery, there is a distinct difference between what is described here and what is described in the McGraw Hill and Analytic Orange textbooks. What is particularly alarming in the latter two texts is the lack of time spent on the subject, which does not allow for details about the nature of slavery and the slave trade. Especially in the Analytic Orange text, these details seem to be spared to avoid any “distress” among White students, as indicated by the need for a “Brain Break.”

American Spirit/Underdogs Rhetoric

In all three textbooks, there is an emphasis both on the American spirit and the idea that the Continental Army were the “underdogs” in the Revolutionary War. For example, the McGraw Hill text talks about how, “Many Americans gave everything they had to win their independence,” appealing to an undying American spirit (Banks et al., 2018, p.172). Likewise, McGraw Hill also spends time talking about how the Continental Army was disadvantaged, describing men as “shoeless” and “tired, hungry, injured, and

homesick" (Banks et al., 2018, p.174). Similarly, the Analytic Orange text talks about the "passion and heart for Americans" and the colonists' "great desire for freedom from the crown" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.81). When describing the Sons of Liberty, the Analytic Orange says that they were "willing to die for America" and that the Patriots "would fight with all their heart" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.84). These descriptions try to evoke a passionate American spirit from readers, perhaps making readers more apt to support the colonists' cause. Analytic Orange also incorporates Americans-as-underdogs rhetoric, including discussions of the difference in class between the British and the colonists, who "did not have fancy wool coats like the British. They did not have tall fur hats like the Hessians. Some were in ragged shirts and had big holes in their boots. Some were barefoot. Many were sick or starving. Yet they believed in the cause for independence" (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.99). Similarly, in the TCI textbook, it says that "The Continental army was made up of volunteers. Most of these men were farmers, merchants, and workers" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.264). There is also rhetoric that the odds were stacked against the colonists, quoting Washington who said that the Continental Army win was "little short of a standing miracle" and that "Americans had lost several battles, and many people began to desert the army" (Banks et al., 2018, p.184, 178). This sort of language used to describe the Continental Army as underdogs, in contrast to the great and mighty British, is an appeal to the readers, especially as these conversations often revolve around differences in wealth. Upon reading this, working-class Americans might feel strongly towards the colonists' cause in fighting the class hierarchy of Britain, causing readers to overlook the ways in which the colonists were creating their own racial hierarchy by and

through the revolution.

There is also a notion of “we” in the Analytic Orange text, such as saying that “we would become independent of Britain” (Sherwin et al., 2022, p.98). The use of the pronoun “we” implies a unifying American identity and experience. Such a notion is dangerous, however. “We” might be assumed to only be White men, since both women and enslaved Africans did not have rights at the time. This could subconsciously create that connection that those who are included in the nation were only those who were able to participate in the “winning.”

This sort of strong, American spirit rhetoric is not as present in the TCI text. There is a more objective telling of the war, such as, “They [the colonists] thought that Great Britain was taking advantage of them and believed that the colonists would have more freedom and security if they had their own nation” (Lasser et al., 2022, p.233). The TCI text focuses on how the colonists *felt* instead of assigning descriptors such as “oppressor” and “control” to Britain in a way that makes readers feel as if these are objective facts. Another example of this focus on colonists' beliefs, rather than facts, is when the TCI text says, “They believed that the colonists should have more say in making laws that directly affected them” (Lasser et al., 2022, p.233). There is a distinction made between the colonists’ beliefs and American student readers’ beliefs made by the TCI texts through the use of the pronoun “they” rather than “we.”

However, in the TCI text, there is a strong emphasis on the Continental Army being the underdogs, similarly to the other two textbooks. TCI talks about how Britain “seemed sure to succeed” but that the colonists “had stronger reasons for wanting to win

the war" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.260). TCI claims that the Continental army was "small and inexperienced but motivated" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.260). An entire section of a lesson in the TCI text is titled, "The Continental Army is Motivated to Win," which reiterates the fact that Continental soldiers had a "stronger motivation, or desire, to win … They were fighting to make a better future for themselves and their families. Many thought that these were goals worth dying for" (Lasser et al., 2022, p.267). Although TCI's language is not as strong, it is still obvious that it tries to portray the colonists as the underdogs in the war, appealing to a passionate, American spirit and cause.

Conclusion

The last chapter evaluated the McGraw Hill, Analytic Orange, and TCI texts in their ability to provide a Critical Race perspective of the Revolutionary War. The colonists' desire to continue the institution of slavery through succession from Britain is not mentioned in any textbooks, and instead, the texts focus on other reasons for the war. However, colonists' rejection of abolition is foundational to CRT counterstory, and without it, inclusion of other elements in the CRT rubric is more difficult, such as the Somerset v. Stewart case and Lord Dunmore's edict. Textbooks speak of the Proclamation of 1763 as a reason for revolution, but do not hold colonists accountable for their disrespect of Indigenous lands, people, and rights.

Likewise, in the telling of the Revolutionary War, the texts highlight the colonists' appeal to rights, freedom, and justice, but fail to acknowledge their own hypocrisy in failing to afford such values to indigenous peoples or enslaved peoples. Although enslaved resistance is mentioned, there is an overwhelming emphasis of enslaved support

of the Continental Army throughout the textbooks, along with heroization of enslaved figures who supported the colonists' cause. Besides the rubric criteria evaluated, other themes related to critical race theory emerged from the texts and were described by this chapter, including a justification and diminishment of slavery and a patriotic rhetoric that tries to appeal readers to the colonists' cause. The next chapter will synthesize the themes found throughout Chapter Four, connecting them back to CRT and pointing towards implications for students, teachers, and the nation.

Chapter Five; Conclusion

In this chapter we return back to the central question of this study, that being, how do fifth grade social studies textbooks portray the American Revolutionary War in terms of a critical race perspective, or the lack thereof? A critical race perspective is needed all throughout textbooks, not just in portrayals of the Revolutionary War, as it provides students with a more complete version of history that allows all voices and perspectives to be heard. However, as discovered in the previous chapter, the fifth grade textbooks in this study fail to provide students with such a CRT perspective in the portrayal of the Revolutionary War. In fact, those elements most important in telling the CRT counter narrative are those most heavily avoided by the textbooks. This will be explored in the chapter below. This chapter concludes with relating this study to larger social realities in the world today.

Rubric Evaluation Themes

Out of the three textbooks studied, they scored respective scores of 0.250, 0.650, and 0.725 out of 3.00 on the developed CRT rubric. However, there were consistent themes across textbook evaluations. Elements most important in telling the CRT counter narrative are those that received the lowest scores in all three textbooks. The textbooks consistently all scored “0” for inclusion of the colonists’ defense of slavery, Somerset v. Stewart, hypocrisy of nation founders, and surveillance and carcerality. Textbooks also scored “0” for the inclusion of Lord Dunmore’s edict, except for TCI, which scored a low score of “1.” All of these elements not included in the textbooks relate most directly to the CRT counterstory described by Horne (2014). This means their inclusion would best

point to the narrative that the United States is founded upon ideas of oppression. It is through these unmentioned criteria that the colonists' motivation to continue slavery is best explained.

Interestingly, the textbooks I examined also consistently exhibited high scores against the same rubric criteria. The categories that the textbooks consistently scored high in are indigenous fear, White identity development, and fear of the enslaved and enslaved resistance. These are less directly tied to Horne's counter narrative. Although these elements should be included in a CRT narrative, they can more easily be stated in isolation, without touching upon the crux of Horne's (2014) argument. For example, for Indigenous Fear, the textbooks were able to meet this criterion by mentioning the Proclamation of 1763. In speaking to enslaved resistance, the textbooks were able to mention a few examples of resistance, such as escaping. These examples can both be mentioned without giving any indication of Horne's (2014) counter narrative. Although when these examples *are* included with other elements identified in the rubric, they provide important context for the narrative. In comparison, the criteria that the rubrics scored lowest on, such as including colonists' rejection of slavery's abolishment in Britain, cannot as easily be mentioned without giving way to the idea that the United States is hypocritical in its calls for freedom and justice.

Lack of Counter Narrative

Including the continuance of slavery in the colonies as a motivation for colonists' succession is a necessary part of a critical race telling of the Revolutionary War. Although this is only one criteria of the developed CRT rubric, it is the *most* important

rubric criterion. Future developments of this rubric might consider following a schema that would allow this criterion to have more weight in determining the total evaluation score for a given textbook.

Colonists' defense of slavery as a rubric criterion is what truly uproots the ideas of the United States being built upon freedom, justice, and liberty, allowing students to critically examine the celebratory, patriotic narrative that exists today and question its validity. Instead of mentioning this criterion, all texts mentioned conventional reasons for succession such as the Coercive and Intolerable Acts, Boston Massacre, and Boston Tea Party. Without understanding colonists' motivations to continue slavery, however, any reasons for succession that could be connected to this narrative are lost. For example, Britain's doubts about slavery can be related to their imposition of trade controls on the colonies, as many of these controls were over movement of enslaved peoples. All textbooks mention colonists' frustration with trade controls, but connecting this detail to Britain's doubts about slavery is neglected. Connecting frustration over trade controls to colonists' larger motivations, rooted in exercising control over movements of enslaved people for their own gain, would appear hypocritical. This connection is important, but it is deliberately avoided by all textbooks to prevent such discussions of hypocrisy. Likewise, even if Lord Dunmore's edict and the Somerset v. Stewart, two other criteria, were mentioned, without connecting these to colonists' defense of slavery, they cannot allow for a full CRT narrative. When describing reasons for succession, the textbooks only present the master narrative, failing to present other

counter narratives, most importantly Horne's argument about colonists' defense of slavery as a reason for succession.

There are other topics in which the textbooks fail to provide important counter narratives, such as enslaved and Indigenous perspectives on the Revolutionary War. The textbooks have a strong emphasis on the enslaved peoples who sided with the Patriots. This creates an inaccurate association that the enslaved agreed with the motivations of the colonists. This is emphasized by textbooks highlighting certain Black figures who sided with the colonists and the ways that they supported the people that enslaved them. By giving an unproportionate number of examples of Black figures who supported the Continental Army, students may assume that most did. A counter narrative would accurately include a description of how most African Americans and Native Americans joined forces with the British. Only mentioning examples of enslaved support of the Continental Army can give students inaccurate ideas, as enslaved peoples most sided with the British. In this regard, an inclusion of Lord Dunmore's edict would show students how there were many enslaved who joined forces with Britain in hopes of their freedom. Lord Dunmore's edict may be deliberately erased from the texts to avoid a conversation around the nation's hypocrisy, as the colonists were fighting for freedom against British rule, who in turn were promising freedom to the very people colonists were denying freedom to.

Also, by not providing a counter-narrative, White supremacy is upheld. As described by Ladson-Billings (2003), racism is considered normal in much of today's world, and if this is not acknowledged by the textbooks, racism will continue to be

normal. Thus, without offering counter narratives, texts maintain a White supremacist master script inside the classroom and also outside of the classroom, through the ideas that students carry. Textbook content thus remains important, and maintaining the White supremacist master script can allow for social control and legitimization of power. In the case of these three textbooks, the master narratives here satisfy the interests of certain political groups, particularly the radical right who look to maintain White power. Because of this, the use of counter-storytelling is essential in textbooks. These texts do not provide such counter narratives and allow racial privilege to appear as natural.

Whiteness as an identity is not identified by the textbooks, thereby legitimizing it as society's "normal." In the textbooks, racial difference is only considered when descriptions of slavery begin, which makes Whiteness the normative point of reference and marks Blackness only in relation to slavery. Texts also do not identify race in matters that such a discussion is needed, such as the Declaration of Independence, where "rights" are defined without specifying that these rights applied only to White people. Likewise, when the colonists won the Revolutionary War, it is said that "they" were now Americans, while not identifying that African Americans were not considered "Americans" at that time. Examples such as these cause the American identity, rights, and Whiteness to be tied together. This is done deliberately to enforce a White master script and also to avoid revealing the hypocrisy of the nation's founding.

Lack of Nuance of Knowledge

The presentation of knowledge in the three textbooks is objective and matter-of-fact. An appropriate telling of history, grounded in critical race theory, would

show the nuance of knowledge through sharing multiple perspectives of history. When presenting any historical event, like the Revolution, students should enter with a critical mindset, questioning whose story is being told, and also come in with an understanding that knowledge is subject to human bias and interpretation. Thus, as described earlier by McCoy & Rodricks (2015), texts need to present both the narrative and counter narratives, showing how different versions of history can exist depending on whose voice is guiding the story. In these textbooks, the patriotic, celebratory and reductionist story of America's past is told, but it is not countered with other narratives. Because of this, students walk away with an inaccurate understanding of the nature of historical knowledge, believing that there is only a one-dimensional interpretation of history. Instead, as described by the National Council for Social Studies, social studies curriculum should encourage students to question and challenge knowledge (2017).

Also, because of the objective nature of the textbook content, the textbooks fail to be accountable for historical injustices. Presenting emotional, immoral events in such a matter-of-fact way normalizes them, and does not allow room for critique. For example, although the textbooks describe the horrors of slavery, they failed to definitively condemn the institution of slavery as a historical atrocity. Likewise, the texts mention also do not state whether colonists *should* have been angered when Britain forbade them from encroaching on indigenous lands. Students need guidance on understanding these historical wrongdoings.

Lack of Self-Critique and Unacknowledgement of Hypocrisy

The textbooks are quick to criticize Britain and its classism, but fail to critique the United States and its racism. Throughout all textbooks, there is an emphasis on the portrayal of class differences between the British and the American colonists. Colonists are characterized as plain, hard-working, and passionate, pitted against their tyrannical, wealthy, overlords, the British. Britain is portrayed as controlling, without a discussion of how, in many ways, the British exercised more justice than the colonists at the time, protecting Indigenous lands and creating plans to abolish slavery. However, critiquing Britain advances the textbooks' White master narrative, allowing students to celebrate colonists for being "moral" and "upstanding" people. However, none of the textbooks mentioned how many of the founding fathers were slave holders, which is antithetical to ideas of morality, freedom, and justice. Erasing this fact allows the textbooks to avoid engaging in self-critique. Employing patriotic language consistently throughout the textbooks also serves as a distraction from the colonists' motivations that are rooted in unjust ideas. This supports a celebratory, patriotic narrative of the nation's founding and its founding fathers.

Another point throughout the textbooks in which self-critique is needed is in discussions of the Declaration of Independence and rights. Instead of including this self-critique, textbooks continue to establish a foundation of the nation based on property rights, rather than human rights, as described by Ladson-Billings (2003). When the textbooks talk about human rights, property rights are still a prerequisite for such rights, which goes unacknowledged. In descriptions of the Declaration of Independence, conversations about "human rights" being established through this document are invalid,

as such rights were simultaneously being denied to entire groups of humans. A full CRT narrative would, when describing the rights in the Declaration of Independence, note that the human rights they describe only applied to White men of property at the time. Especially given that information is presented in such an objective, matter-of-fact fashion, students may feel as though, since it was stated, that human rights were in fact being upheld. Students, then, are not given the opportunity to reflect on the fact that those of African descent are "othered" by the Declaration and the founding fathers. Students may subconsciously come to view human rights only in the context of White men, with the rights of Black folx being supplementary.

The hypocritical nature of language of rights included in the textbooks is also not explained. For example, John Locke and his ideas of people being "born free and equal" and having the rights to "life, liberty, and the right to own property" is mentioned by McGraw Hill (Banks et al., 2018, p.170). The idea that the enslaved were considered property at the time is not explained, however. Thus, Locke's "rights'" that he speaks of are tied to the rights for White men to own enslaved as property. The hypocrisy of providing rights to one entity, the colonists, to take away rights of another entity, the enslaved, is avoided.

Diminishing Slavery Realities and Cultural Memory

The way that slavery is portrayed in textbooks is critical. The nature of slavery is minimized by all three textbooks. For example, some of the more positive work that the enslaved might do on plantations, such as carpentry or blacksmithing are focused on, and not countered with descriptions of brutality that the enslaved endured. Similarly, details

of slave codes, or the surveillance of Black folx, are not mentioned. Neglecting details of the oppressive nature of slavery allows students to have an incorrectly positive view on slavery. Slavery is also minimized by the limited time spent discussing it. In the Analytic Orange textbook, the word "slavery" is not even included in any lesson heading, and instead is included in a subheading under the title of "Economy." The lack of inclusion not only erases this harmful history, but will cause White students to feel as though these harmful histories do not concern them. Immediately following the singular page on slavery, for example, Analytic Orange includes a page titled, "Time for a Brain Break!" This is an avoidance technique and an effort to minimize shame that White students might feel about slavery.

What seems less important to these texts, it seems, is the effect that such a reductionist portrayal of slavery has on Black students. As described by Brown and Brown (2010), descriptions of enslavement affect cultural memory. This includes portrayal of enslaved resistance. The power of the enslaved, including their self-reliance and ability to affect their own freedom, is not portrayed in the textbooks. When enslaved peoples are portrayed as helpless and resistance is portrayed as a failure, this negatively impacts cultural memory of Black folx, especially when such a portrayal could instead give students empowerment, as there are many examples of the enslaved revolting in successful ways. In the few instances that resistance is described, textbooks focus on violence and White deaths rather than the efforts to write and organize by enslaved peoples, showing how textbooks emphasize the importance of White folx over Black. Textbooks need to humanize the enslaved and speak to their resilience. Without

including such details, a positive cultural memory cannot be built, nor can students connect their own contemporary issues that they face to past historical events.

Discussions of Black folx are largely based in discussions of slavery, which can affect how Black students view themselves. Only one textbook, TCI, included information about African people prior to their enslavement. In other textbooks, the first introduction to African people is through the context of their enslavement, which again, would make it appear as if their use by White colonists is the only thing that produces their importance and relevance within history. The textbooks also justify slavery for economic needs, while a critical race perspective would instead point to colonists' economic imperialism and greed.

Thus, histories of Africans prior to enslavement in the colonies are needed in textbooks. The enslaved are also dehumanized through the ways that bondage is described by the textbooks. Colonists describe themselves as undeserving of metaphorical bondage from Britain, when in actuality, the colonists were exercising real, literal bondage of Black people. Through this metaphor, colonists dehumanize Black people while humanizing White people. The textbooks continue this dehumanization by stating such, without pointing to the hypocrisy of the statements from the colonists.

Slavery is also individualized by the textbooks and disconnected from the larger racialized system. For example, McGraw Hill asks students about the role of shipowners in slavery, and in doing so, blames individuals for what is an institutionalized system. Likewise, when discussing the Middle Passage, it needs to be portrayed as racialized, attributing its existence to its role in the larger, racialized economic system. Instead, the

Middle Passage is individualized by the texts by focusing on isolated, harmful acts. The practice of slavery is also individualized. For example, the McGraw Hill text discusses how some of the enslaved had enjoyable jobs, making it seem as if the livelihood of the enslaved was dependent upon individual masters, not based upon the racialized system and state sponsored violence. The presence of such individualization of important historical concepts related to Black folx calls for a deeper conceptualization of curriculum.

Connection to the Present Day

Throughout the textbooks, there are efforts by the authors to connect content to the students' present day lives. Connecting historical material to matters of the present is an important aspect of Critical Race Theory, but it is done entirely incorrectly by the textbooks. For example, to connect the Proclamation of 1763 to the students' present day lives, the texts compare the colonists being limited by growth into indigenous lands to not being allowed to use part of the playground. Comparing the stealing and death of Indigenous peoples to such matters as trivial as a playground is extremely disrespectful, and also does not actually provide students with an understanding of how these events carry into the present day. A critical race approach to connecting this content to the present day would include an explanation of how after the Proclamation of 1763, the rebels continued to crush indigenous politics, invade indigenous lands, and disregard indigenous rights for centuries to come. Similarly, when describing slave codes, this could be connected to the present day by showing how the idea of surveillance and control of Black folx exists today. Connections to the present day are important, as long

as they relate to real, existing relationships between people and institutions that can be traced back through history. Connecting to something such as playgrounds has no connection to indigenous politics and instead obscures history.

Limitations

An important limitation of this Honors Thesis to note is that I served as the sole evaluator of the textbooks and determinant of the rubric criteria. To improve the validity of the rubric and textbook evaluations, there would need to be multiple contributors and evaluators. Going forward, a way to improve the validity of this study would be to use this same rubric to evaluate the portrayal of the Revolutionary War in textbooks across different decades. In this way, the tool of measurement (the rubric) would remain consistent, improving the study's validity.

Implications

The stories that are told through textbooks have immense power, serving as a main source of learning for students, shaping not only their ideas but the ideologies of a nation. The McGraw Hill, Analytic Orange, and TCI textbooks evaluated in this study maintain White supremacy. Through their lack of inclusion of Critical Race perspectives, they work to benefit the dominant White male group and impose second-class citizenship upon Black folx in the United States. These textbooks aid the current conservative agenda in the state of Florida to use CRT as an ideological boogeyman to attack and harm Black lives. Legislation imposed by the state of Florida, such as the STOP W.O.K.E. Act, and curriculum standards, which ban publishers from including any aspects of critical race theory, are also to blame.

The McGraw Hill, Analytic Orange, and TCI textbooks try to evoke a sense of pride, or patriotism, from student readers rather than a critical, questioning lens over the historical wrongs of the United States. This allows White supremacy to be maintained in the present while simultaneously silencing marginalized voices, causing harm to minoritized students through affecting cultural memory, self-worth, and achievement levels. Students reading these textbooks will not be able to make sense of their existing conditions and envision different realities, which is the purpose of social studies curricula. Knowledge in textbooks needs to include both master narratives and counter narratives so that students have an understanding of all perspectives, but most importantly, textbooks need to value all people.

This study's findings have direct implications not only for students, but for teachers. There needs to be a critical examination of teacher education programs, as teachers need to be prepared to enter politically-contentious careers. Teaching, as it stands today, is a very demanding, underappreciated, and underfunded career that does not allow teachers to do much independent research to supplement curriculum if they were to disagree with the use of master-narratives in their given textbooks. This emphasizes the importance of textbooks, as teachers should not have to feel as though they need to move away from textbooks in order to achieve inclusivity in their classroom. It must be noted, as described by Swartz (1992), that master narratives can be upheld through classroom practices, pedagogy, and paradigms. These elements are not examined in this study but still are important areas for further research. However, it must be noted that the current political climate must also change, and that without such, changes in

curriculum or in the classroom will be ineffective. In the midst of CRT hysteria, book bannings, and teacher firings, there is legitimate fear among teachers over their job safety if they were to teach an inclusive, critical race oriented curriculum.

When reconceptualizing Elementary Social Studies Curriculum, scholars might look toward the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) position statement of powerful, purposeful pedagogy (2017). NCSS notes that the purpose of social studies education is for students to understand, participate in, and make informed decisions about their world. Thus, in order to do this, students must be able to explain relationships of people, institutions, and their environment through an understanding of the past. The presentation of social studies knowledge needs to create room for controversies, nuances, and multiple perspectives. Without this, history appears objective and one-dimensional and does not allow students to challenge and improve the society that they live in. This includes using a curriculum that focuses on large themes and concepts, connections of past to present, and is integrative. As described by NCSS, “Challenging social studies curriculum includes research, debates, discussions, projects of all varieties including the arts, and simulations that require application of critical thinking skills” (2017).

The rubric developed through this study could serve as a model for future developments of rubrics to evaluate similar, crucial historical events such as the Civil War, Reconstruction era, or Civil Rights movement. The Revolutionary War alone is not the only place where critical race perspectives are needed. Critical race theory needs to be incorporated not only in curriculum, but throughout all disciplines and in a variety of ways in different areas of social life.

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