History in the Heartland: Teaching and Learning African American History Through Inquiry in Third Grade

by

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DEDICATION

To my students: past, present, and future.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

History education researchers in the U.S. have largely focused on students' capacities to improve their literacy practices as they read and write from historical evidence. Yet, a second—and closely related—goal of history education is the development of students' historical consciousness; that is, how they use the past to orient themselves in the present and construct expectations for the future.

In this dissertation, I present three manuscripts that explore aspects of teaching and learning about African American history (enslavement, the Civil War and emancipation, the civil rights era) in a third-grade classroom using historical inquiry methods. I collected data for these papers during the enactment of the same inquiry during two separate school years in the classroom of a teacher known for her expertise in teaching historical inquiry methods to younger students.

In the first paper (Chapter II), I draw on classroom observation data, interviews with the teacher, and classroom artifacts collected during the 2015-2016 school year to explore how the teacher apprenticed students into disciplinary ways of reading, analyzing, and employing historical evidence. Findings from that study highlight how the teacher used historical fiction picture books to teach about the constructed nature of historical accounts and provided opportunities for students to analyze visual primary sources and to employ evidence when making claims. The findings show possibilities for apprenticing elementary students into

disciplinary source analysis without exposing them to the challenges of written primary sources and suggest further investigation into how school inquiries might balance an analytic stance to historical analysis and the ethical and emotional dimensions of difficult history topics (e.g., enslavement).

In the second paper (Chapter III), I use a framework for historical consciousness to investigate how 19 students developed their understandings of enslavement before, during, and after they participated in an inquiry on the topic over six weeks and how they connected their conceptualizations of enslavement to the present. Data sources include pre- and post-concept maps, student interviews, and students' classwork. The findings show that the students made growth in their overall concept knowledge about enslavement. However, the students provided nascent understandings that focused on enslavement as interactions between individuals rather than as systemic forms of power and economic gain, and they demonstrated limiting understandings of White supremacy. Furthermore, students' sensemaking about enslavement did not promote critical thinking about the construction of racialized identities. Thereby the data suggest that the curriculum may limit how many connections students make between the past and the present.

In the final paper (Chapter IV), I use a framework for historical consciousness to investigate how eight White focal students interpreted African American history using their written historical narratives and interviews. Findings show that students interpreted African American history through a framework of national progress, but did not acknowledge the limitations of past efforts, which are visible today in forms of ongoing systemic racial inequality.

Furthermore, students used assimilated, raceless, nameless, and nonhuman language (e.g., "Jim Crow laws separated African Americans") to describe the White oppressors. These findings suggest students' misconceptions that racism has been "solved" may lead them to produce a colorblind ideology, which will limit their historical consciousness.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

In this research project, my goal was to lend new insight into the teaching and learning of history using a disciplinary inquiry approach in elementary schools. Scholars argue that inquiry learning explicitly promotes equity by helping students understand how knowledge is constructed, providing students a pathway to literacy learning, and orienting students to historical and contemporary issues. While the *Common Core State Standards for Language Arts* and the *C3 Framework for State Social Studies Standards* now provide a policy context favorable to social studies inquiry in elementary schools, the field needs research that examines how teachers and students take up these ambitious standards in the classroom. In particular, little remains known about how teachers make such learning accessible to young students and how elementary school students develop their interpretations of U.S. history through inquiry. In this dissertation, I take up these goals in three manuscripts that I have prepared for peer-reviewed journals (Chapters II, III, and IV).

This project began in 2016 when I designed a preliminary exam focused on the literacy opportunities afforded to third-grade students as they participated in social studies inquiry. I sampled an extreme case of successful elementary school teaching—the classroom of Ms. McKinley[1], a nationally-known expert who integrated literacy and social studies into her

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[1] All names used across this dissertation are pseudonyms.

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teaching practice using curriculum designed to support inquiry. I collected data for two months in 2016 during an inquiry on African American history, from the transatlantic slave trade through the civil rights movement. Initially, I wrote a paper about the ways Ms. McKinley integrated literacy and social studies teaching. However, a faculty member in Language, Literacy, and Culture reviewed that paper and suggested I revise it to focus solely on the *disciplinary literacy* instruction in the classroom, or ways of reading, analyzing, and thinking specific to history. I revised the paper as suggested and presented it at the American Educational Research Association in April 2018. The next month I submitted that paper to a competitive literacy journal for review and received a rejection in September 2018. However, the feedback from the reviewers was stellar and supported me in strengthening the overall argument. This paper— "Apprenticing Third Graders in Disciplinary Literacy in History"—is included as Chapter II and is the first paper of three, setting the context for the remaining papers.

The data I collected in 2016 left me curious about how these mostly White students might develop their understandings of race, intergroup relations, and civic agency through the sustained academic inquiry I witnessed into difficult topics in U.S. history (e.g., enslavement). Therefore, I returned to Ms. McKinley's classroom during the 2017-2018 school year. Whereas my data collection in 2016 aimed at researching teaching, my data collection throughout 2017-2018 shifted to focus on the students' learning. I used a theoretical framework of *historical consciousness*, which relates to how students use the past to orient themselves in the present and construct expectations for the future.

When returning to Ms. McKinley's class, I used Seixas' adaptation of Rüsen's framing of historical consciousness as my conceptual framework (Seixas, 2016), as shown in Figure I.1. The upper half of the figure (in blue) represents "disciplinary history." Here, students participate in

disciplinary inquiry as they pose questions and present initial theories about the past, use historical methods and disciplinary practices (e.g., disciplinary literacy or historical thinking) to further develop their historical knowledge, and represent their historical interpretations in forms such as written accounts. Students bring their own unique sociocultural lens and historical orientation to bear on their historical learning at schools, as they confirm, extend, and challenge ideas about the past held by themselves and others (Epstein, 2009; Levstik & Barton, 2008). The lower half of the figure (in red) represents "life practice," or the ways external elements outside of school, such as public memory and identity, shape students' orientation to the present and their interest in the past. Working through this conceptual cycle allows students to develop important aspects of their historical consciousness as they use disciplinary methods to challenge commonly held views about the past and use their academic experiences to reorient themselves in the present. In this study, I take up Seixas' (2016) call to investigate the interaction of these two—represented in the figure by the purple arrows and middle zone—by attending to how participation in classroom historical inquiry shapes students' historical knowledge of a particular topic and how this orients them towards the present day.

Figure I.1. Theoretical framework for the development of historical consciousness
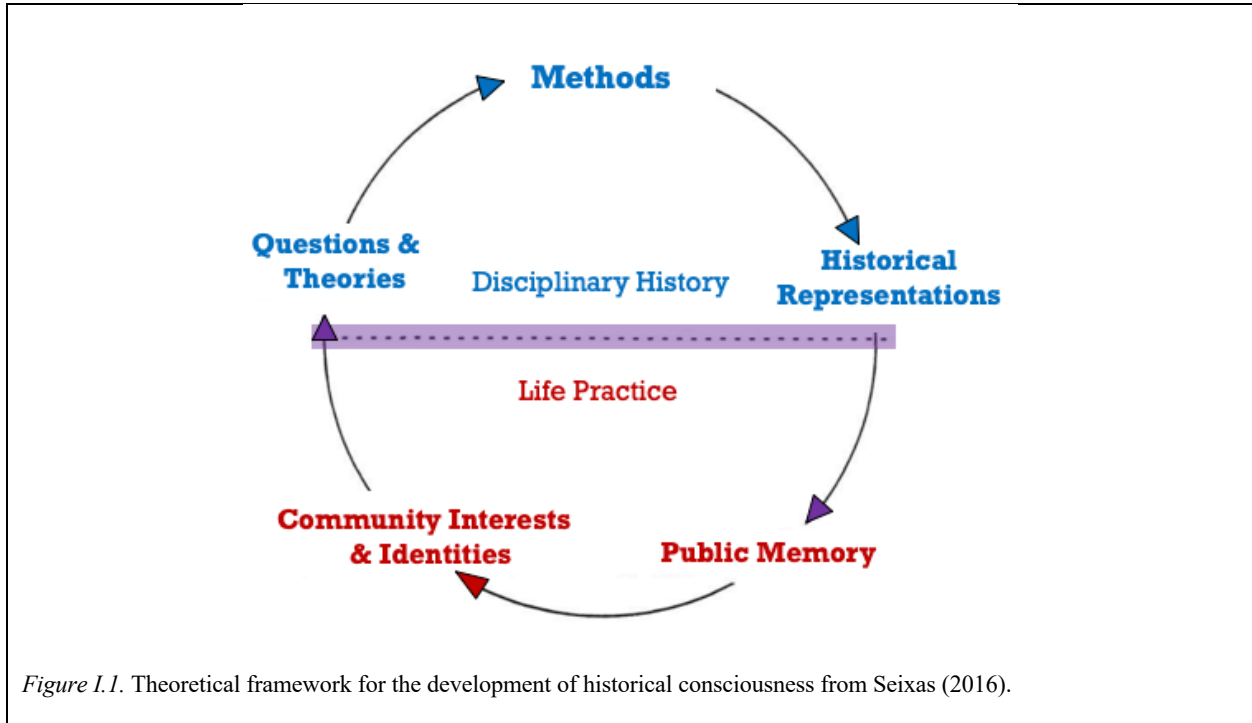
Figure I.1. Theoretical framework for the development of historical consciousness from Seixas (2016).

I collected data for eight months using ethnographic methods, becoming a daily participant-observer in the classroom. I tracked the students' development of content knowledge, affective engagement and interests in various historical topics, and attitudes towards contemporary society as they participated in inquiry. This included collecting students' classwork, observing and video-recording classroom instruction, and analyzing pre- and post-concept maps students completed as part of the study to gauge their social studies content knowledge. In addition, I conducted one-on-one interviews with eight focal students six times throughout the school year.

From the data I collected related to students' learning during the 2017-2018 school year, I wrote two manuscripts (included here as Chapters III and IV). Chapter III is entitled "What is Slavery? Third Graders' Sensemaking About Enslavement Through Historical Inquiry" and traces the students' understandings of enslavement in North America before, during, and after

their six-week inquiry into the topic. In May 2018, the month after I left the field, I discovered the Southern Poverty Law Center's educational organization, Teaching Tolerance, had just issued a report that year—*Teaching Hard History: American Slavery*—that found that few of the K-12 teachers they surveyed in the U.S. reported teaching about enslavement in North America in any comprehensive way and raised concerns about how limited teaching about the history of enslavement might prevent students from making connections between the past and present (Teaching Tolerance, 2018b). In their subsequent follow-up report with classroom resources, Teaching Tolerance published a list of 10 "key concepts" for teaching about enslavement based the work of historian Ira Berlin (Teaching Tolerance, 2018a). These 10 key concepts act as a roadmap for educators seeking to ensure their students develop a complex understanding of slavery. As the *Framework* explains: "The Key Concepts are important ideas that students must truly understand if they are to grasp the historical significance of slavery" (Teaching Tolerance, 2018a, p. 6). Therefore, I developed my coding scheme from these 10 concepts (codes included: *resistance*, *institution of power, economic gain*) so I could understand which concepts about enslavement students seemed to be integrating into their learning.

The coding of students' classwork about enslavement revealed that in the beginning of their writing about enslavement, they provided conceptualizations that obscured who was doing the enslaving and the race of both the victims of enslavement and their oppressors. In my analysis of over 118 pieces of students' classwork, students were seven times more likely to mention African Americans than Whites when mentioning race. In fact, less than 5% of classwork produced by students mentioned White people at all; no artifacts explicitly mentioned White supremacy. I can point out the specific nonfiction texts the students read during instruction that make use of language in the same ways. For example, students did a primary

source analysis by looking at Library of Congress primary source images about enslavement and generating inquiry questions to research. However, the two nonfiction books they used to find the answers to these questions had a similar grammatical construction to the students' writing that obscured race and racism (e.g., sentences such as "Slaves were whipped" make no mention of who is doing the whipping). In other words, although students had opportunities to do more advanced types of historical thinking, they still adapted the interpretation of nonfiction, informational text in the classroom. What I began to realize is that for all of the time they spent learning about African American history, the curriculum limited the students' understandings of race and racism in several noticeable ways.

I wrote the paper about students' emerging understandings about enslavement (Chapter III) from May 2018 until November 2018. In October 2018, I presented an early draft of the findings in a public research talk at the University of Michigan School of Education. Two months later in early December 2018, I attended the College and University Faculty Assembly/National Council for the Social Studies Conference and again shared this paper at a roundtable session entitled "Critical Social Studies for Elementary Schools." As I received feedback on this paper, I continued to learn about how social studies curriculum is known to deliver sanctioned messages and silences about how and why certain racist episodes in history occurred and mask the long-term, systemic effects of racism.

At this point I began to more fully understand that Ms. McKinley was an exceptional elementary social studies teacher in many ways. She was exceptional because she held great expertise in teaching disciplinary literacy in history (e.g., supporting students in analyzing primary sources) that set her apart from her colleagues, and she regularly educated her peers about these practices at state and national teaching conferences. Furthermore, she dedicated far

more instructional time to social studies than most elementary school teachers. In their analysis of nationally representative data, Fitchett, Heafner, and Lambert (2014) found that third grade teachers devoted less than 30 minutes a week, on average, to social studies. This contrasts sharply with Ms. McKinley, who, during the 2017-2018 school year, taught her third graders more than five hours of social studies per week, on average. Most importantly, she dedicated 10 weeks of instructional time to teaching about difficult events in African American history to her nearly all-White students, in a school with nearly all White teachers, in a midwestern state that is over 90% White. In her words, Ms. McKinley believed that teaching her students about the difficulties of the past through an analytic approach would help them become advocates for social justice:

> Teaching history helps students become better citizens because they learn to analyze [arguments] and make arguments about what they are thinking. I want them to be active, involved citizens and to see themselves as an advocate who can stand up for social justice, not be that bystander.

Yet, while Ms. McKinley was deeply committed to providing students with an inclusive social studies curriculum and supporting their development of positive character, she was not always comfortable talking about racism with the students. Although I did not fully understand how the lack of discussion around race and racism in the curriculum limited the students' understandings of history until I later analyzed the students' classwork about enslavement, I had noticed the lack of discussion of racism during my fieldwork. For example, on February 13, 2018—once I had already been in the field for six months—I made the following note to myself:

> It occurred to me on my drive this morning that Ms. McKinley does not explicitly use the word racism with the students in her instruction. They talk about "oppression," "hardship," and "poverty," but not "racism."

So, for all that she was attempting to do for her students, data began to reveal how the absences, gaps, and silences about race might limit the students' understandings of the past and impede their ability to stand up for social justice in the ways Ms. McKinley hoped for.

In December 2018, I met with Ms. McKinley to share my findings about the students' classwork about enslavement (Chapter III). I shared a slide presentation with her from my earlier talks for the research community. Our conversation lasted over three hours and was overwhelmingly positive. I considered her questions and reactions as I planned to write the last paper in this series. In particular, Ms. McKinley was open to my suggestions about changing language in the curriculum—for example, calling African Americans "enslaved people" rather than "slaves." However, I had difficulty explaining that is it not enough to change the language from one term to the next to make it more politically correct. Rather, we need to teach students both terms and unpack their meaning. Which term is more humanizing? What about the term makes it more or less humanizing grammatically? Why do you think one term is replacing the other? Which would you rather have your ancestors called? In fact, such conversations with students would directly engage their historical consciousness as they question how we represent the past in the present; however, I felt I had done a poor job of explaining this to Ms. McKinley. What I lacked was a framework for thinking about the power of language related to race in the classroom.

That would change in early 2019. A colleague suggested I watch a video-recorded lecture about race given by Gloria Ladson-Billings, an expert in critical race theory and education, presented at the University of Michigan that fall. During her lecture, Ladson-Billings presented a paper she had recently published (2017), which argues that the school curriculum rarely gives students "deciphering knowledge" (King, 2004, p. 3) about race—that is, knowledge

8

that allows students to understand how the curriculum (and society) makes particular perspectives, values, and ideologies about race available through certain kinds of texts and use of certain language. Rather, the school curriculum often provides *invisibilizing knowledge* about race (e.g., using language of "we" and "our" to signal a notion of common interest, but regarding contribution of Europeans over all others), *marginalizing knowledge* about race (e.g., distorting the lived experiences of various racial groups by conflating them into one "immigrant" experience), or *expanding knowledge* about race (e.g., schools expand the canon of text read or topics studied to included additional racial groups without disrupting or interrogating the legitimacy of why the official curriculum) (King, 2004). I realized what I needed to do next in this project was dig deeper into the types of racial knowledge the curriculum transmitted to students through the use of particular language.

I began my final paper (Chapter IV), entitled "Interpreting African American History: White Students Learning about Difficult History through Inquiry in Third Grade," in early 2019. In this paper, I analyzed data from eight, White focal students collected during the African American history inquiry. I analyzed students' written accounts about difficult events in the history they studied including enslavement, emancipation, sharecropping, segregation, and the lack of African American voting rights. To analyze the students' written historical accounts, I used a discourse analysis approach informed by systemic functional linguistics, a tool I knew would help me decipher the racial knowledge in the curriculum. Developed by Halliday (1985), this linguistic theory argues that human language is produced within a social context and that language both reflects, and shapes, the context in which it is used. Often, these meanings are not obvious to the reader, speaker, or listener, but are realized through the language and grammar. Therefore, I selected a functional grammar approach to code students' historical writing because

9

this approach allows us to understand how the text represents and evaluates the people, concepts, or events it presented. For example, notice how John and Will explained enslavement in their classwork:

> In slavery, there's a slave auction and people in their family gets taken away from them and their family gets split up. And then also on the slave plantation, you have to pick cotton and work all day. (John)

> So, slavery is when you're being taken against your will. First, slaves get checked and then shackled. Then you go on the boat and then go to work on the field. (Will)

You can see that there are no racial groups of any sort mentioned in these two examples, only "people" and "slaves." Furthermore, there are no human actors doing the enslaving: John attributes family separation to the "auction," rather than to human actors, and Will makes use of the passive voice, which obscures who is doing the checking and shackling. I compared students' historical writing to their interview data to convey more of their thinking on these topics. In these last two papers, I've highlighted students' learning as I hope that this kind of work is something I can share with Ms. McKinley and other teachers who teach difficult history. I also hope that this work will push work focused on disciplinary inquiry and literacy forward, beyond examination of students' learning of disciplinary practices toward attention to their sensemaking about the topics under investigation.

Role of the Researcher

Like so many educational researchers, I am in a position of critiquing my research participants for things I likely could not do myself as a White third grader and did not do myself as a White third grade teacher.

When I was in third grade, I remember taking a children's bibliography about Martin Luther King to a local photocopy shop with my mom. I was writing a report about King as part of a school assignment and I wanted to include some of the photographs from the biography. It

was 1991 and the first time I remember using a color photocopy machine. Sadly, other than the trip to get the color photocopies made of the March on Washington, I remember nothing about that report and unfortunately did not save it. But I do remember my teacher that year—Ms. Heart—taught us about King. I remember learning about the March on Washington and the "I Have a Dream" speech. I remember learning that when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a boy, he could not be friends with his neighbor, a young White boy his age, because the boy's parents forbade it. I remember Ms. Heart telling us that once, someone attempted to murder Martin Luther King Jr. by stabbing him with a knife, but that he survived. I remember learning he was ultimately assassinated. My teacher was a White woman at the end of her career (she would retire before I would finish elementary school) teaching at a neighborhood school in my predominately White and Latinx school in the San Francisco Bay Area. Although I have no memories beyond those, as I have gone through this dissertation project I have often wondered: As a White third-grade student, how did I understand racism in history? Did my report on Martin Luther King Jr. use the passive voice to obscure who was behind segregation? How did it represent White people? If a researcher would have interviewed me after studying King and asked me who was responsible for segregation, what would I have said? Would nine-year-old me have told the researcher that segregation was over—the problem was solved?

Twenty years later, as a third-grade teacher in San Francisco, California, I taught my students a historical fiction writing unit that integrated social studies content on the civil rights movement. It was 2012 and the national *Common Core State Standards* in language arts were just released, which called for more—and more sophisticated—writing instruction in elementary schools. Over the course of several weeks, I read my students historical fiction picture books about various events during the movement in order to prepare them to write their own. I

11

supplemented reading historical fiction with additional resources—informational texts, graphic

novels, primary sources, documentaries—to help students learn about the time period. I

developed and taught this unit as a partial requirement for a master's degree program, so in the

summer of 2012 I analyzed six students' stories to understand how they demonstrated historical

thinking in several dimensions, including their ability to:

> 1. Identify the structure of a historical narrative.
> 2. Compare different viewpoints in history.
> 3. Understand that people's values, outlooks, motives, and interests were influenced by their time.
> 4. Identify the differences in daily living (e.g., food, clothing, industry, agriculture, technology, transportation, etc.).

To evaluate the second dimension, I assessed each story to see how the students presented a

protagonist and antagonist. With regards to the protagonists, I concluded that:

> The students showed an ability to think creatively as they constructed a wide variety of imaginary protagonists, such as: an African American boy who goes to hear Martin Luther King Jr. speak (Avery); a young White girl who helped the Freedom Riders when their bus was bombed by a White mob in Alabama (Corbin); an African American girl who befriends her White neighbor (Erin); a White lunch counter waitress during a sit-in demonstration (Jill); an African American child who just moved to the South with his family (Pete); a boy who was on the bus with Rosa Parks when she was arrested (Tien). (Hughes, 2012, p. 43)

But, of course, because the published and widely-available historical fiction picture books I read

to the students as "mentor texts" for their writing often omitted White racism as the cause of

segregation, my students had difficulty clearly representing the antagonists in their own stories, a

fact I fully acknowledged:

> By contrast, the antagonists, those in favor of segregation and racism, were often underdeveloped and ill-defined. In four of the stories, the antagonists were either White racist mobs or merely "Jim Crow laws." Erin's antagonists were the characters' parents, who warned them not to play with children of the opposite race. Jill had a more developed antagonist: the manager of a Woolworth's who fired a waitress for serving Black customers at the lunch counter. Yet, none of the stories attempted to explain the motives of the antagonists which would have asked my students to provide a justification

for segregation. In fairness to them, the students likely omitted antagonists from their stories as they patterned their historical fiction writing after the published historical fiction books they read. I speculate that the lack of well-developed antagonists in their stories was a result of the historical topic that I chose for this study. The majority of the historical fiction books I read to students throughout the course of the unit focused on pro-civil rights protagonists. These published works rarely attempted to explain why White Southerners sought to preserve the system's segregation so adamantly. In this sense, the topic and available historical fiction books were a limitation in helping to develop this dimension of historical thinking. (Hughes, 2012, p. 43-44)

Although I am being selective in sharing my memories, I am trying to make a clear point: As a third-grade White student, it is unlikely that I knew much about race and racism, even after studying Martin Luther King Jr. Therefore, I criticized the students in this study for doing things I myself likely also did at their age. Furthermore, when I was a teacher, I openly acknowledged the curriculum materials I used to teach African American history in terms of the way they obscured Whiteness and White supremacy. However, I did not directly engage my students in a conversation about this, something I will critique with regard to Ms. McKinley's practice in this study. So, I would like to acknowledge that researchers are often in a position to critique things that we ourselves were not able to do in the past. Therefore, if there is one injury I do in this dissertation, it is to downplay my own personal failings to interrupt racist curricula as a teacher, while turning the attention to Ms. McKinley and her students. However, what I feel is so powerful about my story is that when I was a teacher in 2012, I did not necessarily think that teaching about the civil rights movement without explicitly connecting it to issues of present-day racism was problematic; today, I do.

Coming into a Midwest community as an openly gay, White, native Californian, I lived through current events that jostled my thinking about the need to connect the past to the present when teaching history. For example, consider that between August 2017 and April 2018—the time I relocated to and lived in Ms. McKinley's school community—I recorded the following

13

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current events in my field notes because I read, heard about, or discussed them and they pushed my thinking about power and race: the Charlottesville protest and murder of Heather Heyer; the St. Louis protests over the acquittal of a White police officer, Jason Stockley, for the death of Anthony Lamar Smith; the advent of the Me Too movement; the mass shooting during a music festival in Las Vegas that killed 58 people and wounded 422 others; the 2017 NFL "take a knee" national anthem protests; the special election for the U.S. Senate seat in Alabama (vacated by Jeff Sessions), where the Republican candidate with openly racist views would be narrowly defeated; the resignation of U.S. Senator Al Franken, Democrat from Minnesota, for sexual misconduct allegations; the ongoing Mueller investigation to Russia's interference in the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election; the trial of Larry Nassar, a sports physician, who was found guilty of sexually abusing the more than 150 women and girls over two decades; the shooting at Stoneman Douglas High School, claiming 17 lives; the ongoing controversies over the U.S. immigration policies related to a wall at the southern border and the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals; the death of Stephon Clark, who was shot by Sacramento, California police officers because they believed he was pointing a gun at them (it was a cell phone); and other controversies and scandals related to President Trump and his administration too numerous to name.

What I am saying is that it was during my lived experience in the everyday where I often did my sensemaking for this dissertation. For example, Saturday, August 12, 2017, the day of the Charlottesville protest, was the same day I drove my station wagon stuffed full of my personal belongings over 500 miles across the Midwest to begin data collection. As I drove and listened to reports about the protests and ensuing violence, I worried about the uptick of White supremacy nationally (see Reitman, 2018). Therefore, before I ever entered the classroom, I was considering how history education might help ameliorate White racism in society. While I look forward to

14

writing more on my own experiences as a White researcher making sense of race both inside and outside of Ms. McKinley's classroom during this study, I offer these three papers as partial evidence of all I have learned.

CHAPTER II

Apprenticing Third Graders in Disciplinary Literacy in History

> It's the end of morning literacy block and students are spread out around the classroom; some are working in small groups or pairs on the floor, while others work independently at their desks. Ms. McKinley, the teacher, leads a reading group of four students at a small, bean-shaped side table at the front of the classroom. The group reads *Cracking the Wall: The Struggles of the Little Rock Nine* (Lucas, 1997) and I overhear her pointing out words in the text with r-controlled vowels. A few students sit at their desks locating and highlighting the main ideas in a reading passage about famous African-Americans— Langston Hughes and Thurgood Marshall—in yellow marker. In the back of the classroom, three students huddle on the floor around a primary source photograph of sharecroppers, talking energetically as they infer how people in the image are feeling. One student, sitting quietly at his desk, takes out a glue stick and carefully pastes a list of works cited into the final draft of his writing about the Civil War.
>
> (Field note, February 18, 2016)

This scene highlights the dynamic and varied literacy instruction that typified Ms. McKinley's[2] third grade classroom. During this observation, I watched as students worked to develop and hone general literacy practices, such as reading comprehension strategies and fluency. I also witnessed how the students engaged in *disciplinary literacy* practices—ways of reading, analyzing, and writing derived from the practices employed by professional historians—such as analyzing historical evidence and writing historical accounts. In this paper, I seek to understand how Ms. McKinley moved beyond teaching general literacy practices through social studies instruction to apprenticing her elementary-aged students into disciplinary ways of reading,

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[2] All names used in this paper are pseudonyms.

writing, and thinking in history. I ask: How did an expert teacher apprentice her third-grade students into disciplinary literacy in history through disciplinary ways of reading, analyzing, and employing historical evidence?

Disciplinary Literacy

The concept of *disciplinary literacy* finds its roots in university disciplines, such as chemistry, mathematics, history, music, and so on. Within each discipline, members (i.e., experts, professionals) aim to produce new—or critique existing—knowledge on specific topics. Driven by their values, curiosity, and imagination, members of a discipline interact socially as they utilize specialized processes or discourses (e.g., inquiry methods) in their pursuit of knowledge (Moje, 2015). Disciplinarians read certain texts and produce them for certain purposes and audiences, employing specific linguistic codes and technical vocabularies. These ways of thinking and doing are realized in particular styles of multimodal communication. Taken together, members' purposes, processes, and literacy practices create the unique cultures that distinguish one discipline from another (Hirst, 1983; Moje, 2015; Schwab, 1964). Working on disciplinary literacy, then, means to become versed in the ways of reading, writing, and thinking within a given discipline. Some literacy researchers hold a narrower conception of the term and see disciplinary literacy solely as ways of reading and writing in the disciplines (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008); however, I share the view of other history education scholars that reading a text for the purpose of producing a text within a disciplinary context necessarily involves thinking or reasoning; therefore, in as much as they are integrated into reading and writing, those habits of mind also constitute disciplinary literacy (Leinhardt & Young, 1996; Monte-Sano, 2011; Wineburg, 2001).

Yet, K-12 students in the United States rarely learn the specialized literacy practices employed by experts and professionals in the disciplines (e.g., mathematicians, chemists, historians). Rather, they learn general literacy practices which focus on reading strategies (e.g., decoding, vocabulary, fluency), cognitive text processing strategies (e.g., predicting, summarizing, inferencing, monitoring, questioning, visualizing), and other learning strategies (e.g., highlighting, note-taking, concept mapping) (Fang, 2012). Students must become proficient in general literacy practices to help them navigate school, which requires that they locate, comprehend, memorize, and retrieve information from a variety of different texts as they read and write in various subject areas.

However, as students move through secondary school and into adulthood, can they read, produce, and think critically about the complex disciplinary texts they may encounter as college students, professionals, and citizens by relying on general literacy strategies alone? According to many literacy experts, policy makers, and teachers, the answer to this question is no—the literacy preparation given to K-12 students does not fully prepare youth for participation in today's society (Carnegie Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy, 2010; Moje, 2008; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Moje (2008), for example, argues that the general literacy strategies traditionally taught in schools too often position students as passive consumers of information rather than giving them the tools needed to create and critique knowledge, which are located in the discursive practices of the disciplines. Scholars argue that learning disciplinary literacy practices equips students with an intellectual "toolkit" needed for citizenship (Wineburg & Reisman, 2015), while others have called access to disciplinary instruction a civil right (C. D. Lee, 2004).

If teachers and schools heed the call to apprentice students into the habits of mind of successful citizens (e.g., disciplinary literacy practices) rather than solely into the habits of mind needed to "do" schooling, at what age might they begin? I share the view of Moje (2015) that the teacher's role is to begin this process in elementary school. Furthermore, empirical research conducted by history education scholars argues that elementary-aged students are capable of practicing sophisticated disciplinary literacy practices when provided opportunities in school (Levstik & Barton, 2008; Portal, 1987; VanSledright, 2002). Elementary-aged students demonstrate abilities to think chronologically (Barton & Levstik, 1996); read and interpret multiple sources of evidence (Fillpot, 2012; Levstik & Barton, 2008; Nokes, 2014; VanSledright, 2002); and construct historical accounts (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997). Taken together, this research supports the assertion that schools might do more to apprentice students into historical literacy at earlier ages. Sociocultural theory grounds such apprenticeships as teachers use both cognitive and social tools to broker students into a specific community of practice over time (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

These research findings also dovetail with the recent publication of the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards* (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013), a set of standards that articulate disciplinary learning goals in social studies for students across grades K-12. According to the *C3 Framework*, for example, students should be learning how to identify different types of historical sources and understand how they can be used to study the past as early as Kindergarten (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). Yet, research on teaching says little about how elementary school teachers might apprentice their students in historical literacy practices called for by the authors of the *C3 Framework* (see Brophy & VanSledright, 1997 for an exception). Although some individuals

19

have written about their own historical literacy teaching (e.g., Nokes, 2014; VanSledright, 2002), there remains little evidence of elementary school teachers apprenticing students into disciplinary ways of reading, analyzing, and writing.

Some literacy scholars have questioned how successful students are likely to be with disciplinary literacy practices if they have yet to master more general literacy practices (Faggella-Luby, Graner, Deshler, & Drew, 2012). In this view, disciplinary literacy is seen as unnecessary, or even inappropriate, for students who are still learning the basics of reading, such as adolescents reading below grade level, students in the early stages of learning English, and elementary-aged students. However, whereas literacy research has largely focused on how students develop their general literacy practices, little research to date explores how students develop their disciplinary literacy practices over time, thereby making the debate ongoing as the research community continues to investigate disciplinary literacy.

Furthermore, those researching disciplinary literacy in secondary history classrooms often argue that disciplinary literacy is a pathway rather than a barrier to general literacy. As Learned (2018) explains: "Disciplinary literacy is not designed to eschew general literacy strategies but to regard them as useful when they work in service of disciplinary learning" (p. 193). Several recent research projects investigating disciplinary literacy in middle school (De La Paz et al., 2017; Duhaylongsod, Snow, Selman, & Donovan, 2015) and high school classrooms (Reisman, 2012) support the idea that opportunities for disciplinary learning (e.g., working with sources, developing a claim) provide opportunities for students to develop and hone more general literacy practices (e.g., reading comprehension, writing fluency). Reisman (2012), for example, found that high school students reading below grade level improved their reading comprehension, historical literacy skills, and ability to transfer analytical reading skills to

contemporary issues when they participated in a historical inquiry curriculum that foregrounded reading and discussing primary sources throughout one school year.

While these studies show disciplinary literacy is a pathway to general literacy practices in the context of secondary social studies classrooms, further evidence is needed to understand the relationship between general literacy and disciplinary literacy in elementary schools when students are at earlier stages of their literacy development and the majority of instructional time is devoted to learning general literacy practices. Although researchers hold a common assumption that general literacy practices develop *before* disciplinary literacy practices, the progression for this development remains largely unstudied and in need of further research. What we *can* assume about the order of the development of literacy practices is summarized by Duhaylongsod et al. (2015):

> We do know that disciplinary literacy presupposes general literacy skills (those applied to achieve comprehension of novels, newspapers, memos, and Wikipedia pages), and that sophisticated disciplinary literacy requires adding to those literacy skills: knowledge of the reading and writing practices specific to the discipline, the generally presupposed background knowledge specific to the discipline, knowledge of what questions can legitimately be asked, and how arguments are legitimately structured within the discipline. (p. 604)

What is Disciplinary Literacy in History?

Although many people believe history is a relatively straightforward record of facts about the past, constructing history is really an act of interpretation. In their work, historians interact directly with raw source materials of the past—whether cave paintings or newspaper clippings—as they pursue answers to pressing historical questions. These artifacts of the past do not simply tell historians what happened; rather, they tell what the creator thought happened or what the creator wanted others to think happened (Carr, 1961). Historians use careful reasoning and critical judgment as they weigh and corroborate many pieces of ambiguous evidence. History,

21

then, emerges from the interpretive claims historians make from the evidence they analyze. Historians cross-check their conclusions against those of other experts in the field and consider disconfirming evidence. It is from this critical work with both primary and secondary sources that new accounts of the past emerge. This process—pursuing a historical question, carefully reading sources from the past, using those sources as evidence to make claims, and communicating evidence-based interpretations—is referred to as historical inquiry (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Holt, 1990). The thinking, reading, and writing practices that historians employ throughout the inquiry cycle form the core of disciplinary literacy in history.

History education researchers, both domestically and abroad, have studied the disciplinary habits of mind historians employ as they conduct inquiries. Often labeled *historical thinking* skills or concepts, these ways of thinking undergird historians' interpretive work and therefore comprise an important part of disciplinary literacy in history. Seixas (2015), through his work with *The Historical Thinking Project* (The Historical Thinking Project, 2014), culled this research, and defined six historical thinking concepts central to the discipline:

1. Historical Significance: The concept that events, people, and developments viewed as historically significant are constructed by differing criteria over time.
2. Historical Evidence: The concept that history is interpretation based on sources (both primary and secondary) and involves particular methods of source analysis.
3. Continuity and Change: The concept of change over time, which can be framed as progress or decline.
4. Cause and Consequence: The concept that events were not inevitable, but rather the result of multiple factors that create a complex web of causes and consequences.
5. Historical Perspectives: The concept that historical actors' worldviews must be considered within their historical context and that there are different perspectives on any one event.
6. The Ethical Dimension: The concept that historical interpretations can help us determine how we respond to the past in the present.

Several decades of research have examined the discipline-specific reading or writing practices with historical evidence associated with Seixas' second dimension. Most notably,

Wineburg (1991) identified the specific ways historians read and interpret sources, which he terms *sourcing*, *contextualization*, and *corroboration*. *Sourcing* involves considering a document's source of origin and purpose. *Contextualization* involves considering the document's original temporal and spatial context as well as the broader historical context of the period. *Corroboration* involves reading and comparing several documents against each other. Building on Wineburg's work in reading, Schneider and Zakai (2016) provided an understanding of disciplinary literacy practices historians employ as they write evidence-based arguments. They name four "balancing acts"—or tensions—novice historians face as they write: the tension between knowing when to seek out additional evidence, hone an argument, or write prose; the tension of making an evidence-based account meaningful without making it up; the tension of holding firm to an interpretation, but being open to adjusting their positions; and the tension of translating the past in ways that are comprehensible to readers in the present. Monte-Sano (2017) also researched historians' writing practices by interviewing 18 professional historians to glean insight into their writing process, such as the ways they bridged moving from reading sources to composing evidence-based arguments. Taken together, this research provides insight into experts' historical literacy; however, more research is needed to understand how teachers might support students with these practices, especially at the elementary-school level where students' literacy skills are most nascent.

Method

To address my research question—How did an expert teacher apprentice her third-grade students into disciplinary literacy in history through disciplinary ways of reading, analyzing, and employing historical evidence?—I employed a case study methodology (Yin, 2003), since I was investigating a local, context-bound phenomenon. I also decided to sample an extreme case of

successful elementary school disciplinary literacy teaching in hopes it would yield the best data to address my research question (Patton, 2001). The purposeful sampling of Ms. McKinley allowed me an opportunity to witness what teaching disciplinary literacy meant to a recognized expert in elementary school social studies education.

Participant

Ms. McKinley first became exposed to teaching historical inquiry and disciplinary literacy in 2001. That year, her school district piloted a new K-5 social studies inquiry curriculum funded by a Teaching American History grant. The curriculum focused on supporting students' disciplinary literacy practices by incorporating discipline-specific learning processes such as reading historical accounts for context, analyzing primary sources, and synthesizing sources to construct accounts (Fillpot, 2009). By 2004, Ms. McKinley had developed enough expertise in these history-specific teaching practices that she became a mentor to other teachers learning to use the curriculum. Her talent for teaching disciplinary inquiry eventually earned her the title of national "Teacher of the Year" from several social studies organizations beginning in the mid-2000s.

At the time of data collection, Ms. McKinley had been teaching elementary school for 26 years in the Midwest region where she also grew up. A White woman in her late forties, Ms. McKinley's passion for social studies education extended outside of her classroom. During the school year of data collection, she presented regularly at education conferences; consulted for the local African American history museum about their educational exhibits; taught a social studies methods course to preservice teachers at a local public university; and served on the board of both state and national social studies advocacy organizations. During our first interview, Ms.

McKinley explained that she viewed apprenticing students into disciplinary history practices as vital for their participation as citizens:

> Teaching history helps students become better citizens because they learn to analyze [arguments] and make arguments about what they are thinking. I want them to be active, involved citizens and to see themselves as an advocate who can stand up for social justice, not be that bystander.

Context

Curriculum. During the 2015-2016 school year, Ms. McKinley taught three social studies inquiries. I collected data during the second inquiry about African American history entitled "From Slavery to Civil Rights," which she taught over 12 school weeks from January to March. Ms. McKinley framed the unit with the overarching compelling question, "How do people overcome hardship?" and several supporting questions (e.g., "How were African Americans oppressed after the Civil War?"). Students began their inquiry by investigating the transatlantic slave trade, the lived experiences of enslaved people in the United States, and the Civil War. Next, they learned about oppressions that African Americans faced in the 20th century: sharecropping, segregation, and the lack of voting rights. Lastly, they studied resistance to these oppressions, such as the civil rights movement, and touched on how they persist today through discussion of police brutality in Ferguson, Missouri. Ms. McKinley devoted three blocks of daily instructional time (literacy, writing, and social studies) to teaching social studies content.

School and classroom. I conducted this study in a midwestern city, large for its region, where Ms. McKinley taught and lived. Basswood Elementary School is a PK-4 public school with a total enrollment of approximately 450 students at the time of data collection. Ms. McKinley described the economic conditions of the school's families as a "double hump," with the first hump representing the comfortable middle class, many of whom were employed by a

local engineering company. The second hump consisted of families who lived "paycheck-to-paycheck," always teetering on—or living below—the poverty line; roughly 30% of Basswood students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch.

Ms. McKinley's class reflected the racial makeup of the larger school community: Eighteen out of 21 of her students, or about 85%, identified as White; one identified as White and African American/Black; one identified as Asian; and one as Latinx.[3] A student who qualified for special education services joined the class each day with a designated paraeducator for selected subjects, including some social studies lessons. Two students received weekly pullout instruction as part of the school's Gifted and Talented Program.

Data Sources

I collected a variety of data to strive for an accurate, authentic representation of Ms. McKinley's classroom, which included classroom observations, video recordings of instruction, classroom artifacts, and teacher interviews. To recruit students to participate in the study, Ms. McKinley distributed a paper consent form to students in December before I arrived in the field, included as Appendix A. All 21 of her students consented to participate.

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[3] All categories of race/ethnicity were reported by parents or guardians on family consent forms returned for this study.

Classroom observations. I visited Ms. McKinley's classroom during the first and seventh weeks of the unit, logging a total of 35 hours of fieldwork. I attended class daily and assumed the role of participant-observer, which included participating in classroom activities such as morning meeting and conversing with students informally during individual or small group work time. During preparation periods, I spoke informally with Ms. McKinley about her teaching and the students. Throughout the day I made jottings (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011) about the classroom activities, which I turned into ethnographic field notes each evening after leaving the school site.

Classroom video recordings. Ms. McKinley video recorded portions of her instruction during the weeks of the unit I was absent from the field. I provided her with video recording equipment, and she agreed to video record two to three lessons each week. I left it to her discretion to decide which lessons to video record, but I was clear that my interest was on teaching literacy through history education. While this likely biased her selection of which lessons to film, the goal of the study was to learn from her expertise in this area. Ultimately, Ms. McKinley recorded and shared over 20 hours of video footage.

Classroom artifacts. I collected classroom artifacts produced by both Ms. McKinley and the students. Teacher artifacts included materials related to teaching, such as detailed weekly lesson plans and copies of handouts for students. I also collected student artifacts, such as written classwork, journal entries, and artwork. Ms. McKinley archived students' work in a large crate, and during my second visit to the school site I digitized these artifacts, which totaled over 350 pages.

Teacher interviews. During my visits to her classroom, I conducted two interviews with Ms. McKinley, each lasting about 45 minutes. During these interviews, I asked Ms. McKinley

questions about her impressions of the school and community; her career and background in teaching disciplinary literacy and historical interpretation; her goals for her social studies teaching; the specific literacy skills she sought to target through her teaching; the use of various tools and supports (e.g., heuristics, graphic organizers) students employed throughout the unit; and her impressions of the students' learning.

Data Analysis

My data analysis occurred in three stages. In Stage 1, I utilized a deductive approach to analyze the classroom observation data (i.e., field notes and video recordings) for evidence of Seixas' (2015) historical thinking concepts. In Stage 2, I took a second analytic pass at the same data using open coding to identify emerging themes and patterns around the instructional moments identified in the first stage.

Stage 1: Disciplinary Literacy Instruction

Since my question in this study relates to *teaching* disciplinary literacy, I began by coding both my field notes and the classroom video recordings, which represented a total of 51 classroom lessons. One tension I faced in the first stage of coding was how to identify disciplinary literacy as separate and distinct instructional moments when *all* of the instruction was centered around historical inquiry and, therefore, all literacy was motivated and driven by a disciplinary purpose. Said another way: What precluded *all* instruction related to the social studies inquiry from being categorized as some form of disciplinary literacy? In order to more clearly gauge the disciplinary nature of Ms. McKinley's teaching, I created *a priori* codes for each of Seixas' (2015) six historical thinking concepts (Significance, Evidence, Continuity and Change, Cause and Consequence, Perspective Taking, and Ethical Dimensions). In applying these codes, I was able to see specific instances where Ms. McKinley explicitly foregrounded

historical thinking practices, such as using historical evidence within the inquiry. I applied those codes to my field notes using Dedoose, a qualitative analysis software. Then, I used Studiocode, a video analysis software, to apply these codes to moments in the video footage. I combined the codes applied across software programs and found that 31 lessons contained at least one instance of Ms. McKinley apprenticing students into disciplinary ways of reading, writing, and thinking. In the other 20 lessons, however, her instruction did not include explicit teaching about historical thinking.

At this stage in my coding process, I shared examples of coded instances with two colleagues, both of whom research secondary history education. They watched video clips of 11 instances (about 20% of the total coded data) and shared their thinking about Ms. McKinley's teaching in relation to Seixas' (2015) framework. I considered their comments, questions, and reactions to reduce researcher bias and to support this study's validity. For a visual representation of the results from this first phase of coding, see Figure II.1.

Figure II.1. Results of Coding Stage 1
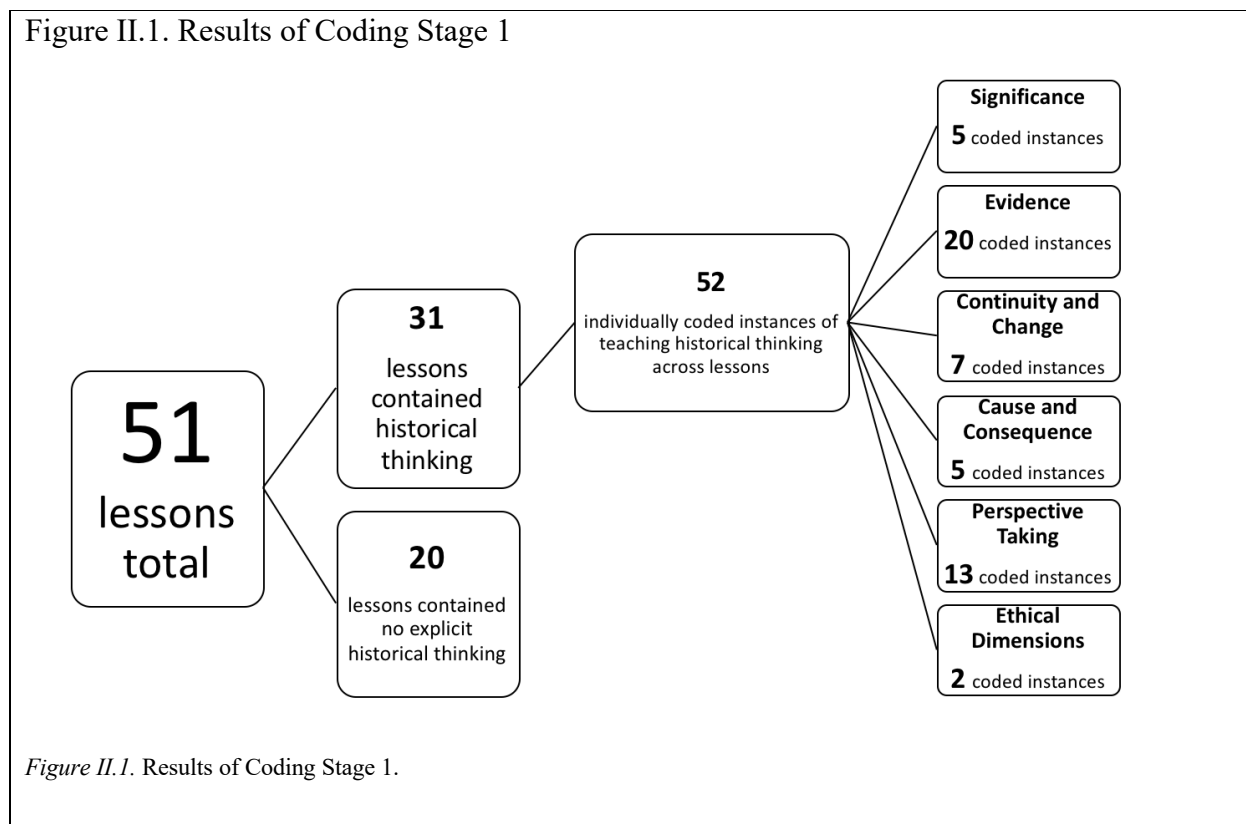
Figure II.1. Results of Coding Stage 1.

Stage 2: Texts, Tools, and Activity Structures

To understand the context surrounding the instructional moments identified in Stage 1, I took a second analytic pass at the data, this time using open coding to identify emerging themes and patterns across the ways Ms. McKinley apprenticed the students into various disciplinary literacy practices. I began by coding each of the 52 instances of historical thinking using descriptive categories. For example, I coded instances where students worked directly with historical sources as "working with primary sources." Then I took commonly occurring descriptive codes and grouped them into categories (Patton, 1990). For example, I collapsed the code "working with primary sources" into a broader category "type of texts," which helped me see patterns in the ways Ms. McKinley used a variety of texts to engage students in disciplinary literacy. In the end, I was left with three categories: (a) the type of texts (e.g., historical fiction)

read or produced by students, (b) tools employed to support reading and writing (e.g., graphic organizers), and (c) the activity structure (e.g., class discussion). See Table II.1 for examples of codes and data exemplars from this stage.

Stage 3: Looking Across Instances

Given the breadth of my findings, I chose to focus my remaining analyses on the instances related to the code *Evidence*, since it occurred the most frequently in Stage 1. Looking across these instances, I developed themes related to the various ways students practiced understanding, using, or working with historical evidence, which form the organization of the findings section below. I started each theme with a gerund (-ing) to emphasize the disciplinary literacy practices Ms. McKinley engaged the students in: (a) understanding the constructed nature of historical accounts, (b) analyzing historical sources, and (c) employing evidence when making claims. During this stage, I also triangulated my emerging findings with the remaining pieces of data (e.g., interviews with the teacher). Then I crafted an initial list of findings with examples for Ms. McKinley to review as a form of member-checking.

Table II.I

Example of Codes and Data Exemplars

Historical Thinking Concept (Seixas, 2015)	Description	Text Types	Tools	Activity Structure
Historical Significance	Ms. McKinley asked students to "walk and talk" the timeline (create a verbal account as they physically walk down the classroom timeline) about the development of slavery and its abolition. She explained they cannot include every item on the timeline related to slavery as they walk and talk, but rather they need to select the most significant events; she provided guidance on what determines significance.	Images on timeline (mainly primary sources)	Classroom timeline	Whole class
Historical Evidence	Ms. McKinley provided various sources related to slavery in America for students to analyze in small groups. After completing their analysis, each group presented their source to the whole class.	Primary sources	Analysis heuristic; analysis chart	Small groups; whole class
Continuity and Change	After students analyzed primary source images of sharecropping, the class discussed how closely this labor system mirrored slavery. Ms. McKinley projected images from one period to another and asked students think about progress and decline and to consider whether African Americans' conditions changed for better or worse.	Primary sources	N/A	Whole class
Cause and Consequence	After students "analyze" cotton, Ms. McKinley teaches about the impact of invention of the cotton gin had on slavery in America. The class watched a short video clip about the cotton gin, and afterward she pressed students to think about the consequences of the invention for American history.	Video clip	N/A	Whole class
Historical Perspective Taking	While reading *Pink and Say* (Polacco, 1994), students struggled to understand how members of a Civil War unit would shoot their own soldiers for deserting. Ms. McKinley responded: "Your families teach you this is right, and this is wrong. Your culture or your society, the places that you live and you grow up help a person think about certain things that are right and wrong…during this time period, that is what happened. You may not agree with it now, but during that time, some people thought that to be okay."	Historical fiction picture book	Graphic organizer	Whole class
Ethical Dimension	While learning about the civil rights movement, Ms. McKinley asks students to brainstorm those responsible for ending segregation. After a discussion of who is included on their lists, Ms. McKinley emphasized that many of the people responsible were unnamed protesters, some of them children. Students discuss the risks and benefits for those who participated and conjecture about how they would have responded.	N/A	N/A	Small groups; whole class

<center>**Findings**</center>

My analyses revealed that Ms. McKinley apprenticed students into all six of the historical thinking concepts during her instruction. Given the breadth of my findings, I limit my discussion here to the ways Ms. McKinley accomplished this within the practice of understanding and using *historical evidence*. This concept was the most frequently occurring historical thinking code, applied to the data 20 times out of 52 total codes applied, or 38% of the time. After looking at each coded instance, I found that Ms. McKinley made explicit and deliberate attempts to apprentice students into understanding evidence in three primary ways: (a) understanding the constructed nature of historical accounts, (b) analyzing historical evidence, and (c) employing evidence when making claims.

Understanding the Nature of Historical Accounts

Ms. McKinley apprenticed students into understanding historical sources by teaching them about the constructed nature of historical accounts. These included instructional moments where Ms. McKinley sought to help students understand that any account of history derives from the author's direct interpretation of sources (both primary and secondary). This happened most often during interactive read alouds with historical fiction picture books, a text type often associated with teaching core reading strategies (e.g., story elements). According to her lesson plans, Ms. McKinley read approximately 25 historical fiction books to the students throughout the "From Slavery to Civil Rights" inquiry unit. During read alouds, Ms. McKinley projected the historical picture book on the visualizer, so students could read the text and see the illustrations as she read aloud. As she read, Ms. McKinley paused frequently to engage the students in discussions that supported their comprehension of the text and understanding of the genre. She also engaged students in disciplinary literacy practices when she highlighted where the historical

<center>33</center>

knowledge being shared in the story comes from. She did this by telling students that authors examined historical sources to get the information embedded in their accounts.

In one instance, for example, Ms. McKinley read *Pink and Say* (Polacco, 1994), a historical fiction picture book about soldiers during the Civil War. After reading the narrative, Ms. McKinley read the Author's Note aloud, and the class learned that the author, Patricia Polacco, wrote the account from an oral history story passed down in her family from generation to generation. Ms. McKinley supported students' understanding of Polacco's use of evidence by situating oral history alongside other examples of evidence, saying:

> Now this is an oral history. So, when we think of all different types of sources… [standing in front of display at the front of the room that references different types of sources] We look at documents. We look at photographs. We look at art. We look at artifacts, like cotton from last Friday. You can look at things like letters and diaries. You can also look at interviews with people to get their stories. This book is kind of like an interview; one person told the story and the story was told again, and again, and again, and again, and now Patricia Polacco recorded it because she said, "I cannot ever let the story of Pinkaus A. Lee go away. We have to remember it."

This move by Ms. McKinley helped students trace the sources of information Polacco used to craft the account. Although Ms. McKinley stopped short of asking students to consider reliability or trustworthiness of the oral history, she nonetheless took an important first step in supporting students' nascent disciplinary literacy in history by helping them understand how authors employ evidence—such as oral histories—to form historical accounts.

In a similar instance, Ms. McKinley emphasized the historical evidence employed to write *Night Boat to Freedom* (Raven, 2006), a historical fiction picture book about enslaved people escaping across the Ohio River to freedom. During this lesson, the classworked to compare and contrast *Night Boat to Freedom* with another historical fiction picture book on the same topic. Ms. McKinley projected a Venn diagram for the class to see and elicited students' ideas about the similarities and differences between the two texts, a commonplace literacy

activity. However, after a discussion of story elements (e.g., setting, characters) in each text, Ms. McKinley prompted students to compare and contrast the sources of evidence the two authors employed when crafting their accounts:

Student: So, the second book [*Night Boat to Freedom* (Raven, 2006)] was created from real stories.
Ms. McKinley: Right, so this one [pointing to *Night Boat to Freedom* side of the Venn diagram projected for students] was created from [begins writing on diagram] "oral interviews with slaves to make the book."
Student: But how did they find the slaves?
Ms. McKinley: It would have been a long time ago in the 1930s during the Great Depression. [walking across the room to classroom timeline and motioning around the 1930s] So, if you look over here, you can see it was after slavery had ended and they began to think: "We should probably write down some of these stories." Why do you think former slaves didn't write down their own stories?
Student: Well, the majority of them did not know how to write.
Ms. McKinley: So, what they did was interviews or oral histories instead to get some of the stories written down. Then the author took that research and created this book [holds up *Night Boat to Freedom*].

By highlighting for students that Raven (2006) relied on narratives from formerly enslaved people to construct her account, Ms. McKinley supported students' disciplinary thinking by helping them to see history as a discipline derived from sources that authors employ as evidence.

In other instances, Ms. McKinley sought out pieces of historical evidence related to a historical fiction book she read to the class. While reading *Addy's Surprise: A Christmas Story* (Porter, 1993), a historical fiction book about a community of newly freed African Americans living in Philadelphia after the Civil War, she shared personal photographs she had taken at the historic site of the story's setting:

Ms. McKinley: [projecting photograph of church informational plaque on the visualizer] The church was established by the Free African Society and their leader was Richard Allen and he organized it with a group of African Americans who first came here out of slavery. [projecting photograph of church on the visualizer] This is the church, it's still there in Philadelphia. The reason I know that is because I visited there.
Students: [audible gasps of excitement]

35

Ms. McKinley:	This is the church that they talk about in this book [holds up *Addy's Surprise*]. It's historical fiction because it's based on something that happened in history, not every detail is the same and Addy is a made-up character, but this church and the community of ex-slaves that founded it were real.

Ms. McKinley's focus on sources of evidence used to create accounts helped support students' understanding of historical evidence and how it is employed. These examples also highlight the ways Ms. McKinley apprenticed students into the disciplinary concept of evidence while simultaneously teaching general literacy skills, such as comparing and contrasting two texts, and building students' historical content knowledge about African American experiences before and after the U.S. Civil War.

Analyzing Historical Evidence

Ms. McKinley gave students direct opportunities to analyze historical sources, which apprenticed them into discipline-specific ways of reading and thinking with evidence. During five separate lessons throughout the "From Slavery to Civil Rights" unit, students analyzed historical evidence—including photographs, engravings, lithographs, maps, political cartoons, and documents. Source analysis lessons supported students in investigating different topics related to the unit's inquiry questions, including slavery, sharecropping, segregation, voting rights, and civil rights. For each lesson, Ms. McKinley selected a variety of sources related to the topic. For example, during one activity students worked with sources related to the topic of voting rights. These sources included an image from *Harper's Weekly* depicting African American men voting after the passage of the 15th Amendment, an original poll tax receipt from the early 20th century, and a photograph of President Lyndon Johnson signing the 1965 Voting Rights Act into law.

Ms. McKinley apprenticed students into working with the evidence she selected using a heuristic from the curriculum (Fillpot, 2009) entitled "SOCC" (pronounced *sock*), which stands for sourcing, observing, contextualizing, and corroborating, a modification of the ways professional historians analyze texts as identified by Wineburg (1991). As students did the intellectual work of "SOCC-ing" a source, they recorded their thinking on a source analysis chart. The SOCC heuristic—and the accompanying analysis chart—helped apprentice students into sophisticated disciplinary ways of thinking with sources by making them both explicit and routine. An example of a SOCC chart completed by students is included as Appendix B.

Ms. McKinley taught her students they must "Stop and Source!" so they would remember to read the source's title and attribution line before reading or examining the source itself. In our interviews, Ms. McKinley explained that she viewed sourcing as a critical disciplinary literacy practice because a reader should understand that any piece of evidence originated from some person (or group) in some place at some time. Thus, Ms. McKinley made "Stop and Source!" a mantra in her classroom. Before passing out sources she would often ask students, "What's the first thing you're going to do?" The students would then shout in unison: "Stop and Source!"

After attending to the title and sourcing information, students went on to observe (or read) the source. They recorded the people and/or objects in the source and their inferences about what the people might be doing on the source analysis chart. Next, the analysis chart prompted them to contextualize the source by asking them to record their inferences about why the people might be doing the action, how they might be feeling, and when the source was created. Although students only worked with one source, students "corroborated" by brainstorming questions the source raised and what evidence they might consult to find the answers.

Not only did Ms. McKinley provide students with tools to make the source analysis process explicit and routine, she also taught each source analysis lesson using a predictable structure that provided opportunities for teacher modeling, peer collaboration, and teacher coaching. Ms. McKinley often began by projecting a primary source for the class and modeling how to analyze it using the SOCC strategy and source analysis chart. Her modeling of the analysis process provided a cognitive apprenticeship for students to support their emerging disciplinary thinking. In my field notes, I captured an example of her modeling, which reveals how she apprenticed students into thinking about the source's date of creation, its historical context, and how to make inferences from observations:

> She begins by reminding students the first step in working with a primary source is to "Stop and Source!" (read the author and date of creation). Ms. McKinley proceeded to model sourcing by reading the attribution and then thinking aloud about the image's date of creation: "Engraving created in 1854 but reproduced between 1960 and 1980." "Hmm," she puzzles to herself, "so this was recreated later but I should think about what was going on in 1854 as I observe." She continues to read that the image is stored at the Library of Congress and explains to the class that means this engraving is a real artifact that is stored in Washington D.C. . . . She observes the image and records the people and objects on the primary source analysis chart. When writing down "palm tree" as an object in the image, she says to the class "So do you think this took place in our state?" "No!" the students respond firmly.

After modeling, students worked to analyze images in groups of two to four, and Ms. McKinley circulated the classroom and coached students as they analyzed. After ample time to complete their analysis, each group of students presented to the class. These various portions of the source analysis lessons were spread across several class periods.

Ms. McKinley began apprenticing students into disciplinary ways of reading and thinking using the SOCC heuristic at the very beginning of the school year, so by the time of my observations the analysis process was an established intellectual routine. One instance, captured

in my field notes, shows the students' proficiency with source analysis five months into the school year:

> Ms. McKinley projects a photograph on the front screen. The black and white image shows about half a dozen figures (all African American) laboring in a large field. She probes the class, "What is this photograph showing?" The class chatters as students disagree about whether the photograph depicts slavery or sharecropping. "What do we need to know for sure what we are looking at?" Ms. McKinley asks. "The source," someone blurts out. "Hmm, okay, the source, but if we had the source what would it need to say? Turn and talk to your partner," she replies. Students respond to each other and I overhear many mention the importance of the date. Calling the class back together, Ms. McKinley elicits ideas from students. They mention they would need "to know the time" to determine if the image was "before or after slavery in 1865" by using "the date." Smiling, Ms. McKinley tells the class that she happens to have the sourcing information for the photograph and projects it for them to read. The image is from 1939. "So what does the date tell us?" she asks, as the students' hands shoot up in the air. She calls on DeAndre, who responds confidently: "Slavery is over. This is sharecropping."

As shown in this example, the practice of using the SOCC tool apprenticed students into disciplinary ways of "reading" sources that focused on authorship and context to support their learning of historical content (i.e., change and continuity for African Americans during the periods of legal enslavement and sharecropping).

Employing Evidence to Make Historical Claims

In addition to helping students understand the constructed nature of historical accounts and ways of working with evidence, Ms. McKinley apprenticed students into the disciplinary practice of making evidence-based claims about the past as they worked with sources and wrote historical accounts.

During instances when students were analyzing evidence, Ms. McKinley coached them to use specific details from a piece of evidence to substantiate their claims. In once such instance, Ms. McKinley stopped briefly to work with a group of students who were analyzing an image of Africans being captured on the Slave Coast by White and African slave traders, and she coached

one student to validate her claim that enslaved people did not get to bring personal possessions when forced onto ships:

Annabelle:	It's like the Pilgrims; they (slaves) came on a boat, too, didn't they?
Taylor:	It's basically like the Pilgrims, but they're forced.
Ms. McKinley:	Oh, alright.
Annabelle:	And they don't get to bring any clothes and stuff when they go.
Ms. McKinley:	How do you know that? What is your evidence?
Annabelle:	Because in the picture [primary source] they don't wear clothes.

This example shows how Ms. McKinley led students to ground their claims in evidence, a key aspect of disciplinary literacy in history. Rather than correct or dismiss the students' conflation of the Pilgrims and enslaved people, she pushed students to provide evidence for their claim.

In addition to these instances of verbal coaching, Ms. McKinley also apprenticed students in supporting claims with evidence as they wrote historical accounts. As students moved through the inquiry unit, they authored historical accounts about African American history. Although all of the students' accounts followed the same chronological organization, each student made their own choices about which specific content and evidence to include and how to organize ideas. In our interviews, Ms. McKinley explained her belief that writing historical accounts was an essential disciplinary literacy practice, as it moved students away from just reading and tasked them "to take what they have done with their historical thinking processes of looking at images, documents, artifacts, and texts" and make evidence-based claims. She emphasized that allowing students to produce their own accounts meant that they could make their own claims about what happened in the past, rather than regurgitating someone else's interpretation: "I want students to build *a* story of the history of 'Slavery to the Civil Rights Movement' rather than telling the story."

As they wrote their accounts, Ms. McKinley coached students to back their claims with evidence. To do so, she provided them with small photocopies of the historical primary source

images the class had analyzed throughout the course of the unit and taught students that they should employ the sources as evidence in their writing. For example, when students wrote the section of their account on slavery, Ms. McKinley provided them with about a dozen visuals, including images of Africans being captured, Eli Whitney, a slave auction, Henry Box Brown, slave quarters, a slave family, Harriett Tubman, and Sojourner Truth, as well as maps of both slave trade routes and the routes of the Underground Railroad. Ms. McKinley modeled how students should employ the sources to support the claims in their writing:

Ms. McKinley:	[writing a sample final draft projected on the visualizer] "In 1619, Africans were kidnapped and shackled from the Slave Coast." Now, I'm thinking there are pictures [primary sources] that support my claim right there. Which historical photos could I pick?
Annabelle:	The one [image] where the man is chaining the Africans.
Ms. McKinley:	So, I could put that one [image of slave traders shackling Africans] right in the middle of text as evidence [moves image to the middle of the page].
Ted:	You could also use the map because you are talking about the Slave Coast.
Ms. McKinley:	Right! Do you see how there's so many options? Now, do I need to use every single one [image]?
Students:	[chorally] No!
Ms. McKinley:	No, not at all. You're the author so you decide which pieces of evidence to choose.

Ms. McKinley also apprenticed students into using historical evidence to support claims by teaching them about the importance of adding references to their accounts. She provided a list of works cited with the text they had read as a class throughout the unit. After writing certain sections of their accounts, students glued in the reference list. This was another move by Ms. McKinley to help students understand that claims in historical writing must be substantiated with sources of evidence.

Ms. McKinley did express that although she made deliberate attempts to apprentice students into the concept of supporting claims with evidence, she worried about the authenticity of the historical accounts the students wrote. She noted that, in the end, students' accounts "are

very similar as they draw from the same concepts and sources" as they write. Yet, she added, "I think developmentally this is where they're at . . . they are eight and nine [years old]." Her thinking here reveals the tension between disciplinary literacy practices of young children, who are constrained as they rely on the teachers' preselected sources and texts when making claims, and those of professional historians. However, she effectively introduced them to the basic mores of historical writing, nonetheless.

Discussion

This case study shows the potential for disciplinary literacy in history at the elementary school level and, in particular, highlights instructional possibilities for teaching students about practices related to historical evidence. Ms. McKinley frequently discussed the constructed nature of historical accounts during interactive historical fiction read alouds by teaching students that the authors drew on historical evidence; allowed students to analyze primary sources using the same heuristics, tools, and instructional sequences; and engaged students in making claims from evidence over the course of the inquiry. These strategies all provided students with opportunities to understand the constructed nature of information, a key goal of disciplinary literacy teaching (Moje, 2008), and engaged students in the process of knowledge creation. Most importantly, she apprenticed students into disciplinary literacy practices despite their young age and their range in proficiency with general literacy practices.

One of the important findings from this study is that Ms. McKinley directly engaged her third-grade students in working with historical sources, which allowed students to employ the reading practices of the discipline identified through Wineburg's (1991) research (e.g., sourcing, contextualizing, and corroborating). She did so by specifically selecting sources that were primarily visual (e.g., photographs) and did not contain narrative written text, given that students

ranged in their proficiency with reading. Furthermore, she modeled the thinking practices explicitly and provided students with a heuristic (SOCC) that enabled historical source analysis to become a routine intellectual practice. Therefore, this study demonstrates one way that elementary teachers might achieve disciplinary literacy in history without needing to expose students to the inherent challenges of reading narrative primary source texts (Wineburg & Martin, 2009). Yet, prior research conducted in fifth-grade classrooms demonstrated that students were able to read and analyze some written sources (Nokes, 2014; VanSledright, 2002). Furthermore, some researchers working in middle school (De La Paz et al., 2017) and high school (Reisman, 2012) social studies classrooms adapted the written sources for students; for example, they simplified the language and reduced the overall length of the sources students analyzed. While these studies provide ways to think about how we might adapt written sources to make them accessible to younger learners, further research is needed to examine how teachers might scaffold and support the reading of written sources in elementary school grades.

Although researchers focused on designing historical literacy learning opportunities in classrooms typically think of primary sources as the main genre of texts used in disciplinary history teaching (Duhaylongsod et al., 2015), Ms. McKinley also used historical fiction picture books in her disciplinary literacy instruction. Ms. McKinley demonstrates that historical fiction might be useful as a resource for developing disciplinary thinking as she combined the use of historical fiction with an explicit focus on considering the author's sources of historical information. Furthermore, when reading *Addy's Surprise: A Christmas Story* (Porter, 1993) and sharing her photos of the church in Philadelphia, Ms. McKinley explicitly combined historical fiction with non-fictional data sources to build students' understanding of historical fiction versus traceable historical evidence. These types of instructional moves show that teachers might

support elementary students in their early development of disciplinary literacy using historical fiction, a genre that is ubiquitous in elementary school classrooms, and challenges the idea that certain texts (i.e., primary sources) must be present in the classroom in order for disciplinary literacy learning in history to occur (cf. Shanahan & Shanahan, 2014).

However, from a disciplinary standpoint, the use of historical fiction in elementary schools is a double-edged sword because while these narratives often promote engagement and interest in the past, they also tend to transmit a sense of historical "truth" that overpowers young reader's concerns for accuracy (Levstik, 1989). Considering the fact that Ms. McKinley read more than 25 historical fiction picture books to the students, it is likely that students learned the vast majority of their historical knowledge from the children's literature, not the primary sources. In other words, the real sources of *evidence* students employed to make sense of African American history were children's books. And, yet, during instruction the historical fiction picture books were not subjected to the same level of disciplinary scrutiny as the primary source images. For example, although students knew to "Stop and source!" when handed a primary source photograph, they did not source the children's literature in the same way. Ms. McKinley used historical fiction as a resource to help students think about the constructed nature of historical accounts and the origins of the author's historical knowledge but did not engage students in questioning the author's perspective, intended audience, motivations for writing, or the reliability of their evidence. For example, Ms. McKinley points out that *Pink and Say* (Polacco, 1994) was written from an oral history passed down across generations, but she does not press students to consider what might be reliable or unreliable about the oral history as a source and, in turn, how this influences the trustworthiness of the book as historical source. In other words, rather than relegate historical ways of reading to specific lessons with primary sources, Ms. McKinley might

consider teaching her elementary school students to read all accounts of the past they encounter during the inquiry with a more analytic approach. Bringing a more disciplinary lens to the historical fiction picture books is especially important given that portrayals of children's literature on the subject of African American history are often contested. For example, the year I collected data for this study, Scholastic Inc. later halted distribution on a recently published historical fiction title about enslavement due to public outcry over its illustrations depicting enslaved people as happy, smiling workers (Stack, 2016). Therefore, engaging students in deciphering how and why history is represented in particular ways within historical fiction texts is another potential way to achieve disciplinary literary in elementary schools.

A final aspect of this case to consider is that Ms. McKinley used disciplinary literacy to teach about what Epstein and Peck (2017) term *difficult history* or studying violent aspects of the past that evoke contested and/or painful reactions, such as enslavement. Some have suggested that inquiry methods are the best approach to learning difficult history (McCully, 2017), given that it is well suited to challenging prevailing ideological certainties and opening up possibilities for reconciliation. However, this is a largely theoretical assumption, and in this case study we see instances where an inquiry approach may have limitations. For example, in the exchange where Ms. McKinley coaches a small group of students analyzing an image of enslavers capturing Africans, both of the students relate the experiences of enslaved people to the Pilgrims, due to the fact that they both arrived in North America on boats. However, rather than probing students' background knowledge about the Pilgrims to challenge their thinking about the ways they related the experiences of the Pilgrims and the enslaved Africans, Ms. McKinley asked the students to supply evidence from the source for their claim. The potential loss in this approach, however, is that students could have completed this lesson believing that Pilgrims and the enslaved were

quite similar due to the ways they arrived in the colonies, and Ms. McKinley's relative silence could have, in fact, reinforced this view. This shows one potential limitation with elevating an "analytic stance" (Barton & Levstik, 2004, p. 69) to history in the classroom when the content involves complex issues of race, identity, and power, such as enslavement. Furthermore, my overall coding using Seixas' framework (2015) showed only two coded instances where Ms. McKinley engaged students in the ethical dimension of history. Therefore, more research is needed to investigate how teachers might balance and/or blend opportunities for analysis with opportunities for engaging in the ethical, moral, and emotional dimensions of difficult history.

Limitations

I acknowledge the limitations of this study. From a theoretical standpoint, this work privileges the epistemology of professional historians and argues that the diverse students in our schools should learn to utilize and adopt their literacy practices as a means to participate in the construction and critique of knowledge. This framework, however, fails to recognize that students bring their own set of understandings, mediated by a wide range of cultural messages and home backgrounds, to their study of history. As we continue to learn about how to best apprentice students into disciplinary literacy practices in history, we must pay attention to how students view history through their own eyes. Otherwise, we run the risk of promoting epistemological supremacy where historical thinking is viewed as invariant and students' ways of understanding history are dismissed as immature or academic (Barton & Levstik, 2004); this is especially important considering that the historical methods being privileged in the classroom are derived from Western academe where few women—especially women of color—have been positioned as knowledge constructors (Gonzales, 2018). Furthermore, by bringing a disciplinary literacy lens to the data in this study, the importance of teaching African American history and

historical racism is deemphasized. Yet, I share the perspective of many scholars that teaching about racism within the formal history curriculum can help support young students in their development of empathy, morality, and agency (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Epstein, 2009) and support intergroup harmony (J. M. Hughes, Bigler, & Levy, 2007). Lastly, by employing a case study methodology and purposely sampling an extreme case of someone who has developed expertise in facilitating literacy-infused social studies inquiries with young children, I obscure the many challenges to teaching disciplinary literacy (Duhaylongsod et al., 2015). It is critical to note that Ms. McKinley developed her orientation and expertise in historical literacy with the support of sustained professional development and that she had taught disciplinary literacy for 15 years by the time I began data collection.

APPENDIX A

Student Consent Form

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am inviting your child to participate in a research study, which I have designed to learn more about his/her teacher and your child's learning during the upcoming social studies unit "From Slavery to Civil Rights" beginning in January. This study is part of my doctoral training at the University of Michigan. I write to inform you about the purpose of the study, to state that participation is voluntary, to explain any risks and benefits of participation, and to inform you of your privacy. My hope is that the information provided will help you make an informed decision to participate.

Purpose of the Study: This study will help me learn about effective social studies and literacy instruction, as well as how third graders make sense of the historical content they learn in school. You child's teacher is a well-regarded social studies educator and my hope is that in studying her classroom we can support other elementary school teacher seeking to teach in similar ways. Participation: This study will take place for the duration of the "Slavery to Civil Rights" unit during January and February 2015. With your consent, I would like to photocopy the classwork your child completes during history and literacy instruction. In addition, I would like to audio and/or video record your child, and the classroom, during the lessons.

Risks and Benefits: There are no foreseeable risks to participating in the study and there is no penalty for refusing to participate. Potential benefits are that child's participation may help us identify ways to improve student learning.

Privacy: Data collected in study will be kept strictly confidential. Only I will have access to the students' classwork and any audio/video recordings. I will not include your child's full name in any presentations or publications that result from this study. Your child's privacy, and that of your child's school and district, will be protected to the maximum extent allowed by law.

Please contact me with any questions regarding this research project. For questions about your child's rights as a research participant, or to discuss this study with someone other than me, please contact the University of Michigan Health and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board via phone at (734) 936-0933 [toll-free at (866) 936-0933] or email at irbhsbs@umich.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ryan Hughes
School of Education
University of Michigan
Phone: (415) 713-9877
Email: hughesre@umich.edu

Do you voluntarily allow **your child's classwork** to be included in this study?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Do you voluntarily allow **your child to be audio recorded** during the assessments**?**

Yes ☐   No ☐

Do you voluntarily allow **your child to be video recorded** in this study?

Yes ☐   No ☐

_____   _____   _____
(Parent/Guardian Signature)   (Parent/Guardian Printed Name)   (Date)

_____
(Child's Printed Name)

Background information about your child (Optional)
(Please note: you have the right to skip any questions you do not wish to answer; this information will never be reported with names or other identifying information):

Child's gender: Female ☐   Male ☐

Child's ethnicity: ☐ Other: _____
☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native   Services that your child receives:
☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American   ☐ Special Education
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander   ☐ Title I for Reading or Math
☐ White   ☐ Visits the Reading Specialist
☐ Hispanic or Latino   ☐ Gifted/Talented Services
☐ Not Hispanic or Latino   ☐ English as a Second Language
☐ Multiracial   ☐ Other: _____

49

Does your child qualify for free or reduced-price lunch?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Language(s) spoken in your home: _____

APPENDIX B

Classroom Artifact: Completed "SOCC" Analysis Chart with Historical Sources Related to Racial Segregation

NEGRO EXPULSION FROM RAILWAY CAR, PHILADELPHIA.

Philadelphia, PA, 1889, Removing an African American from a Philadelphia Railway Car—after the starting of Jim Crow

K (what we think we know)

People:
3 whites
1 black

Objects: Chair
Pillow
hat
bonits

What are they doing?
Whites are telling
the black to get
up and let them
sit there

W (what we want to know)

Why do you think they're doing this?
Because it is the
time of segregation

How do you think they are feeling?
Whites mad
black Sad

When do you think this picture was taken? How do you know?
1889 because it
says

Questions this photo raises:
Were some people
rich? black
What is a Railway car?
Is the black in a whites
spot?!

L (what we hope to learn)

Where could you find the answers?
research
infure

CHAPTER III

"What is Slavery?": Third Graders' Sensemaking About Enslavement Through Historical Inquiry

My Inquiry Space

In 2018, the Southern Poverty Law Center's educational organization, Teaching Tolerance, convened an advisory board of historians, educational researchers, and teacher educators to examine the status of teaching about the history of enslavement in K-12 schools. In their subsequent report—*Teaching Hard History: American Slavery*—the committee found that few of the teachers they surveyed reported teaching about enslavement in North America in any comprehensive way (Teaching Tolerance, 2018b). Furthermore, the high school seniors they surveyed struggled to answer basic questions about enslavement, such as knowing that enslavement was the central cause of U.S. Civil War. This report is especially troubling given that the history of enslavement is central to understanding contemporary American society— from highly racialized issues, such as police brutality or Black-White wealth inequality, to public controversies, such as removing Confederate memorials in public spaces or assertions in our media that enslaved people were "well-fed and had decent lodging" (Hagg, 2018; Jay & Lyerly, 2016; Victor, 2016). In this sense, understanding the history of enslavement plays a role in the development of students' historical consciousness, or how they use the past to orient themselves in the present and construct expectations for the future. Clearly, the history of enslavement in North America deserves more robust treatment in our schools.

But what *does* a classroom with robust learning about the history of enslavement look like? While a growing body of literature critiques the portrayals of enslavement in K-12 textbooks (Brown & Brown, 2010; Woyshner & Schocker, 2015), state social studies standards (Anderson & Metzger, 2011; Busey & Walker, 2017), and children's trade literature (Bickford & Rich, 2014; Bickford & Schuette, 2016; Patterson & Shuttleworth, 2019; Thomas, Reese, & Horning, 2016; Williams, 2009), there are few portraits of classroom instruction about enslavement and the student learning that resulted from it. In this paper, I examine third graders' developing understandings of enslavement as they participated in an extended social studies inquiry focused on African American history. I ask: How did third-grade students conceptualize enslavement before, during, and after participation in a social studies inquiry focused on the history of enslavement in North America? How did students connect their conceptualizations of enslavement to the present?

Why Study Enslavement in Schools?

Although the history of enslavement is full of violence and pain, and therefore might be tempting to avoid or ignore in schools, it would be difficult—if not impossible—to learn an honest and accurate account of U.S. history without a discussion of enslavement. Historians have long argued that enslavement played a significant role in the development of everything from political parties (Potter & Fehrenbacher, 1976) to views about race in our culture (Degler, 1971). More recent historical scholarship delineates previously unacknowledged ways in which the institution of enslavement gave rise to modern financial institutions that supported the slave trade, such as banking and insurance (Schermerhorn, 2015), advanced medical knowledge in fields such as gynecology (Cooper Owens, 2017), and ideas about race and biology in the American scientific community (Hogarth, 2017). As one historian noted, it is impossible to find

historically prominent American "institutions and individuals entirely free of its [enslavement's] insidiously pervasive touch" (Cobb, 2016, para. 2). Given the significance historians ascribe to enslavement, it is vital that K-12 students develop an understanding of enslavement throughout their social studies instruction.

Beyond being key to understanding American history as an academic subject, studying violent aspects of the past that evoke contested and/or painful reactions, such as enslavement, act as a powerful reference point for students as they develop an understanding of themselves and contemporary society (Epstein & Peck, 2017). Scholars have documented ways in which students use the past as a resource for developing aspects of their moral reasoning and sense of identity, as well as how learning about the past may reduce their racial bias. Learning about past injustices like enslavement contributes to students' development of moral reasoning as they reflect on how they themselves might have responded to the circumstances of violence, oppression, tragedy, and bravery they encounter in their historical study (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Bellino & Selman, 2012). Levy (2014) argues that school history is a powerful tool for affirming—or diminishing—the identities of students from marginalized groups. She found that when teachers included marginalized racial/ethnic groups in school history and portrayed them as having agency during periods of historical victimization and injustice (e.g., Jewish students studying Jewish resistance to the Holocaust), students from these groups came to see their heritage group as multifaceted and dynamic, which helped them develop a stronger, more positive sense of their identity. Conversely, if the school history curriculum excludes historical injustices towards marginalized groups, students from these groups may hold a less positive view of their identity and learn to distrust the historical knowledge presented by their teachers (Epstein, 2009). J. M. Hughes et al. (2007) found White students' racial stereotyping and bias

against African Americans decreased as they participated in a curriculum explicitly centered on reading about historical racism. Taken together, these studies suggest that studying topics such as enslavement may support all students as they construct their identities in the present.

Learning about the history of enslavement also positions students to understand the present, particularly how the effects of enslavement impact contemporary society. Social scientists continue to document enslavement's influence on many present-day social issues, including shocking disparities in health care (Noonan, Velasco-Mondragon, & Wagner, 2016), wealth (Asante-Muhamed, Collins, Hoxie, & Niveves, 2016), and educational attainment (Reece & O'Connell, 2015) between Black and White Americans. Although discussions of enslavement's legacy in the present rarely occur in classrooms (Teaching Tolerance, 2018b), understanding historical racism prepares students to make sense of our current reality and positions them well to make informed civic decisions in the present. As Epstein (2009) notes, studying historical resistance to oppression provides students with an orientation towards present-day civic action as students learn about—and from—the successes, failures, and limitations of past responses to racial injustice. Yet, despite the many promises learning about enslavement holds for students, little is known about how students develop their understandings of enslavement through the social studies curriculum and how their learning may—or may not— prepare them to understand the continuity of systemic racism in contemporary society.

Instruction About Enslavement in U.S. Schools

Why do schools often avoid the subject of enslavement if learning about the topic supports a deep understanding of American history and holds potential for advancing racial reconciliation in the present? Educational researchers (Brown & Brown, 2010; Busey & Walker, 2017; Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2017; Patterson & Shuttleworth, 2019)

suggest this may occur for several reasons, including: (a) weak policy mandates to teach about

enslavement and/or social studies in schools, (b) lack of high-quality curricular resources

available for teaching about enslavement, and (c) inattention to race and racism within social

studies curriculum.

Policy Context for Teaching About Enslavement

Weak policy mandates to teach about enslavement—or social studies topics generally—

may reduce its coverage in the classroom. In their recent content analysis of 15 K-12 state social

studies standards, Teaching Tolerance (2018b) found the standards were typically devoid of any

mention of enslavement until fifth grade and that their presentation of the topic was generally

"timid" (p. 29). This report corroborates the critiques of educational researchers who argue that

state social studies standards present enslavement as an exception within a greater story of

national progress (Anderson & Metzger, 2011) and as an economic condition rather than a

cornerstone of a democracy founded on racialized physical, emotional, and psychological

violence (Busey & Walker, 2017). In addition to a weak mandate from state social studies

standards, the absence of instruction about enslavement in elementary schools—where this study

is situated—also results from state testing policies that often do not assess students in social

studies. In efforts to prepare students for state testing, teachers privilege tested content (e.g.,

reading skills, mathematics) in the classroom, which has led to a documented decline in the

number of minutes of social studies instruction per week in elementary schools across the nation

(Fitchett, Heafner, & Lambert, 2014).

Lack of High-Quality Instructional Resources

Although we know little about what students learn when they study enslavement in schools, researchers have long examined and critiqued the portrayals of enslaved people in K-12 texts, including textbooks and children's literature, as inaccurate and oversimplified.

Textbooks. Scholars such as Reddick (1934) began this line of inquiry nearly a century ago by examining the portrayals of African Americans in U.S. history textbooks. Reddick found that textbook authors laced their account of enslavement with White supremacist ideology, such as the idea that enslaved people were docile and happy. For instance, the textbook *American History*, published for the elementary grades in 1930, explained:

> Although he was in a state of slavery, the Negro of plantation days was usually happy. He was fond of the company of others and liked to sing, dance, crack jokes, and laugh . . . and he was loyal to a kind master or overseer. Most of the planters learned that not the whip, but loyalty based upon pride, kindness, and reward, brought the best returns . . . For generations they had known no other conditions, and most of them were content to remain as they had been born. (as cited in Reddick, 1934, p. 233)

Recent inquiries into the portrayals of African Americans in elementary history textbooks found more accurate representations of enslaved people than Reddick (1934) did, but these studies still note important flaws. Brown and Brown (2010), for example, found that fifth- and eighth-grade social studies textbooks failed to present violent practices against African Americans as widespread, institutionalized, and legally codified; rather, they presented violence as limited to the actions of individuals. For example, one textbook (*Harcourt Horizons,* 2003) read: "There was little protection, however, for slaves who had cruel masters," which implies that only *some*—not all—African Americans experienced cruelty under enslavement and that cruel individuals are to blame for violence, not the sociocultural, political, and economic structures complicit with such violence (as cited in Brown & Brown, 2010, p. 145). Brown and Brown

(2010) warn that limitations and gaps in textbook narratives about enslavement will "likely impact students' historical literacy in adverse ways" (p. 150); yet, little is known about students' historical literacy about enslavement.

Thomson (2017) noted similar issues with language used by textbook authors writing about enslavement. Using critical discourse analysis, Thomson (2017) compared the language used to describe the same historical topic—the intimate relationship between U.S. President Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemmings, a woman he enslaved—in a fifth-grade U.S. history textbook published in 2010 and a Pulitzer Prize-winning historical monograph written by historian Annette Gordon-Reed in 2008. Thomson (2017) found the textbook authors favored terms that deemphasized the action taken by individuals to hold others in bondage (i.e., masters) and that eschewed enslaved peoples' humanity (i.e., slaves). Gordon-Reed, on the other hand, used more humanizing language in her prose, such as "enslaved men and women," or referenced enslaved people by their names. Furthermore, while the textbook authors positioned Jefferson as an ethical leader despite being a slaveholder, Gordon-Reed's language choices emphasized the role that Jefferson and others in power played in human bondage. Thomson (2017) concluded that teachers might help their students examine authors' language choices about enslavement, since the language used in universities about enslavement "has not translated into changes in K-12 curricula" (p. 25).

Children's literature. Students do not typically encounter social studies textbooks on U.S. history until they reach fifth grade or later in middle school. Instead, elementary school teachers often use children's trade literature, such as historical fiction, narrative nonfiction, and informational texts, to teach social studies. Given the predominance of these texts in classroom instruction, researchers have also examined representations of enslaved people in children's

literature. They find that like school textbooks, trade books present enslaved people in inaccurate, simplistic, and incomplete ways, and thereby echo Brown and Brown's (2010) concern that exposure to such narratives may distort students' understandings of history (Bickford & Rich, 2014; Bickford & Schuette, 2016; Patterson & Shuttleworth, 2019; Thomas et al., 2016; Williams, 2009).

In their recent content analysis of 21 elementary-level social studies trade books that depict enslavement, Patterson and Shuttleworth (2019) suggested a book's features may fall into one of three categories based on ways enslaved people are portrayed in the text and illustrations: selective tradition, social conscience, and culturally conscious. Selective tradition representation in children's literature continues to present longstanding racist myths of happy and docile slaves. Patterson and Shuttleworth (2019) found that three titles in their study, all published between 2015 and 2016, presented the selective tradition. One of these titles—*A Birthday Cake for George Washington*—caused such a public outcry over its illustrations, which depicted enslaved people as happy, smiling workers, that Scholastic Inc. later halted its distribution, saying they ultimately decided the book could give children a "false impression" of enslavement (Stack, 2016). Titles in the social conscience tradition—about half of those analyzed by Patterson and Shuttleworth (2019)—acknowledged the horrors of enslavement, but still generalized, exaggerated, and/or omitted some aspects of enslavement. For example, these books tended to emphasize escaping from bondage with little discussion of the institution of enslavement itself. Authors writing in the social conscience category also often made use of passive voice, which obscures the actions of Whites (e.g., sentences such as "Slaves were whipped" make no mention of who is doing the whipping). The third category—culturally conscious books—made up less than 40% of the sample. These titles described violence against enslaved people in active voice

and included portrayals of African American cultural practices and customs. Given that any classroom might contain a range of these three types of texts, we need further investigation into students' thinking as they learn about enslavement and encounter texts with such different portrayals.

Inattention to race within the social studies curriculum. The critiques of state social studies content standards and instructional materials for teaching about enslavement are indicative of a broader trend within U.S. social studies education where race and racism are deemphasized, silenced, and omitted (Brown & Brown, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2003, 2017; Rubin, 2019). When teaching about North American history, teachers may avoid or gloss over historical racism because they deem it too complex, sensitive, or unpleasant for students or fear backlash from parents/guardians and school administrators (Epstein, 2009). Levstik (2000) found the fifth- through eighth-grade teachers she interviewed worried that children in elementary and middle school were not developmentally ready to grapple with an ambiguous past; therefore, these teachers constructed "cheerful" narratives which emphasized national progress and avoided grappling with anomalies in U.S. history, such as the persistence of racism in a society founded upon egalitarian ideas. Similarly, Chandler and Branscombe (2015) found the enacted social studies curriculum in three White teachers' high school U.S. history classrooms delivered sanctioned messages and silences about race and failed to explain why certain racist episodes in history occurred, which masks the long-term, systemic effects of racism that extend to the present.

King (2004) argues that the school social studies curriculum may mask racism through an approach that conflates the experiences of various racial and ethnic groups into one "immigrant experience." As Ladson-Billings (2017) explains, such a curriculum may conflate:

European Americans' experience as immigrants at Ellis Island, Asian Americans' experience as immigrants at Angel Island, Native Americans as "first immigrants" across the land bridge, and African Americans as "forced immigrants" on slave trade ships. . . [which] distorts the specificity (and harsh realities) of their real experiences. (p. 8)

Wills (2001) argues this kind of multicultural history curriculum often obscures the actions and interactions between various groups; for example, enslavement is told through a narrative where African Americans and Whites are "missing in interaction." Without open discussion of race and racism, the social studies curriculum may further reproduce the narrative that we live in a "postracial society" (Bobo, 2011), which only sustains racism in contemporary society. In this study, I sought to explore how a social studies inquiry curriculum about enslavement may have disrupted or further reproduced students' understanding of systemic racism by considering the way students related the past, present, and future with regard to this history.

Disciplinary Inquiry in History

As researchers examining instructional materials about enslavement indicate, any single text is likely to contain a limited or problematic historical interpretation. History education scholars argue, therefore, that K-12 students need opportunities to compare multiple sources when learning about the past and make their own interpretations. Historical inquiry instruction is supportive of this goal as it allows students to participate in the practices common to the discipline of history, such as posing historical questions, gathering and analyzing evidence, applying disciplinary concepts, and making an interpretation about the topic under investigation (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Holt, 1990; National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). Inquiry instruction is viewed as a "socially-just pedagogy" (Moje, 2007) because it positions students as sense makers and gives them the tools needed to construct and critique knowledge, thereby

standing in sharp theoretical contrast to the transmission model of history education where students memorize facts and passively consume state-sanctioned narratives.

Through their participation in historical inquiry, students develop and utilize the thought processes that form the intellectual base of the history—often referred to as *historical thinking* or, more broadly, *disciplinary literacy*—which support them in carrying out the procedural practices of the discipline, such as analyzing evidence or engaging in historical perspective taking (Seixas, 2015). Although space does not allow me to provide a full exploration of the empirical work on disciplinary historical thinking, I share more about a particular study— Wineburg's (1991) study of historians' cognitive reading practices—because those reading practices were employed by the third-grade students as they learned about enslavement. In a study of how professional historians read historical evidence, Wineburg (1991) identified the specific reading practices historians employed as they read and interpreted sources, which he termed *sourcing*, *contextualization*, and *corroboration*. *Sourcing* involves considering a document's source of origin and purpose. *Contextualization* involves considering the document's original temporal and spatial context as well as the broader historical context of the period. *Corroboration* involves reading and comparing several documents against each other.

The idea that students should engage in the literacy-rich and academically rigorous practices of constructing history that more closely mirror the practices of professional historians (e.g., analyzing evidence) has ignited a global "historical thinking movement" (Keirn, 2018) in K-12 history education research and practice. A body of literature demonstrates that high school (Reisman, 2012), middle school (De La Paz et al., 2017), and fifth grade students (Nokes, 2014; VanSledright, 2002) have the capacity to utilize these historical literacy practices while working with sources of historical evidence in the classroom. Researchers argue that earlier elementary-

aged students can also participate in history-specific literacy practices when provided more scaffolded opportunities (Levstik & Barton, 2008; Portal, 1987). In particular, elementary-aged students have demonstrated that they can think chronologically (Barton & Levstik, 1996); read and interpret multiple sources of evidence (Fillpot, 2012; Levstik & Barton, 2008; Nokes, 2014); and construct historical accounts (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997). Yet, these studies do not examine the ways historical literacy practices might support students' understanding of a particular historical topic, such as enslavement, in the context of historical inquiry. More typically, attention to historical thinking (or disciplinary literacy) and inquiry has been agnostic with regard to the topic under examination (for exepctions at the secondary level see Goldberg, Schwarz, & Porat, 2008; Kolikant & Pollack, 2009). Furthermore, inquiry is rare in U.S. elementary schools (Barton & Levstik, 2003) as teachers may lack expertise with (and professional support for developing) inquiry teaching practices, which require supporting their students with disciplinary ways reading, analyzing, and writing. Yet, many believe inquiry instruction is a potentially promising approach to learning about enslavement. For example, Teaching Tolerance recently published a curricular guide that recommends inquiry as the best method to teach about the topic. They argue that "understanding the far-reaching and overlapping effects of enslavement and white supremacy demands deep engagement on the part of students, a type of engagement that inquiry is well suited to support" (Swan, Lee, & Grant, 2018, p. 12). However, while disciplinary historical inquiry remains a widely suggested and potentially promising approach to learning about difficult history, no research to date explores its efficacy for learning about enslavement. Therefore, in this study I ask: How did third-grade students conceptualize enslavement before, during, and after participation in a social studies

63

inquiry focused on the history of enslavement in North America? How did students connect their conceptualizations of enslavement to the present?

Theoretical Framework

In this paper, I use a theoretical framework for history education known as *historical consciousness*. A term that finds its origins in German scholarship of the 1970s, historical consciousness is fundamentally about how humans, both individually and collectively, orient themselves in time and coordinate their interpretations of the past, understanding of the present, and outlook and perspectives on the future (Rüsen, 1993; Seixas, 2004).

In this study, I use Seixas' adaptation of Rüsen's framing of historical consciousness as my conceptual framework (Seixas, 2016), as shown in Figure III.1. The upper half of the figure (in blue) represents "disciplinary history." Here, students participate in disciplinary inquiry as they pose questions and present initial theories about the past, use historical methods and disciplinary practices (e.g., disciplinary literacy or historical thinking) to further develop their historical knowledge, and represent their historical interpretations in forms such as written accounts. Students bring their own unique sociocultural lens and historical orientation to bear on their historical learning at school as they confirm, extend, and challenge ideas about the past held by themselves and others (Epstein, 2009; Levstik & Barton, 2008). The lower half of the figure (in red) represents "life practice," or the ways external elements outside of school, such as public memory and identity, shape students' orientation to the present and their interest in the past. Working through this conceptual cycle allows students to develop important aspects of their historical consciousness as they use disciplinary methods to challenge commonly held views about the past and use their academic experiences to reorient themselves in the present. In this study, I take up Seixas' (2016) call to investigate the interaction of these two—represented in the

figure by the purple arrows and middle zone—by attending to how participation in classroom historical inquiry shapes students' historical knowledge of a particular topic and how this orients them towards the present day.

Figure III.1. Theoretical framework for the development of historical consciousness

Figure III.1. Theoretical framework for the development of historical consciousness from Seixas (2016).
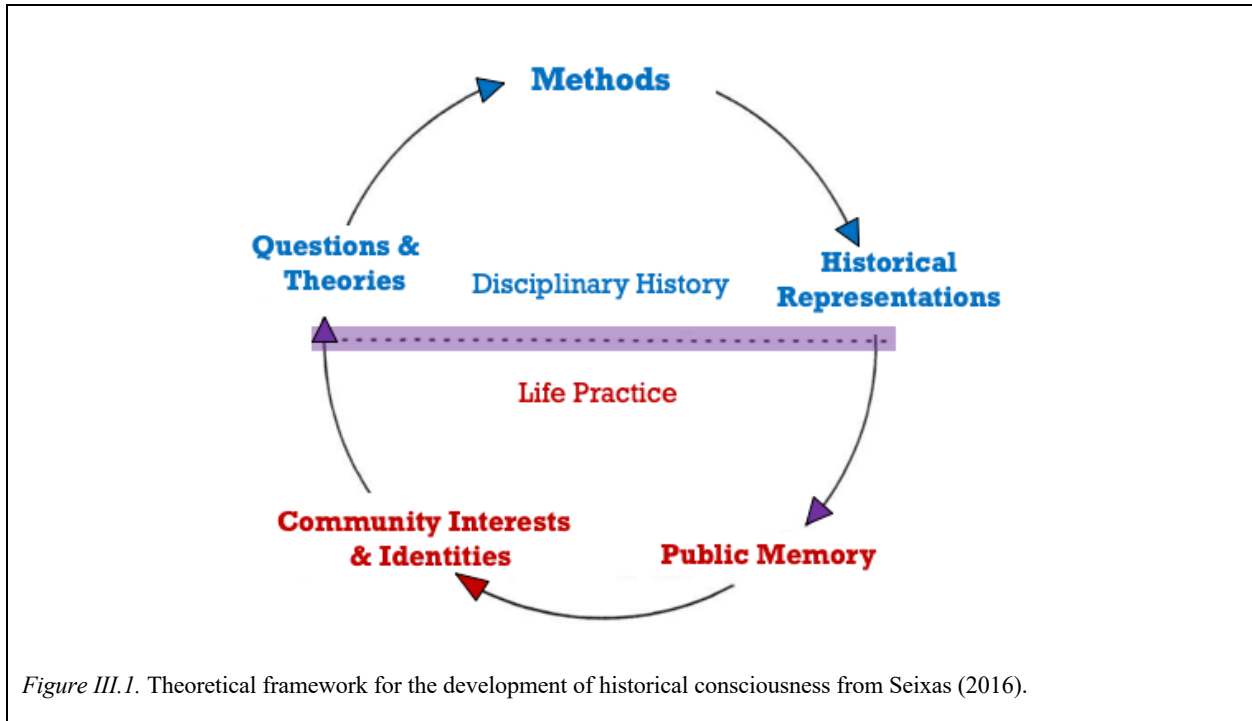
Study Context

Background

I collected data for this study as part of a larger, one-year ethnographic study of third-grade students' participation in a social studies inquiry curriculum taught by their teacher, Ms. Trisha McKinley,[4] during the 2017-2018 school year. This ethnographic study grew out of an pilot study I conducted in early 2016 in Ms. McKinley's classroom, where I examined how she

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[4] All names used in this paper are pseudonyms.

taught young children to employ disciplinary literacy practices through inquiry during a unit on African American history.

A colleague first introduced me to Ms. McKinley in 2015 given my interest in learning more about an elementary-level history curriculum project funded through the federal Teaching American History grants program. The curriculum project incorporated discipline-specific historical thinking processes rarely seen in K-5 classrooms, such as reading historical accounts for context, analyzing primary sources, and synthesizing sources to construct accounts (Fillpot, 2009). Ms. McKinley began teaching disciplinary history in 2001 when her district adopted the curriculum and she became increasingly expert in history-specific teaching practices. By early 2016, when my pilot study began, Ms. McKinley had won several teaching awards, held positions for social studies advocacy organizations at both the state and national levels, presented routinely at professional development conferences around the country, and consulted with the local African American history museums about their educational exhibits.

During my pilot study, Ms. McKinley explained that although the original curriculum unit focused solely on segregation in the 20th century, she eventually decided to expand the historical period under study, as she found segregation proved to be a difficult concept for the students to grasp without understanding its progenitor: enslavement. On the first day of my field visit, she projected a lithograph entitled "Inspection and Sale of a Negro" (1854). This resource came from the Library of Congress and, according to the library, depicts "an African man being inspected for sale into slavery while a white man talks with African slave traders" (Library of Congress, n.d.). I watched as she supported the third graders in analyzing the image using historical reading practices identified by Wineburg (1991). Her ability to engage her nearly all-White students in an evidence-based conversation about enslavement and to apprentice students

in complex historical reading practices, as well as her use of primary sources, struck me as unique. I wondered how using historical inquiry methods to learn about enslavement and other racial injustices developed the students' understandings of both history and contemporary society. These musings became the central focus of the year-long study which yielded the data for this paper.

Community and School

Although the Basswood School District where Ms. McKinley taught was located in a region heavily populated in her midwestern state, rolling fields of corn and soybean crops surrounded its schools in all directions. Basswood School District served students living in three counties, which collectively held over a million acres of farmland and produced $800 million worth of market-value products each year. Yet, within several miles of the school site there were also two large financial firms, a new four-star hotel, and an emergency medical facility. This mix of blue- and white-collar jobs led Ms. McKinley to describe the economic conditions of the community's families as a "double hump," with the first hump representing the comfortable middle class and the second hump representing families who lived "paycheck-to-paycheck," always teetering on—or living below—the poverty line. Roughly 30% of Basswood School District families qualified for free or reduced-priced lunch.

The Basswood School District consisted of eight separate school buildings on a 500-acre campus that included five elementary schools (PK-4), an intermediate school (5-6), a middle school (7-9), and a high school (10-12), collectively serving over 6,000 students. The district bused all students to and from campus each day. When beginning elementary school, students were randomly assigned to one of the five schools. The district carried out a policy for each elementary school to have roughly the same number of students by race and socioeconomic

status. It maintained efforts to balance the quality of the elementary schools through frequent district-wide planning days and sustained, cross-site professional development projects related to teaching practices.

Ms. McKinley taught at one of these five elementary school sites—the Basswood Community School—which supported a total enrollment of approximately 450 students during the 2017-2018 school year. The Basswood Community School building was less than a decade old. It featured media, art, and science labs, as well as a spacious print library at its center. The third graders at Basswood shared a set of tablets and a set of computers between four classes, and students used these devices heavily.

Classroom and Curriculum

Ms. McKinley, a public school teacher since 1990, taught a third-grade class of 20 students during the 2017-2018 school year. Ms. McKinley taught language arts, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. The daily instructional schedule included an hour and 45-minute literacy block and one 45-minute writing block five days a week, plus three 50-minute sessions for either science or social studies. The third-grade teachers at the Basswood Community School, like all elementary teachers in the district, alternated between teaching sustained science or social studies units that lasted from four to eight weeks. Ms. McKinley integrated teaching science and social studies content throughout the entire school day using portions of her literacy time, all of her writing time, as well as the three 50-minute sessions per week allotted for science or social studies to teach various topics. For example, while teaching about enslavement, Ms. McKinley taught reading comprehension during the morning literacy block using books about enslavement; during writing time, when the students researched and responded to the unit's inquiry questions; and during social studies sessions, when they

continued these activities and also participated in source analysis, mapping, and timelining lessons. This meant that on any given school day it was not uncommon for students to spend two to three hours of instructional time focused on their social studies inquiry questions.

Going into the school year of this study, the state Department of Education had adopted new state standards for K-12 social studies. Ms. McKinley and a team of teachers led the implementation of the new standards in the Basswood District, and they developed three new inquiry units for K-6 grades before the start of the 2017-2018 school year. When creating the new inquiry units, these teachers tried to build upon what they could of the former topics and materials, since those were familiar to their colleagues. However, they also revised the curriculum with greater attention to all social studies disciplines, state history, and disciplinary practices related to inquiry—all of which the new standards required.

These new state social studies standards included an overarching content theme for each grade level. The third-grade theme was "Immigration and Migration," however, the language of the standards did not specify the groups and/or time period under study. Ms. McKinley and her grade level team decided that for their third graders, this would mean participating in three inquiries covering: (a) immigration to America during the 19th and early 20th centuries as well as to their state in the past 50 years, entitled "Immigration"; (b) the capture and forced movement of African people during the transatlantic slave trade beginning in the 1600s and African American history until the Great Migration of the 20th century, entitled "Forced Immigration"; and (c) Westward movement, Indigenous culture, and the forced migration of Indigenous Peoples, entitled "Migration."

"Forced Immigration" inquiry. The "Forced Immigration" inquiry lasted from November 2017 through January 2018. Prior to this inquiry, students spent August through

September studying the "Immigration" unit. Ms. McKinley organized the inquiry through a set of questions that followed a chronological progression of African American history, as shown in Table III.1. Ms. McKinley's instruction began with the arrival of slave ships in the Americas in the early 1600s. Students then learned about the lives of enslaved people, resistance to enslavement, and the Civil War. Next, they learned about racial, economic, and political oppressions in the 20th century: sharecropping, segregation, and the lack of voting rights. Lastly, they learned about the civil rights movement, the Great Migration, and African American cultural contributions to their state.

Table III.1

Organizing Questions for "Forced Immigration" Inquiry

Question Type	Question	Dates Taught	Days of Instruction
Compelling	How does oppression force people to move to a new place?	November 7, 2017-January 15, 2018	37
Supporting	What is slavery?	November 7-November 30, 2017	12
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	December 1-December 15, 2017	11
	How did oppression after the Civil War cause/motivate African Americans to migrate? and What cultural contributions did African Americans make on [our state]?	December 18, 2017-January 15, 2018	14

In this paper, I focus specifically on a portion of the inquiry that related to enslavement when the students investigated the questions "What is slavery?"[5] and "How was our country divided during the Civil War?" This portion of the inquiry lasted 23 school days, which were spread over six school weeks.

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[5] For the purposes of this article, I use the term "enslavement" in my framing, but "slavery" in the subsequent sections of this chapter, since that is the term used in the classroom and during student interviews.

During these six school weeks, students built their historical content knowledge through reading and analysis of a variety of texts. Ms. McKinley did not use a standardized textbook during the inquiry; rather, the class read over three dozen texts, including historical fiction literature, primary source documents, and informational texts (see Appendix A for a full list of all texts used during instruction). Ms. McKinley carefully integrated her social studies and literacy teaching, which meant she often taught genre- or text-specific reading practices as the students learned historical content. For example, when analyzing primary source images, Ms. McKinley asked students to use disciplinary reading heuristics (Wineburg, 1991); when reading historical fiction picture books, Ms. McKinley's students worked on reading practices such as determining the setting, plot, characters, problem-solution, and point of view, as well as comparing and contrasting texts. Given the voluminous number of texts, I did not conduct a formal content analysis of each title to evaluate how the author represented enslavement; however, three of the titles Ms. McKinley used during the inquiry were included in Patterson & Shuttleworth's (2019) study. Patterson and Shuttleworth classified two of the titles Ms. McKinley used as part of the social conscience tradition (Kamma, 2004; Levine, 2007) and one title as part of the culturally conscious category (Raven, 2004), which suggests Ms. McKinley exposed students to a mix of representations of enslavement.

Method

Participants

Student participants included the 19 third graders in Ms. McKinley's class during the 2017-2018 school year who consented to have their classwork collected as part of this study. At the beginning of the school year, I gave a brief, one-slide presentation to the parents about my research aims during Back-to-School Night, a school event for parents and guardians about the

71

new academic year held the week before school began. All families also received a letter and consent form (included as Appendix B) inviting them to participate in the study. Of the 20 students in Ms. McKinley's class that year, all 20 returned their consent forms. One student did not consent to have his classwork collected and is therefore not included in this study.

On the consent form, I included a brief questionnaire about the students' demographics, including their racial backgrounds. Responses on the consent forms showed the racial makeup of the student participants reflected that of the larger school community: 15 out of 19 students, or roughly 80%, identified as White; one identified as African American; and three identified as biracial. The biracial students included one African American/White student, one Mexican/White student, and one Asian/White student. The students represented a wide range of academic ability. Four students attended class with a designated paraeducator and split their instructional time between Ms. McKinley's classroom and a special education classroom. Two additional students received extra support with reading under the school's Title 1 program. Furthermore, two other students received separate instruction as part of the school's Talented and Gifted education program.

Data Sources

To help me understand students' thinking about enslavement over time, I collected artifacts created before, during, and after their unit of inquiry. The artifacts I collected before and after the inquiry included a pre- and post-inquiry concept mapping task and interviews with a subset of eight focal students. The artifacts created during the inquiry include eight assignments students completed as part of their regular classroom instruction.

Artifacts produced before and after the inquiry.

Pre- and post-inquiry concept mapping task. To understand students' thinking before and after the inquiry, I gave the students a concept mapping task the weeks before and after the unit. I consulted with Ms. McKinley about the best format for the task, and we decided on concept mapping so that students were not required to write entire sentences and would have plenty of room to draw. I gave each student a large sheet of paper with the unit's compelling question at the center, with the four supporting questions positioned around it. The teacher and I co-presented the directions; we asked students to write words or drawings answering each of the five questions. The mapping task and my notes on the directions are included in Appendix C. We allotted 45 minutes for students to complete their maps. The students completed their concept maps the day before the inquiry began (November 1st, 2017) and the day after it ended (January 18th, 2018).

Pre- and post-inquiry student interviews. In order to further understand students' thinking, I interviewed a subset of eight students before and after the inquiry (see Appendix D for the interview protocol) about their concept maps. I selected these students in consultation with Ms. McKinley so that I could speak to students who represented a range of reading ability. During the interviews, I asked students more about what they included in their concept maps and various questions related to historical thinking concepts. In addition, I presented the students with two historical images—one of a slave auction (Bibb, 1849) and one of a sit-in demonstration from the civil rights era (Moebes, 1960)—to help elicit their thinking about African American oppression and agency. My goal was not only to see what students knew about the historical events depicted in the images, but also how they might relate them to the present. I selected these specific photographs since both of the historical events they depicted were a part of the inquiry's focus.

Artifacts produced during the inquiry.

To understand students' thinking during the inquiry, I included the classwork students produced as part of their regular classroom practices as they investigated the questions "What is slavery?" and "How was our country divided during the Civil War?" Since my focus in this paper is how individual students developed their thinking about enslavement over time, I omitted several assignments that the class completed together from this study (e.g., Venn diagrams comparing Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman constructed with whole-class input and copied by students into their journals). Also, since the young students in this study varied in their writing proficiency, the data I share include artifacts that students narrated orally after they wrote or drew. As part of their regular classroom practice, students used a classroom blog called Seesaw, which allowed each student to maintain a personal newsfeed of their classwork. When posting to Seesaw, students took images of their classwork using a tablet and then added a voice narration explaining or describing the assignment. The Seesaw platform allowed the teacher and parents to comment on students' individual posts. Students added images and voice recordings to roughly 40% of the total data sources used in this study from Seesaw, which I transcribed before analysis. In total, I identified eight assignments each student created during the inquiry to use in my analysis: three social studies journal responses, one inquiry question response, two sketchnotes journal responses, one activity response sheet about Henry Box Brown, and one claim about slavery.

Social studies journal responses. Three times during the inquiry unit, Ms. McKinley asked students to write a response to the question "What is slavery?" in their journals. These journal entries acted as a formative assessment and prepared students to write their historical documentaries. These entries were brief, taking no more than 15 minutes of instructional time.

Students responded to this question in their ruled journals on November 7, 14, and 20—roughly once a week.

Inquiry question responses. During the first week of the inquiry, students generated their own inquiry questions based on their analysis of a visual primary source related to enslavement. Students worked to analyze the sources in small groups of two to three students but answered their research questions individually. Students posted their questions and answers to Seesaw on November 11.

Sketchnotes journal responses. Ms. McKinley asked students to write and illustrate a response to the inquiry questions "What is slavery?" and "How was our country divided during the Civil War?" in their sketchnotes journals (a journal with unruled pages). Students completed these entries during 45-minute writing blocks on November 21 and December 15, respectively. Students photographed and voice narrated their responses on Seesaw.

Henry Box Brown activity responses. On November 28, Ms. McKinley presented students with primary sources related to the life of Henry Box Brown, an enslaved man who shipped himself from the South to freedom in the North. Students were asked to record their ideas and reactions to the sources before and after reading a historical fiction picture book, *Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story of the Underground Railroad* (Levine, 2007).

"*Slavery claim" responses.* Ms. McKinley taught a short lesson on November 29 about how to write a claim, evidence, and reasoning. At the end of the lesson, students wrote their own claims about slavery.

Analysis

My data analysis occurred in two phases. In Phase 1, I utilized a deductive approach to code student artifacts and interview transcripts. In Phase 2, I used various data displays to reveal

patterns in the code application to the student artifacts across time, which allowed me to group students into various learning pathways.

Phase 1: Applying Deductive Codes

Since I sought to understand the robustness of students' conceptualizations of enslavement over the course of their inquiry, I developed a coding scheme from *Teaching Hard History*'s key concepts (Teaching Tolerance, 2018b). Historian Ira Berlin—an expert on the history of enslavement—developed these 10 key concepts as a roadmap for educators seeking to ensure their students develop a complex understanding of enslavement and they form the core of the *Teaching Hard History Framework.* As the *Framework* explains: "The Key Concepts are important ideas that students must truly understand if they are to grasp the historical significance of enslavement" (Teaching Tolerance, 2018a, p. 6). See Table III.2 for a description of each key concept from *Teaching Hard History* and my corresponding code.

Table III.2

Deductive Coding Scheme Developed from Teaching Hard History (2018)

Code	Key Concept from *Teaching Hard History* (direct quotes from p. 6)*
1. Civil War	Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.
2. Cultural legacy	Enslaved and free people of African descent had a profound impact on American culture, producing leaders and literary, artistic, and folk traditions that continue to influence the nation.
3. Economic gain	Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the economy across British North America and, later, the United States.
4. Evidence	By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought, and desired.
5. Geographic expanse	Slavery, which was practiced by Europeans prior to their arrival in the Americas, was important to all of the colonial powers and existed in all of the European North American colonies.
6. Legal sanction	Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court, and Senate from 1787 through 1860.
7. Institution of power	"Slavery was an institution of power," designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.
8. Race	Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and White supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.
9. Resistance	Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.
10. Varied lived experiences	The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding, and gender.

*Originally developed by Berlin (2016).

I uploaded the classroom artifacts into Dedoose, a coding software. Then, I applied the codes to a subset of student work as a way to test out the coding scheme with the data and to adapt it as needed to be sure the coding scheme reflected the data. This led me to revise the coding scheme in two ways. First, I developed two additional codes: *Emerging Understanding* and *Misconception* to accommodate ways students' understanding of slavery might be emerging but not entirely accurate, or ways their understandings might simply be incorrect. For example, some students wrote on their pre-concept maps that slavery involved working, but they did not explicitly mention it was forced, and therefore I coded it as *Emerging Understanding.* Other students, however, wrote that slavery was war, which was coded as a *Misconception.* In addition to the development of these two codes, my initial coding led me to develop subcodes for each of

77

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the 10 key concepts. For example, I developed subcodes such as *Mentioned Underground Railroad* under the main concept code of *Resistance* so I could relate the language and topics mentioned by students to the broader conceptual categories developed by Teaching Tolerance.

After I expanded the coding scheme to better reflect the data, I created a code book (see Appendix E) and proceeded to code the entire data set. Then, I asked another researcher to code a subset of 40 artifacts, or roughly 25% of the total data. The second scorer applied codes identically 84% of the time (that is, they coded 106 out of 126 code applications the same). I also asked a member of the Teaching Tolerance advisory board and an expert in K-12 African American curriculum theory to review my code book and initial findings to ensure I applied the codes with reliability from his perspective. He verified that my coding approach matched his understandings.

Phase 2: Identifying Patterns in Students' Responses Across Time

At the beginning of Phase 2, I considered the breadth of code application in Phase 1 and decided to pursue further analysis of the code *Institution of power* (e.g., how enslavers controlled and organized enslaved people)*, and *Race* (e.g., naming racial groups) since they occurred most frequently in artifacts students produced throughout the inquiry (see Appendix F). I began by comparing the ways students described power and slavery in their pre-inquiry concept maps. I noticed that many students knew the term "slavery" related to forced labor, but that students rarely mentioned who exerted power over whom (e.g., slavery is when people force you to work). When students did mention specific groups, they did so by naming race (e.g., slavery is White people catching African Americans and making them work). Therefore, I became interested in when and how the students began to describe race, as this signaled a shift in the students' thinking to their awareness of this as racialized history.

I created a visual chart (included in the next section as Table III.4) of the students' artifacts based on the inclusion or exclusion of the codes *Institution of power* and *Race*. This visual display allowed me to see instances where the coding for various students followed similar progressions. I found that students could be grouped into learning pathways based on the ways their ideas about power (*Institution of power*) and race (*Race*) developed over time as indicated by the coding. I created initial groups of students for each pathway based on the coding and then went back to each student's artifacts to see how their thinking compared to others within that group. This allowed me to think about similarities and differences between individual students within a given pathway and to substantiate the differences between pathways. After ensuring the students were grouped accurately based on their thinking, I shared a draft of these findings with Ms. McKinley to review as a member-check.

Role of the Researcher

Luttrell (2010) writes that relationships—not research questions—are at the center of qualitative research and that the heart of the research journey is negotiating and representing these relationships. In this study, I negotiated relationships with Ms. McKinley and her students as I attended school daily as a participant observer. Daily participation supported my understanding of the instructional activities and approach to history teaching in the classroom and to build relationships that enabled data collection. Given that I am a White man in my thirties and looked like the other adult staff member, students likely saw me as another "teacher," although I explicitly told the students that my purpose in being there was to learn about how they thought about social studies. My relationship with Ms. McKinley was collegial, although it is important to understand that I viewed her as an expert teacher in social studies inquiry and

disciplinary practices in history. Therefore, I approached our relationship as one where I was learning from her about her teaching practice and expertise.

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Findings

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I present the findings of this study by the phase of coding. First, I describe the ways the third graders developed their understandings of enslavement before, during, and after the inquiry by reporting the presence, or absence, of the Teaching Tolerance (2018) key concepts within their pre- and post-inquiry concept maps and classwork. Then, I share five learning pathways students followed based on when they discussed the concepts of power and race across the inquiry.

Findings Part 1: Students' Conceptualizations of Enslavement Before, During, and After the Inquiry

In this findings section, I describe development at the class level, reporting how the students as a whole conceptualized enslavement before, during, and after the inquiry. I detail the frequency of the inclusion of all concepts from the Teaching Tolerance framework (2018) and application of the codes *Emerging Understanding* and *Misconception* to the student artifacts produced before and after instruction to give a sense of where students started with their conceptualizations of enslavement and where they ended up. However, when sharing artifacts produced during the inquiry, I limit myself to fully describing only two codes—*Institution of Power* and *Race*—given the breadth of student work analyzed in this phase. I focus on *Institution of Power* and *Race* because these were the two most prevalent key concepts students included during the inquiry and form the basis of the second phase of my analysis.

Before the inquiry. Recall that before the inquiry began, students completed a concept map where I asked them to draw or write responses to the compelling and supporting questions

of the inquiry. The concept maps revealed that students varied in their background knowledge before the inquiry began, but overall students' responses included limited information about slavery (see Appendix G for all responses). As shown in Table III.3, less than half the class—only eight students out of 19 (roughly 42%)—offered responses that included any of the key concepts from the Teaching Tolerance (2018) framework. The remaining students offered only emerging understandings (26.3%) or misconceptions (32%) about slavery.

Table III.3
Application of Codes to Pre-Inquiry Concept Maps

Code	Number of pre-inquiry concept maps	% of class
Included Teaching Tolerance's key concepts	8	42.1%
Only included *Emerging Understandings*	5	26.3%
Only included *Misconceptions*	6	31.6%
	19	**100%**

Inclusion of key concepts. As shown, in Table III.4, students' responses to the question "What is slavery?" revealed that eight students (just over 40% of the class) included any of the key concepts on their pre-inquiry maps. All eight students conceptualized slavery as an *Institution of power*; three of these students also explicitly mentioned *Race* (15.7% of the class); and one student also included the idea of *Legal sanction* (5.3% of the class). Students' responses to the question "How was our country divided during the Civil War?" yielded no application of the key concepts, as no students mentioned slavery in connection to this question.

81

Table III.4

Application of Key Concept Codes and Subcodes to Pre-Inquiry Concept Maps

Key Concepts and Subcodes	Number of pre-inquiry concept maps	% of class
Institution of power	8	42.1%
Described slavery as forced	5	26.3%
Described violence	2	10.5%
Described human ownership	1	10.5%
Race	3	15.7%
Named African Americans	3	15.7%
Named Whites	1	5.3%
Legal sanction	1	5.3%
Civil War	0	0%
Cultural legacy	0	0%
Economic gain	0	0%
Evidence	0	0%
Geographic expanse	0	0%
Resistance	0	0%
Varied lived experiences	0	0%

*Ordered by most frequently occurring key concept

Institution of power. About 42% of all students' pre-inquiry maps included the code *Institution of power*. Of these eight artifacts, five described slavery as forced, two others mentioned violence, and one mentioned human ownership. The five students who described slavery as forced explained that slavery involved controlling other humans, such as Cassie, who wrote, "Slavery is when you get chains on your rist [wrists] and people tell you what to do" (November 1, 2017) or Brennan, who wrote, "Slavery is when someone controls another person" (November 1, 2017). A smaller number of responses—those from Brian and Rachel—indicated that slavery involved violence. Both of these students conveyed the concept of violence through illustrations: Brian drew an image of one human figure whipping another, while Rachel drew an image of a human figure hanging from a tree. Only one student, Blake, alluded to the idea of power as human ownership: He wrote that slavery is people being "Ceepd [kept]" (November 1, 2017).

Race. Three students who included the *Institution of power* code also mentioned *Race* on their pre-inquiry maps. All three of these students included terms for African Americans (i.e., African American or Black), while one mentioned both African Americans and Whites:

- "[Slavery is] *Black people*." Rebecca (November 1, 2017)
- Makeing [making] people do things; Forcing people to do something; Makeing [making] *African Americans* maids." Allison (November 1, 2017)
- "*Wite [White] people* catching *African Americans* and making them do stuf [stuff]." Noelle (November 1, 2017)

Legal sanction. One student—Rebecca—mentioned that African American people under slavery had no legal rights: "No rites [rights], Black people" (November 1, 2017), which meant her concept map included a total of three concepts: *Institution of power, Race, and Legal sanction.*

Emerging understandings and misconceptions. The remaining 11 students offered ideas about slavery that varied in their accuracy: five students offered emerging understandings (26.3%) and six students offered misconceptions (31.6%).

Emerging understandings. Students presenting emerging understandings before the inquiry indicated they understood slavery related to labor, unfair treatment, and/or human movement, but they did not explicitly describe slavery as forced. Two students—Bailey and Will—conceptualized slavery as labor:

- "[Slavery is] people that are working for athor [other] people." Bailey (November 1, 2017)
- "Slavery is people making other people to work." Will (November 1, 2017)

Two other students, Cole and Cora, drew images of a human figure shouting at another figure to work, indicating they knew the labor involved a power dynamic, but did not indicate to me that they understood slavery involved forced labor and human ownership. Finally, Bradley responded

that slavery involved people "moving to a new place" (November 1, 2017) but did not mention the forced nature of this movement.

Misconceptions. Six students offered misconceptions about slavery, indicating they had limited background knowledge about slavery before the inquiry. Responses ranged from associating slavery with war to confusing it with snow sledding:

- "War." Chelsea (November 1, 2017)
- "Poeple [People] fiting [fighting]." Emily (November 1, 2017)
- "War." Kaylee (November 1, 2017)
- "When people kill people." Layton (November 1, 2017)
- "It is a time that is cold and you goes [go on] sleds." Lucy (November 1, 2017)
- Illustration of several heads. Kash (November 1, 2017)

During the Inquiry. In my analysis, I included students' classwork from eight different classroom assignments completed during the inquiry. Given that students missed some assignments, I ended up coding a total of 118 artifacts from these eight assignments. My coding revealed that during the inquiry nearly all of the students' artifacts (about 97%) included at least one mention of Teaching Tolerance's key concepts. Furthermore, each student included seven of the 10 key concepts in their artifacts at some point during the inquiry, showing that all students' conceptualizations of slavery grew more complex as they participated in the inquiry. Four percent of the artifacts contained the code *Emerging understandings*, while just over 10% contained the code *Misconceptions*. I report the prevalence of all codes and subcodes applied to artifacts from this phase of the inquiry in Table III.5.

Table III.5
Application of Codes to Artifacts Produced During the Inquiry

Key Concepts or Subcodes*	Number of artifacts with this code applied	Percentage of all artifacts (n=118)	Number of students whose artifacts included this code (n=19)
Institution of power	72	61.0%	19
Described slavery as forced	41	34.7%	19
Described slave ships	22	18.6%	14
Described human ownership	17	14.4%	8
Described violence	10	8.5%	10
Described family separation	7	5.9%	6
Race	32	27.1%	15
Named Africans/African Americans	29	24.6%	15
Named Whites	4	3.4%	4
Resistance	29	24.6%	16
Described the Underground Railroad	23	19.5%	16
Mentioned Harriet Tubman	6	5.3%	6
Mentioned risk of punishment	3	2.5%	3
Evidence	27	22.9%	17
Economic gain	25	21.2%	15
Mentioned forced labor	19	16.1%	11
Mentioned auctions	9	7.6%	9
Legal sanction	17	14.4%	16
Civil War	13	11%	13
Varied lived experiences	6	5.1%	5
Geographic expanse	4	3.4%	4
Cultural legacy	0	0%	0
Emerging understandings	4	3.4%	4
Misconceptions	10	8.5%	10

*Ordered by most frequently occurring key concept

Inclusion of key concepts. Similar to their pre-inquiry maps, students used the key concept *Institution of power* most often during the inquiry; I applied this code to 61% of all artifacts. Students mentioned *Race* and *Resistance* in about a quarter of their artifacts—found in 27.1% and 24.6% of their work, respectively. Students mentioned *Evidence* (22.9%), *Economic gain* (21.2%), *Legal sanction* (14.4%), and *Civil War* (11%) next most frequently. *Varied lived experiences* (5.1%) and *Geographic expanse* (3.4%) were included in less than 10% of the students' classwork. *Cultural legacy* appeared in no artifacts given that Ms. McKinley taught this content during instructional days outside the scope of my analysis.

Institution of power. Students included the concept of power when describing slavery in about 60% their artifacts, making it the most frequently occurring key concept mentioned by

students during the inquiry and the only key concept used by all 19 students. Given the prevalence of students' artifacts that describe power, I share a finer-grained analysis of how students' conceptualizations of power developed throughout the inquiry in the next section of the findings. For now, I report the frequency of the five subcodes related to power applied to artifacts created during the inquiry: (a) *Described slavery as forced*, (b) *Described slave ships*, (c) *Described human ownership*, (d) *Described violence*, and (e) *Described family separation*.

Students named slavery as forced in 34.7% of all artifacts they produced during the inquiry. All students mentioned this aspect of slavery at least once after the first week of instruction, making it a subcode commonly applied to all students' work. Students accomplished this by making use of words and phrases such as "captured," "taken against their will," "forced," "stolen," and/or "kidnapped" when describing slavery. At the beginning of the second week of instruction, for example, Ms. McKinley asked students to respond to the inquiry question "What is slavery?" in their journals, and students offered these responses that mentioned slavery as forced in a variety of ways:

- "Slavery is people that are *getting captured and taken against their will*." Bailey (November 14, 2017)
- "People *being stolen* from Africa." Kash (November 14, 2017)
- "Slavery is masters *taking slaves without their will*." Lucy (November 14, 2017)

Students mentioned or described how enslavers controlled and organized African people aboard slave ships—an aspect of power—second most frequently in their artifacts. Thirteen students included these descriptions, and they appeared in 18.6% of all artifacts created during the inquiry. When describing slave ships, students typically detailed their inhumane conditions, such as limited personal space, lack of bathrooms, and/or limited access to daylight for enslaved men and women. For example, one student, Chelsea, described these inhumane conditions when she narrated her illustration in response to the question "What is slavery?" on Seesaw:

And once you go to the boat, you're going to have to be like shackled on. There's people on top of you. There's bad conditions. You could get sick. You could die. And the bad part is, if somebody had to lay on top of you and stuff could happen, like they could wet the bed. (November 11, 2017)

About 14% of all artifacts mentioned that slavery involved ownership of human beings. Eight students included this idea in their classwork at some point during the inquiry. I applied this code to places where students explicitly used the term "own" or "ownership" and/or when they mentioned buying and/or selling of enslaved people as a form of power. For example, the following students mentioned the idea of being sold as a form of power over enslaved people when writing a claim about slavery in their journals during the fourth week of instruction:

- "Once *they were sold to a master or mistress they were that person's property*." Allison (November 29, 2017)
- "My claim is that slavery is when *people get sold* to another plantation." Bradley (November 29, 2017)
- "When you are a slave you come from Africa and *you get sold to a master*." Brian (November 29, 2017)

During the inquiry, 10 artifacts (8.5%) created by 10 different students explicitly described the violent practices used by slaveholders. I applied this code most often to artifacts where students described whipping enslaved people. For example, in their second journal response to the inquiry question "What is slavery?" both Blake and Cassie described physical violence as a form of power slaveholders held over enslaved people:

- "Slavery is when *you get whipped or shackled* if you don't listen to your master." Blake (November 14, 2017)
- "And you do whatever you are told or if you try to run away *you get whipped or something worse*." Cassie (November 14, 2017)

The final and least applied subcode related to power during the inquiry was *Described family separation*. This subcode was present in seven of the students' artifacts (5.9%), which six students created. During the first week of the inquiry, for example, Bailey worked with her group to analyze a primary source photograph from the Library of Congress that depicted five

generations of enslaved people. This prompted her to generate the inquiry question: "What problems are this family facing?" which she answered on a Seesaw blog post: "They are faceing [sic] getting separated" (November 11, 2017) as shown in Figure III.2.

Figure III.2. Bailey's Seesaw post

Figure III.2. Bailey's Seesaw post created November 11, 2017 shows her inquiry questions, which were generated based on her primary source analysis. Her second question indicated she understood that enslaved families faced a constant threat of being separated, showing she comprehended that slavery was an institution of power.
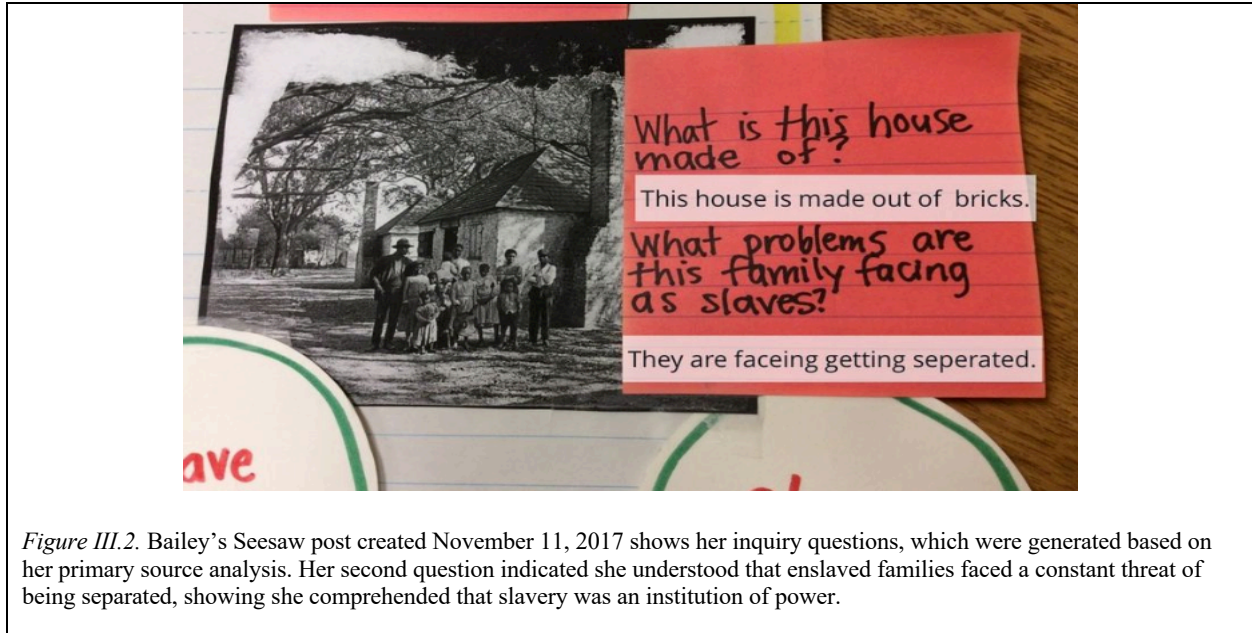
Race. Race was the second most prevalent key concept found in students' artifacts. I applied this code to 32 artifacts (27.1%) created by 15 students during the inquiry. This key concept included two subcodes—*Named African/African Americans* and *Named Whites*—which I applied to 24.6% and 3.4% of all student artifacts, respectively.

Fifteen students incorporated the fact that enslaved men, women, and children in North America were African or African American in their artifacts produced during the inquiry. Students mentioned this when they named that enslaved people were from Africa or by using the terms "African American" or "Black." For example, students wrote the following claims about slavery:

88

- "My claim is that slavery is when *black people* work for White people against their will." Brennan (November 29, 2017)
- "My claim is when you are a slave, *you usually come from Africa* and you get sold to a master." Brian (November 29, 2017)
- "My claim is I think slavery is when *a person gets captured from Africa* and gets taken to America." Cassie (November 29, 2017)

During the inquiry, only four artifacts created included any mention of Whites. This made it one of the least applied subcodes. Created by four different students, these artifacts explicitly named White people as the perpetrators of slavery. In addition to Brennan's claim above, Emily also named Whites in a Seesaw post, explaining that "masters were only *white men*" (November 21, 2018). In addition to these mentions, Allison and Lucy mentioned Whites when analyzing primary source images related to the story of Henry Brown, an enslaved man who mails himself in a box to the free state of Pennsylvania. Allison, for example, explained that the White men in the primary source image are members of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society and will not harm Henry Brown when he arrives in the box: "Those men are the people who are White but free people and who will not hert [sic] him. They will help him. He mailed himself" (November 28, 2017). Lucy, on the other hand, did not understand the scene depicting abolitionists and wrote: "I see whit [sic] people seling [sic] a black pirson [sic]" (November 28, 2017). Beyond these four artifacts, students made no mention of the Whites' role in enslaving African Americans.

After the inquiry. After they completed the inquiry, I again asked students to write or draw responses to its compelling and supporting questions. In addition, Ms. McKinley asked students to photograph and narrate their post-inquiry maps on Seesaw the next school day (see Appendix G for all responses). In this section, I share the results of the analysis to understand how students conceptualized slavery at the end of instruction. For all students, the post-inquiry maps showed that participation in the inquiry helped them arrive at a more complex

understanding of slavery and diminished their inclusion of misconceptions (as shown in Table III.6). Overall, I found that students who completed the post-inquiry concept maps included three of Teaching Tolerance's key concepts on average, with students ranging from including one concept (only Bradley) to including five (only Cassie and John).

Table III.6
Application of Codes to Artifacts Produced After the Inquiry

Code	Number of artifacts	Percentage of artifacts (n=18)	Number of students (n=18)
Teaching Tolerance's key concepts*			
Institution of power	17	94.4%	17
Described violence	12	66.7%	12
Described human ownership	5	27.8%	5
Described slave ships	5	27.8%	5
Described family separation	4	22.2%	4
Described slavery as forced	3	16.7%	3
Economic gain	16	84.2%	16
Mentioned forced labor	15	83.3%	15
Mentioned auctions	2	1.1%	2
Civil War	15	83.3%	15
Race	10	55.6%	10
Named Africans/African Americans	10	55.6%	10
Named Whites	3	16.7%	3
Resistance	3	16.7%	3
Described the Underground Railroad	3	16.7%	3
Mentioned Harriet Tubman	1	<1%	1
Evidence	0	0%	0
Cultural legacy	0	0%	0
Geographic expanse	0	0%	0
Legal sanction	0	0%	0
Varied lived experiences	0	0%	0
Emerging understandings	0	0	0
Misconceptions	1	<1%	1

*Ordered by most frequently occurring key concept

Inclusion of Key Concepts. While all students made use of Teaching Tolerance's key concepts in their post-inquiry concept maps, they only included five of the key concepts: *Institution of power*, *Economic gain*, *Civil War*, *Race*, and *Resistance.* Nearly all students (94.4%) included the key concept *Institution of power*, making it the most frequently applied code before, during, and after the inquiry. However, the second most frequently used concept after the inquiry was *Economic gain*, not *Race*. I applied this code to 84.4% of the post-concept maps (16 students), making it nearly as prevalent as *Institution of power*. Following this, students

were most likely to include that slavery was the central cause of the *Civil War*, which was included by 15 students (83.3% of the class). The next most frequently applied code was *Race*, which was mentioned by just over half the class, or 10 students (55.6%). Three students included mention of African American *Resistance* to slavery (16.7%). Finally, one student included a *Misconception* about slavery.

Institution of power. All but one of the third-grade students wrote about some aspect of power related to slavery in their post-inquiry maps. Additionally, two-thirds of the class explicitly mentioned or described violence (66.7%), making it the most frequently applied subcode related to power after the inquiry. Five of the students described human ownership in their post-concept maps (27.8%), and five students described slave ships (27.8%). A total of four students mentioned family separation as a form of power (22.2%), while only three students named slavery as forced (16.7%).

Students' conceptualizations of power in their post-inquiry maps remained more complex than any other key concepts: On average, students included two subcodes related to power. For example, when narrating his post-inquiry concept map on Seesaw, Cole named slavery as forced and mentioned human ownership, both aspects of power: "Slavery is when African Americans *got taken against their will* and they have a master that, um, want, that *owned them*" (January 19, 2018). Cassie's post-inquiry map included the most robust conceptualization of the ways power operated in slavery as she included four subcodes: violence ("shackles, whip, and dog"), human ownership ("sold people"), slave ships ("slave ship") and family separation ("split families"). By comparison, seven students described power using only one subcode. Of these seven students with more simplistic responses, five of them described power only as it related to violence:

- "*Get whipped* by an overseer." Allison (January 18, 2018)

- "The master could *whip you* and there was an overseer that watched you." Bailey (January 18, 2018)
- "I drew a picture of a slave *getting whipped* because he wasn't doing his work." Cora (January 19, 2018)
- "There is an overseer. He would *whip you* if you wouldn't work." Emily (January 18, 2018)
- "When they're [enslaved people] not doing what they're supposed to be doing they *get whipped* by an overseer." John (January 19, 2018)

Two other students also included one subcode related to power: Bradley mentioned family separation ("Take people from their families; Bad." January 18, 2018) and Layton included the idea of human ownership ("Slavery is where people be owned [sic] by a master." January 18, 2018).

Economic gain. I applied the code *Economic gain* second most frequently to students' post-concept maps. Sixteen students (84.2%) mentioned that slavery involved exploitation of enslaved people for profit. Fifteen of these students—or 83.3% of the class—accomplished this by mentioning forced labor, such as Bailey, who wrote: "Slavery is when you have to work in fields and pick the plants and plant the crops and the master could whip you and there was an overseer that watched you to make sure you were working." Two students mentioned slave auctions, such as Brian, who explained: "When you get to America, you, you go to an auction and when somebody buys you go to a plantation and you work like animals" (January19, 2018).

Civil War. When students responded to the inquiry question "How was our country divided during the Civil War?" on their post-inquiry maps, 15 of them named slavery as the central cause of the war. Brennan explained, for example, that: "Our country was divided during the Civil War. The South wanted slavery, but the North did not. So, the South made a new country. So, Abraham Lincoln declared war" (January 19, 2018).

Race. Ten students—just over half the class—incorporated the concept of race into their post-inquiry concept maps. All 10 of these students named African Americans (e.g., identifying

92

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that enslaved people were from Africa and/or by using the terms African American or Black).

However, only three of these students—John, Lucy, and Noelle—also named Whites in their

post-concept maps:

- "*Whites* treating AA [African Americans] like animals." John (January 18, 2018)
- "Black working for *White* picking crops." Lucy (January 18, 2018)
- "*White people* made Black people to work." Noelle (January 18, 2018)

Resistance. I applied the code *Resistance* least often to students' post-inquiry maps; only

three students—Brian, Cassie, and John—included this concept (16.7%). All three students

mentioned or described the Underground Railroad, while only Cassie also mentioned Harriet

Tubman:

- "Underground Railroad; Harriet Tubman." Cassie (January 18, 2018)
- "Some slaves went on the Underground Railroad. So that's why I drew two little guys right there and running away. It was not really underground, and it was not a railroad. It was just called the Underground Railroad to throw the masters off." Brian (January 19, 2018)
- "Big Dipper; Little Dipper." John (January 18, 2018)

***Emerging understandings and misconception*s**. On the whole, students' post-inquiry

concept maps contained more accurate conceptualizations of slavery than the artifacts created

before and during the inquiry. I did, however, apply the code *Misconception* to a response from

Rebecca. On her post-inquiry concept map, she included a concept bubble that read "lazy

masters." When I asked her during an interview about what she meant, she explained that

"masters are lazy because they don't work out in the fields and they would have to get people to

do stuff that they could just do themselves and they have to get slaves" (January 18, 2018). By

indicating that slavery existed simply because of Whites' poor work ethics, Rebecca may not

have fully grasped the greater sociopolitical, legal, and economic forces that sustained it,

although that is difficult to determine from this single response.

Findings Part 2: Learning Pathways

My analyses revealed that the students in Ms. McKinley's class followed one of five learning pathways as they developed a more robust understanding of slavery, as shown in Figure III.3. These pathways emerged from my application of the codes *Institution of power* (e.g., describing human ownership, violence, etc.) and *Race* (e.g., African American, White, etc.) to artifacts created before, during, and after the inquiry. In the following sections, I provide a description of each learning pathway, noting the general ways students' understandings of slavery progressed. Then, I present an exemplar student from each pathway and trace their development throughout the inquiry in greater depth. When possible, I selected a focal student to share as a pathway exemplar, since the interview data provides further insight into their thinking. If a pathway contained multiple focal students, I briefly compared their work and selected the student who seemed to best represent the learning pathway, oftentimes selecting the student with the least amount of missing data. For a summary of the learning pathways, please see Table III.7.

Table III.7
Learning Pathways Overview

Learning Pathway	Students
1. Students with initial misconceptions	Chelsea, Emily*, Kash, Kaylee, and Lucy*
2. Students with initial emerging understanding	Bailey, Cole, and Will*
3. Slavery as an institution of power	Blake*, Brennan, Brian, Cassie*, and John*
4. Slavery as power and race	Allison*, Noelle, Rebecca*
5. No mention of race	Bradley, Cora, Layton

*Focal student

94

Figure III.3. Learning Pathways

Code Application by Learning Pathway

X	Applied "Insitution of Power" and "Race" codes
X	Applied "Race," but not "Instituion of Power" code
X	Applied "Insitution of Power," but not "Race" code
X	Applied neither "Institution of Power" nor "Race" codes
EU	Applied "Emerging Understanding" code only
MIS	Applied "Misconception" code only
X	Artifact Missing
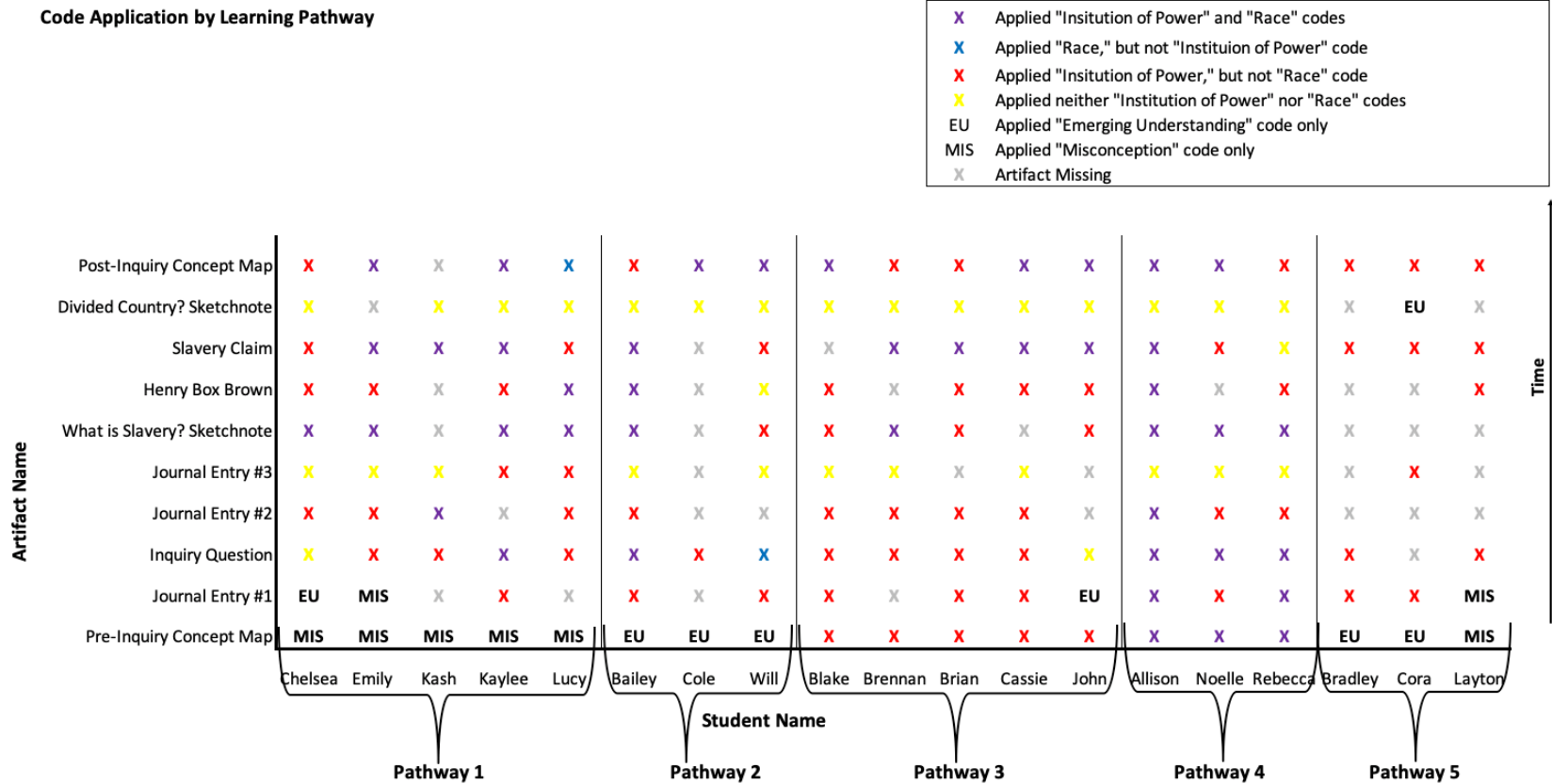
Figure III.3. As students progressed through their inquiry about slavery, they followed one of five pathways as they developed a more accurate conceptualization of slavery in North America as a racialized institution of power.

Learning Pathway 1: Students with initial misconceptions. Learning Pathway 1 (LP1) contains five students—Chelsea, Emily, Kash, Kaylee, and Lucy—who began the inquiry with a misconception about slavery (e.g., slavery is war), then began to understand slavery as an institution of power (e.g., slavery is when you are taken against your will), and by the end of the inquiry incorporated the concept of race and the concept of power into their understanding of slavery (e.g., slavery is people being stolen from Africa). Students in LP1 began the inquiry with the least background knowledge about slavery as evidenced by their responses on the pre-inquiry concept map. As students began the inquiry, they quickly revised their misconceptions with definitions of slavery that focused on slavery as an institution of power, describing the ways enslaved peoples were controlled and organized within society; however, they did not mention race. After more instruction, however, all five students in LP1 began to incorporate race into their conceptualizations of slavery. A typical progression for students in LP 1 is shown through Emily's artifacts in Figure III.4 and described in the next section.

Figure III.4. LP1: Emily's Developing Conceptualization of Slavery

1. People fighting; Fighting because like, um, it's like basically like people not agreeing.

2. Slavery is **a master buys you to work** [sic]. People work for their master.

3. **You get captured** and you have no choice to leave. **You get sold** by an overseer. You work until day-night . . .

4. In 1619 slavery was allowed . . . You would go on a ship. **You'd get shackled** to it and you **would get captured**. And then **slavery is people buying you to work** all night 'til day . . . The master who is the boss of you. <u>**Masters were only White men**</u> and if the master name [sic] was Steven, that would be your last name . . . Next one you'll get sold in an auction.

5. My claim is that <u>**African American people get stole**</u> [sic] from their place and go to America. **You get captured** . . .

6. Slavery is like people working, <u>**only Black people had to work**</u>. There was an overseer. **He would whip you if you wouldn't work** . . .

Time

Figure III.4. Selected excerpts from Emily's classwork show a typical progression for students in LP1 from misconceptions about slavery (1), to describing slavery as an institution of power (2-3), to describing race and power (4-6). **Bold print** indicates language related to power; <u>**underlined bold print**</u> indicates language related to race.

96

Emily: Slavery is "people fighting." Emily, a White student with light blond hair who favored wearing baseball hats and dayglo athletic clothes, showed a learning progression typical for students in LP1. Throughout third grade, Emily received Title 1 services to support her reading development, which was below grade-level benchmarks. In addition to challenges with reading, Emily also had challenges with sustaining her attention during class, which prompted Ms. McKinley to provide her with two desks: one for sitting and one for standing. During lessons, Emily would move quietly between them anytime she felt the need to move and refocus. Although she enjoyed being boisterous during recess while playing sports, Emily was quiet during instruction and often hesitant at the beginning of our interviews. During our conversations early in the school year, Emily told me she sometimes talked with her twin sister about social studies at home. While Emily reported that she enjoyed an immigration station simulation she participated in during second grade, she had difficulty identifying social studies topics that interested her or that she wanted to pursue further.

Before the inquiry. Emily began the inquiry with little background knowledge about slavery. On her pre-inquiry concept map, Emily responded that slavery is "poeple fiting [people fighting]" (November 1, 2017). During our interview about her concept map, I asked her to share more about her thinking. Although she knew slavery had something to do with "Forced Immigration"—which was the printed title of the concept map I provided students—the interview made it clear Emily did not yet have an accurate conceptualization of slavery specifically:

Researcher: How do people fight during slavery? What does that mean?
Emily: Like forced immigration.
Researcher: Like forced immigration and, um, what is forced immigration?
Emily: Like when you get forced to move.

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Researcher: So, slavery has something to do with being forced to move. Can you say something about what it has to do with fighting?

Emily: Fighting because like, um, it's like basically like people not agreeing.
                                                      (Interview, November 1, 2017)

Later in the interview, I presented Emily with an image of a slave auction (Bibb, 1849). She thought the image showed people being arrested and sent to jail, and she inferred that the enslaved mother in the image felt mad because she wanted to get out of jail.

During the inquiry. As the inquiry lessons began, Emily began to understand that slavery was an institution of power that involved forced labor and ownership of humans. After she analyzed a primary source of a slave auction in class, she summarized her analysis in a Seesaw post. In that post, she explicitly described slavery as human ownership saying: "Slavery is a *master buys you to work*. People work for their master" (November 11, 2017). A few days later, when Ms. McKinley asked students to respond to the inquiry question "What is slavery?" in their journals as a formative assessment, Emily's language choices to describe power intensified: "*You get captured* and you have no choice to leave. *You get sold by an overseer*. You work until day-night. If you are a slave, you only get two meals a day" (November 14, 2017). In addition to now seeing slavery as forced, Emily identified other ways enslaved people were organized and controlled, such as enduring grueling work schedules and receiving meager food rations. Yet, despite her growing knowledge base, Emily's classwork about slavery did not include any mention of race until the third week of the inquiry.

After developing an understanding of slavery as an institution of power, Emily began to incorporate ideas about race into her writing. Emily first mentioned race in a Seesaw audio recording to narrate her sketchnotes drawing in response to the question "What is slavery?" On that recording, Emily continued to speak fluently about slavery as an institution of power and also incorporated the idea of race as part of her conceptualization of slavery:

In 1619 slavery was allowed. Then, you would sail around America to get to the place where slaves are. You would go on a ship. *You'd get shackled to it and you would get captured.* And then *slavery is people buying you to work all night 'til day.* You would only get two meals a day. The master who is the boss of you. *Masters were only White men* and if the master name [sic] was Steven, that would be your last name. Next one you'll get sold in an auction. *Someone would buy you, like a White man, and then you would work* like picking up cotton or something like that. (November 21, 2017)

Here, Emily noted race and gender criteria for slave masters as "only White men" and she showed a further developed understanding of slavery as an institution of power, adding details about slave ships.

In her last journal assignment about slavery, Emily returned to the ideas of power and race. For the journal assignment, Ms. McKinley asked students to write a claim, evidence, and reasoning about slavery. In her claim, Emily explicitly stated that enslaved people were Africans, but in this post, she did not mention Whites. Her language choices about slavery continued to intensify; she argued that enslaved people are "stole" and forced to endure "terrible" conditions aboard ships:

My claim is that *African American people get stole* [sic] from their place and go to America. You get captured. *I found the boat has terrible conditions.* You get trapped for 23 hours and 1 hour for free air. I know this is true because my class and I read a lot of books. (November 29, 2017)

After several weeks of participating in the inquiry, Emily's claim defined slavery as both forced and racialized, thoroughly replacing her initial conceptualization of slavery as people fighting.

After the inquiry. When the inquiry ended, Emily responded to the question "What is slavery?" on her concept map by illustrating aspects of power, as shown in Figure III.5. In her narration of this illustration on Seesaw, Emily again named slavery as racialized and forced, noting that only Black people were slaves and that they were controlled by fear of violence: "Slavery is like people working, *only Black people had to work*. There was an overseer. *He*

would whip you if you wouldn't work. The slaves had to work in the master's house" (January 19, 2018).

Figure III.5. Emily's Post-Inquiry Map
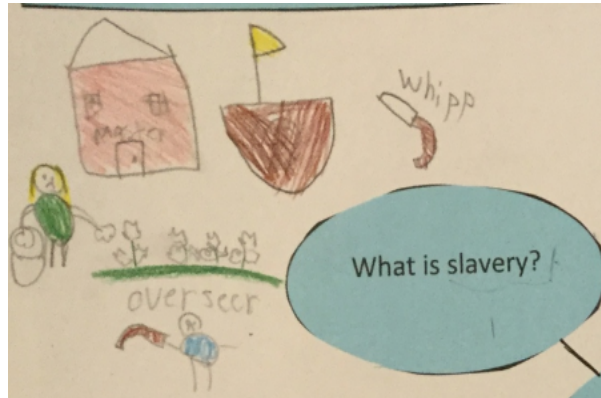
Figure III.5. Emily's post-inquiry concept map depicts a slave ship, an enslaved person working in a field, an overseer supervising labor and holding a whip, and a master's house, indicating she understood slavery as an institution of power.

During our end-of-inquiry interview, I spoke with Emily again about the slave auction image, which she previously thought depicted a jail scene. Emily identified the image as depicting a slave auction immediately. She explained that she thought the mother in the image may have resisted slavery by trying to escape the South with her baby, but that she was captured in her escape attempt and brought to the auction to be sold as punishment. When I asked Emily to infer the enslaved woman's feelings, she still contended that the enslaved woman might be feeling mad as she did in our earlier interview, but unlike her response at the beginning of the inquiry, she contextualized the woman's feelings more accurately:

Emily:	She is sad because someone found her, and they are taking her to a slave auction.
Researcher:	What kind of feelings might she be having?
Emily:	Sad and mad because she's getting seld [sold] and he's holding her baby like that.

(Interview, January 24, 2018)

As we discussed how the enslaved woman's life might be different if she were living today, Emily noted she would be able to work for money and that she would not endure the segregation of the 20th century:

Researcher: If she was living today, Emily, how would her life be different?
Emily: Maybe she could get money and get a job and she wouldn't have to go to different schools or restaurants.

(Interview, January 24, 2018)

This response shows that Emily traced some of the racist oppression African Americans faced from slavery through segregation. However, when I asked her how the enslaved woman's life would be the *same* if she were living today, Emily replied she didn't know, which suggested that she had difficulty contextualizing the experiences of African American people in American society today.

Learning Pathway 2: Students with emerging understandings. Learning Pathway 2 (LP2) includes three students—Bailey, Cole, and Will—who began the inquiry with an emerging understanding of slavery (e.g., people that are working for other people). Similar to the students in LP1, these students revised their understandings to first include ideas related to slavery as an institution of power (e.g., slavery is people that are getting captured), before ultimately incorporating the concept of both race and power into their artifacts about slavery. A typical learning progression for students in LP2 is shown through Will's artifacts in Figure III.6.

Figure III.6. LP2: Will's Developing Conceptualization of Slavery

1. Slavery is making other people work.

2. I'm going be telling you about my slavery image . . . It's a map that shows a lot of people immigrating to help with crops . . . My questions about this image are: Are the slaves helping with crops? Yes, they are because it shows you where they got taken and what crops they're helping with. Um, there's another question: Why don't slaves get paid? **Slaves don't get paid because they're slaves.**

3. So, slavery is, is **when you're being taken against your will.** First, **slaves get checked and then shackled.** They go on the boat and then go to work on the field. There is a **slave quarter, which is the slaves' house** . . .

4. My claim is that **slavery is being taken against your will** . . . I conclude slavery is a very bad thing.

5. Slavery is when people **are taken against their will <u>from Africa</u>** and I drew . . . a slave working in the field and with an overseer basically on a horse, like **watching and making sure they won't run away** . . .

Time

Figure III.6. Selected excerpts from Will's classwork show a typical progression for students in LP2 from an emerging understanding about slavery (1), to describing slavery as an institution of power (2-4), to describing race and power (5). **Bold print** indicates language related to power; **<u>underlined bold print</u>** indicates language describing race.

Will: "Slavery is making other people work." Will, whose thinking I share here for LP2, is a White student who read on-grade level at the beginning of third grade according to Ms. McKinley's benchmarks. Typically, Will stayed on task during class and participated frequently in whole-class discussions. He lived in the country and often talked to me about his adventures dirt biking in the open space around his home. Although he was always willing to speak with me about social studies topics at school, he reported that he did not think much about social studies outside of school or remember talking to his family about African American history.

Before the inquiry. Like his peers in this pathway, Will knew that slavery related to labor, but did not fully express that it was forced in his pre-inquiry concept map. "Slavery is making other people work" he argued, and he added an illustration that depicted a man pulling a rock to help build a house (November 1, 2017). As we talked about the image of a slave auction (Bibb, 1849) during our pre-inquiry interview, Will studied the image closely and made reasonable inferences about the feelings of the enslaved mother:

Will:	Um, they are trying to get people to buy slaves [points to a sign in the image that says "Slave Sale"].
Researcher:	So, as you look at this image, I'm just wondering, um, I want you to think about what she might be feeling [points to enslaved mother in the image].
Will:	Very scared and sad.
Researcher:	Why do you think she's feeling that way?
Will:	Um like she's asking them to not let her be a slave and give back her baby.

(Interview, November 1, 2017)

However, when I asked Will to contextualize how the enslaved mother's life might be different or similar to today, it was clear he only thought about slavery in terms of labor:

Researcher:	And if she was living today, how would her life be different?
Will:	Um, she wouldn't have to be in slavery.
Researcher:	How might her life be the same though?
Will:	She might still have to do a lot of work though.
Researcher:	And why might she have to do a lot of work?
Will:	Um, not sure.

(Interview, November 1, 2017)

During the inquiry. In his first journal entry in response to the inquiry question "What is slavery?" Will wrote: "Slavery is when people are taken from their will [sic] and they didn't get paid" (November 7, 2017), suggesting he began to understand that slavery involved forced labor for economic gain. However, despite appearing to know that slavery was forced, Will mistakenly referred to enslaved Africans as "immigrants" when sharing his analysis of a map of the transatlantic slave trade on Seesaw several days later:

I'm going be telling you about my slavery image I analyzed. So, who is in this image? It's a map that shows how *Africans immigrated. People immigrating to help with crops.* My questions about this image are: Are the slaves helping with crops? Yes, they are because it shows you where they got taken and what crops there they're helping with. Um, there's another question: Why don't slaves get paid? Slaves don't get paid because they're slaves. (November 11, 2017).

Although he acknowledged that slaves did not get paid at the end of the post, his mistake of calling enslaved people immigrants prompted Ms. McKinley to leave the following comment on his Seesaw post: "Will, nice job analyzing your historical image, creating your questions, and

researching to answer them. You say that Africans immigrated. Is it immigration or forced immigration? How do you know?" (November 12, 2017)

Will clarified that slavery was forced in his later work. In his sketchnotes journal response to the question "What is slavery?" he described slavery as forced and described ways enslaved people were controlled and organized on slave ships:

> So, I'm telling you about "What is slavery?" So, slavery is, is *when you're being taken against your will*. First, *slaves get checked and then shackled*. Then you go on the boat and then go to work on the field. (November 21, 2017)

This response shows a more developed understanding of slavery than his earlier conceptualization of enslaved people as unpaid "immigrants" taken to "help" with crops. However, Will does not name enslaved people as African/African American, nor does he identify who is doing the taking, checking, and shackling in his description.

Will continued to describe slavery as forced when writing his claim: "My claim is that *slavery is being taken against your will*. My proof is we read books, watched videos and other things about slavery. I conclude slavery is a very bad thing" (November 29, 2017).

After the inquiry. On this post-inquiry concept map Seesaw post, however, Will mentioned race by naming that slaves are people taken from Africa. He also added the conception of power by illustrating forced labor:

> Slavery is when people *are taken against their will from Africa* and I drew a little picture of like, um, people—like a slave working in the field and with an overseer basically on a horse, like *watching and making sure they won't run away* or they don't do anything. (January 19, 2018)

This mention of race in his work shows Will's thinking about the racial element of slavery progressed throughout the inquiry, although in a slightly less linear fashion than Emily in LP1; and, unlike Emily, Will does not mention Whites in any of his artifacts.

During our post-inquiry interview, Will indicated he still thought about the enslaved woman in the auction image (Bibb, 1849) in terms of her role as a mother and a laborer. However, he did not express how her race might have impacted her life:

Researcher: If she [enslaved mother in the image] was living today, somewhere in the United States, how would her life be different?
Will: Um, it would be, be different because she would probably be a mom or grandma and she . . . she wouldn't be a slave . . . and yeah.
Researcher: So, we know there's no slavery, so she would no longer be a slave, but if she was living today in the United States, how might her life be the same?
Will: Um, she still would do some work cause if you're a Grandma you still do some work. Like working in the kitchen and stuff.
                                                                    (Interview, January 24, 2018)

Similar to Emily (LP1), Will did not mention race as a variable that shapes and influences lived experiences in contemporary society. This omission set these two focal students (and others in their pathways) apart from the focal students in Learning Pathways 3 and 4.

Learning Pathway 3: Slavery as an institution of power. Unlike students in LP1 or LP2, students in Learning Pathway 3 (LP3)—Blake, Brennan, Brian, Cassie, and John—included some aspect of slavery as an institution of power (e.g., slavery is people who are "forced to do stuff") in their pre-inquiry concept map response. Like the students in the previous two pathways, they also moved through a learning progression where they first noted ways that slavery involved power, and then later began to mention race as well. A typical learning progression for students in LP3 is shown through John's artifacts in Figure III.7 and described in the next section.

Figure III.7. LP3: John's Developing Conceptualization of Slavery

1. **People being forced to do stuff.**

2. In slavery, there's slave auctions and **people in their family gets taken away from them and their family gets split up.** And then also on the slave plantation **you have to pick cotton and corn and it is not fun, and you have to work all day.**

3. So, slavery is, is **when you're being taken against your will.** First, **slaves get checked and then shackled.** They go on the boat and then go to work on the field. There is a slave quarter, which is the slaves' house . . .

4. My claim is that slavery is <u>**Africans**</u> **are getting treated unfairly**. My proof is that <u>**Africans**</u> **go to plantations and work all day**, no stopping.

5. <u>**African Americans**</u>; **They were forced** <u>**from Africa**</u>; <u>**Whites treating AA**</u> [African Americans] **like animals.**

Time (label along arrow)

Figure III.7. Selected excerpts from John's classwork show a typical progression for students in LP3 from a describing slavery as an institution of power (1-3), to describing race and power (4-5). **Bold print** indicates language related to power; <u>**underlined bold print**</u> indicates language describing race.

John: Slavery is "people being forced to do stuff." John, a White student with bright red hair and freckles, read above-grade level at the start of third grade. Prior to third grade, the Basswood School designated John as a talented and gifted student, and he received weekly pull-out support designed to extend his thinking in math. John did not report discussing social studies much outside of school with his friends or family during our conversations.

Before the inquiry. On his pre-inquiry concept map, John wrote that slavery was "People being forced to do stuff" (November 1, 2017). This showed that John had some background knowledge about slavery as a system of power (e.g., people are being forced to work). However, during our pre-inquiry interview, John showed some confusion about race. For example, he confused African Americans with Indigenous Peoples in the following exchange:

Researcher: Which of these questions [gestures to inquiry questions on concept map] are you most excited to learn about?
John: Um, how African Americans brought their cultural contributions to [our state].
Researcher: Tell me more about what sounds interesting about studying that.
John: Because, um, they gave us a lot of stuff and helped the Pilgrims while they came.

Researcher: The African Americans?

John: Um-huh and they were in [our state] and helped them make more of [it].

<div align="right">(Interview, November 1, 2017)</div>

As we moved to discussing the image of the slave auction (Bibb, 1849), John deduced that the image related to "making people slaves" and talked about the possibility of families being separated. He explained that: "if one of their family members has to be a slave, then they would lose their family members" (November 1, 2017). While this showed more background knowledge than Emily (LP1) or Will (LP2) seemed to have about slave auctions during their pre-inquiry interviews, John was also initially no better at noting the similarities and differences between the life of an enslaved African American and an African American person living in society today:

Researcher: If they were living today, if this woman was living today, how might her life be different?

John: Um, if she was in America we, um, don't have slaves and it just, um, nobody gets hurt a lot of times and um, nobody can tell them what to do.

Researcher: And how might her life be the same if she was living today?

John: Um, if she was living in a different continent where they did have slavery, she could be another slave again.

Researcher: Let's imagine she was living in [your state]. Think about her life back then and her life today; would there be anything similar for her?

John: Um, no.

<div align="right">(Interview, November 1, 2017)</div>

During the inquiry. In his first journal entry in response to the question "What is slavery?" John offered a vague conception of slavery. He wrote, "Slavery is when you are treated unfairly" (November 7, 2017). While it's unclear what he deemed unfair treatment from that short entry, he later expanded his ideas during a Seesaw audio recording, where he described slavery as an institution of power in which enslaved people were separated from families and forced to labor:

In slavery, there's slave auctions and *people in their family gets taken away from them and their family gets split up*. And then also on the slave plantation *you have to pick cotton and corn and it is not fun and you have to work all day . . .* (November 21, 2017)

Similar to Emily (LP1) and Will (LP2), it is only once John conceptualizes slavery as a system of power that he begins to write about race. John specifically names slaves as Africans who received the unfair treatment of their labor conditions: "My claim is that slavery is *Africans are getting treated unfairly*. My proof is that *Africans go to plantations and work all day, no stopping*" (November 29, 2017).

After the inquiry. On his post-concept map, John continued to describe slavery in more racialized terms, adding the following five ideas—three of which relate to race—in response to the question "What is slavery?":

- *African Americans*
- *They were forced from Africa*
- The Big Dipper
- Little Dipper
- *Whites treating AA [African Americans] like animals (*January 19, 2018)

Through reading this short, highly racialized list, it is clear that John solidified his conceptualization of slavery as the mistreatment of African Americans by Whites.

John continued with this theme of racialized mistreatment in our post-inquiry interview. As we talked about the Bibb (1849) image, John explicitly noted the race of the enslaved mother in the photograph. He then inferred she might be thinking that the White men in the image are mean, showing that he now contextualized the historical actors in the image through a racial lens:

Researcher: What do you know about her? [points to enslaved mother in the image] What was her life like?
John: *[She's] African American*. Maybe she was, she was, either born a slave and then she's getting traded right here or she just got taken from Africa. And maybe the other African Americans are part of her family and she's sad.
Researcher: What might she be thinking?

John: *She's probably would be thinking, like, "These Whites are mean, I wish I was still in Africa."* And maybe, "I wish I was still with my family and that we were never separated."

<div align="right">(Interview, January 24, 2018)</div>

Unlike Emily (LP1) and Will (LP2), John used his knowledge of African American history to make inferences about experiences of African American people living today. When I asked him to think about how the enslaved woman's life might be similar or different if she were living today, he speculated that although the oppressions of slavery, segregation, sharecropping, and lack of voting rights were legally remedied in the 20th century, an African American woman living today might still fear Whites due to these past oppressions:

Researcher: Let's imagine she was alive today in 2018. How might her life be different today?

John: She could go to school with Whites, they wouldn't be hurting her because *there is no slavery. There would be no segregation, no lack of voting rights, and no sharecropping.*

Researcher: And what about her life would be the same if she were living today?

John: Um, there would still be Whites, so she might be nervous if like she was in this age even if she's still farther from slavery, segregation and all that.

Researcher: Hmm, tell me more about how she might be nervous.

John: *She might think the Whites* are going to hurt her or something and, um, that she might get punished just for doing something with a White.

<div align="right">(Interview, January 24, 2018)</div>

Later in the interview, when I asked John if his ancestors were involved with any of the history we studied during the "Forced Immigration" inquiry specifically, he told me he was curious to talk to his African American friends about their heritage and ancestors; however, he worried that bringing up painful racial injustices of the past might make his friends suspect he is in favor of racism or make them feel sad:

John: Some of my friends are African Americans and it just makes you wonder if some of their ancestors had to go through this.

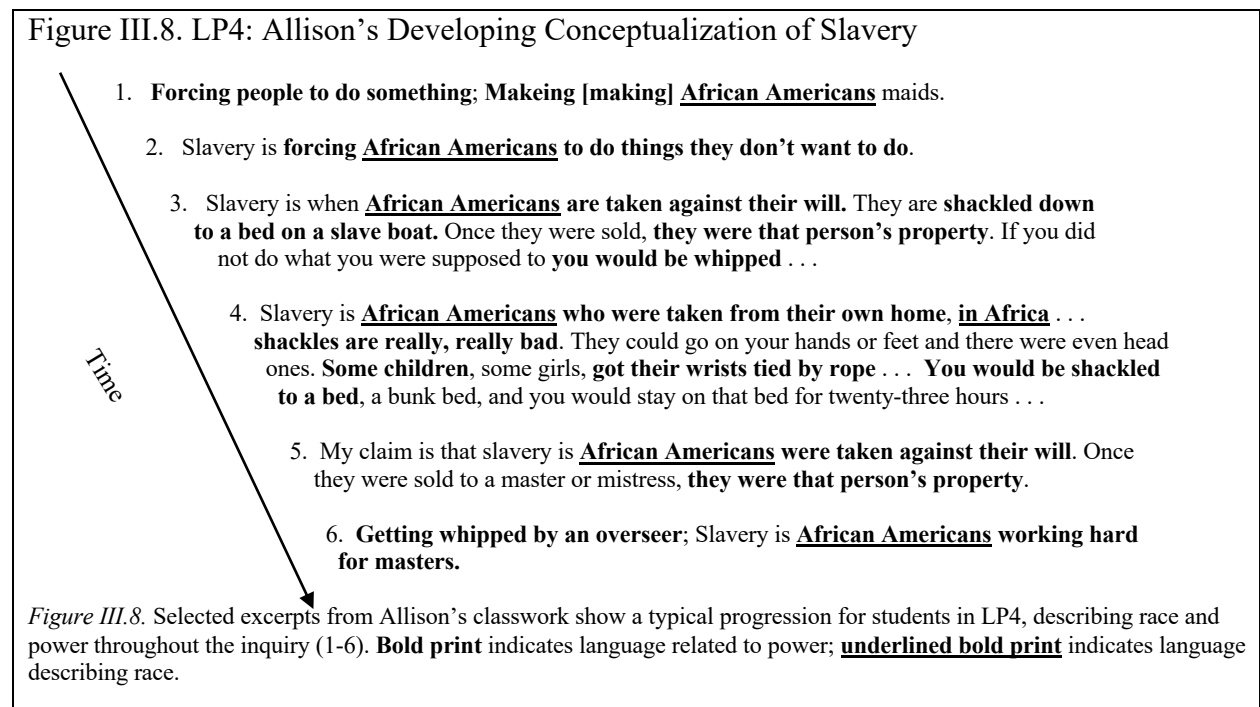Researcher: Have you ever asked your friends about it?

John: No.

Researcher: But it's something you're curious about?

John: Yes, I just also don't want to be like, snooping around them and like asking them about everything.

Researcher: Yeah. Do you think it might make them feel something?

John: Um, maybe.

Researcher: How might it make them feel?

John: *Just that, um, it might make them feel like maybe I want it or something like that*, or maybe, um, *it would make them feel sad because they remember their ancestors that had to go through it.*

(Interview, January 24, 2018)

Learning Pathway 4: Slavery as power and race. Students in Learning Pathway 4 (LP4) began the inquiry with a conceptualization of slavery that students in the previous three pathways spent weeks working towards: one that explicitly named power and race as being central to how slavery operated in America. On their pre-inquiry concept maps, all three of these students—Allison, Noelle, and Rebecca—accurately identified enslaved people as African Americans or Black people and mentioned that slavery was an institution of power (e.g., "slavery is Black people with no rights"). A typical learning progression for students in LP4 is shown through Allison's artifacts in Figure III.8.

Figure III.8. LP4: Allison's Developing Conceptualization of Slavery

1. **Forcing people to do something**; **Makeing [making]** <u>**African Americans**</u> maids.

2. Slavery is **forcing** <u>**African Americans**</u> **to do things they don't want to do**.

3. Slavery is when <u>**African Americans**</u> **are taken against their will.** They are **shackled down to a bed on a slave boat.** Once they were sold, **they were that person's property**. If you did not do what you were supposed to **you would be whipped** . . .

4. Slavery is <u>**African Americans**</u> **who were taken from their own home**, <u>**in Africa**</u> . . . **shackles are really, really bad**. They could go on your hands or feet and there were even head ones. **Some children**, some girls, **got their wrists tied by rope** . . . **You would be shackled to a bed**, a bunk bed, and you would stay on that bed for twenty-three hours . . .

5. My claim is that slavery is <u>**African Americans**</u> **were taken against their will**. Once they were sold to a master or mistress, **they were that person's property**.

6. **Getting whipped by an overseer**; Slavery is <u>**African Americans**</u> **working hard for masters.**

Time

Figure III.8. Selected excerpts from Allison's classwork show a typical progression for students in LP4, describing race and power throughout the inquiry (1-6). **Bold print** indicates language related to power; <u>**underlined bold print**</u> indicates language describing race.

110

Allison: Slavery is "forcing people to do something, making African Americans

maids." Allison is a White student who read on-grade level at the start of third grade. She was an

engaged student and participated in class discussions frequently. Allison had a keen interest in

science; she told me her favorite hobby at home was writing informational books about various

science topics and explained that her parents let her do research online.

Before the inquiry. Students in LP4 possessed the most background knowledge about

slavery before the inquiry, something Allison exemplified. From reading her pre-inquiry concept

map and speaking to her during our first interview, it became clear to me that Allison understood

slavery in America was a racialized system of power. On her pre-inquiry concept map, she

responded to the inquiry question "What is slavery?" by writing: "Makeing [making] people do

things; Forcing people to do something; Makeing [making] African Americans maids"

(November 1, 2017). During our interview, when I asked her about this response, Allison said

she was unsure of all the jobs an enslaved person might do, but she was firm in her idea that

slavery was forced and that enslaved people sometimes helped with housework.

During our discussion of the auction image (Bibb, 1849), it became clear to me that she

possessed background knowledge about racism, which she leveraged as she made sense of the

image; however, she didn't specifically name *who* perpetrated racism and had difficulty

understanding *why* it was directed at Black people:

Researcher:	I want you to think about this woman [points to enslaved woman in the image]. Um, what do you think her life was like?
Allison:	*Hard. I think it was hard 'cause she was Black and people didn't appreciate them for their skin.*
Researcher:	And . . . say a little more about people not appreciating them for their skin.
Allison:	*I think that they are wanting people in their own country; just white skin, not black. They don't want any Black people, babies, grownups, anyone.*
Researcher:	*Why might some White people not want Black people around?*
Allison:	*Because . . . I don't know.*

Additionally, although Allison identified there was racism in the past, she argued that this changed due to the civil rights movement, and she could not name any hardships faced by African Americans in contemporary society:

Researcher:	If she was alive today, how might her life be the same?
Allison:	She's always going to have black skin.
Researcher:	If you have black skin back then you're a slave, but what about having black skin today?
Allison:	*Now, now they don't care what skin you have they, 'cause back then if you had black [skin], you had to give up your seat on the bus, but Rosa Parks didn't and so then, so then, she went to jail, and so then Black people couldn't ride the bus for a year.*
Researcher:	Do you think there are any hardships black people faced back then that they still face today?
Allison:	Um . . . they . . . I don't know.

<div align="right">(Interview, November 2, 2017)</div>

During the inquiry. Allison continued to include the concepts of power and race throughout the artifacts she created during the inquiry at a rate that outpaced her peers. In fact, in all of her classwork that mentioned slavery as an institution of power, she also mentioned race. For example, in her first journal entry she responded to the question "What is slavery?" by writing that "Slavery is *forcing African Americans to do things they don't want to do*" (November 7, 2017). A week later, by the time of her second journal entry in response to the same question, Allison described aspects of power in greater detail—noting that slaves were shackled, controlled through violence, forced to work without rest, and considered property— and she also continued to mention that enslaved people were African Americans:

> Slavery is when *African Americans are taken against their will*. They are *shackled down to a bed on a slave boat*. Once they were sold *they were that person's property. If you did not do what you were supposed to you would be whipped.* If you were pregnant, you would still have to work, no resting . . . (November 14, 2017)

112

As the inquiry progressed, Allison continued to include more specific details about slavery as an institution of power. By the third week of the inquiry, she explained further how people—including children—were kidnapped from Africa and described the conditions they faced aboard slave ships in greater detail:

> Slavery is African Americans who were taken from their own home, in Africa, and they were taken to South America, but some got to go to North America . . . Shackles are really, really bad. They could go on your hands or feet and there were even head ones. Some children, some girls, got their wrists tied by rope, and then they hooked a younger one—I've seen this in a picture—on the neck and then on the arms . . . You would be shackled to a bed, a bunk bed, and you would stay on that bed for twenty-three hours. Why did I say twenty-three and not twenty-four? Because they only got to go up there [on deck] for one hour. And then I'm wondering if you had to go to the bathroom; there's no bathroom. You had to go on the bed. I know, gross, especially if you were on the bottom one [bed]. Yuck! (November 21, 2017)

However, up to this point in her classwork, Allison did not name Whites or mention who was committing these violent and inhumane acts against African Americans, despite showing some awareness of this during our pre-inquiry interview conversation.

Towards the end of the inquiry, Allison does incorporate Whites into one of her classroom artifacts: her response to primary source images related to the story of Henry Brown. As I mentioned earlier, Allison wrote the following to explain the image of Brown emerging from a crate surrounded by several White abolitionists: "Those men are the people who are White but free people and who will not hert [sic] him. They will help him. He mailed himself" (November 28, 2017). This indicated that Allison distinguished White historical actors between those who hurt African Americans and those who did not.

The next school day, when writing her claim about slavery, Allison continued to describe power and race. However, she returned to only naming African Americans and obscured the role of Whites through the use of passive voice and the terms "master" and "mistress": "My claim is

113

that slavery is *African Americans were taken against their will. Once they were sold to a master or mistress, they were that person's property*" (November 29, 2017).

After the inquiry. On her post-inquiry concept map, Allison wrote that slavery is "African Americans working hard for masters; getting whipped by an overseer" (January 19, 2018). Allison's response about slavery here is very similar to her pre-inquiry concept map ("Makeing [making] people do things; Forcing people to do something; Makeing [making] African Americans maids"); however, she incorporated more specific vocabulary such as "master" and "overseers" and explicitly mentioned enslaved people were controlled through violence at the end of the inquiry.

During our post-inquiry interview, I asked Allison to infer the feelings of the enslaved mother in the Bibb (1849) image and, like during our initial interview, she incorporated the concept of race when describing the scene:

Researcher:	What do you think this woman is feeling? [points to enslaved mother in the image]
Allison:	Very, very sad and devastating.
Researcher:	Is she is feeling very, very sad and devastated—why do you think she might be feeling that way?
Allison:	Because her babe could be sold to a *White man* and she could be sold to someone else.

(Interview, January 24, 2018)

This comment suggests that Allison readily identified Whites as the oppressors in North American slavery, as she could before the inquiry began.

When I asked Allison to consider the differences between the woman in the image and a woman living today, she provided an answer similar to Emily (LP1), arguing that conditions have improved since the time of segregation:

Researcher:	If she was living today, somewhere in the United States, how would her life be different today?

Allison: *Probably being able to have a good life. People not shouting at you, like go away this is a white school.*

<div align="right">(Interview, January 24, 2018)</div>

When I asked Allison to consider the similarities for the woman across the historical and contemporary context, she identified the woman's race would be the same, but failed to contextualize experiences for African American people today:

Researcher: And do you think anything might be the same for her today?
Allison: *Yeah, she'd still be black.*
Researcher: She should still be black, but then what would that mean for her? Would anything be the same for her if she were living today?
Allison: *[shakes head] Not really.*

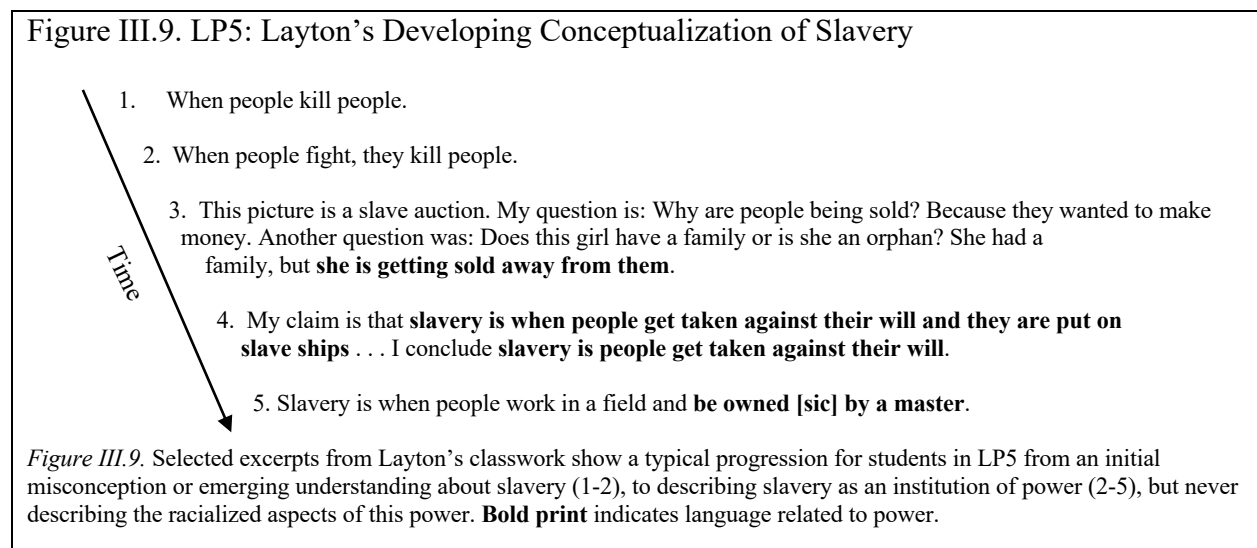<div align="right">(Interview, January 24, 2018)</div>

This exchange was similar to one with Allison at the beginning of the inquiry: I asked if African Americans still faced hardships today and she replied: "Um . . . they . . . I don't know" (November 2, 2017).

Learning Pathway 5: No mention of race. Students in the final learning pathway—Learning Pathway 5 (LP5)—follow roughly the same progression as the others. They begin with misconceptions or emerging understandings of slavery before the inquiry and then solidify the concept of power. However, unlike the students in the previous four pathways, students in LP5 never mentioned race in their classroom artifacts.

However, it is important to note that I collected less data from the students in LP5 overall. I only collected and analyzed three artifacts from Bradley and four artifacts from both Layton and Cora produced during the inquiry. By comparison, this is roughly half of the data I collected from the three students in LP4. For Bradley and Layton, the missing data is due to attending a special education class during the day. This meant they were often out of Ms. McKinley's room during lessons related to the social studies content. Cora, on the other hand,

missed instruction due to frequent absences from school during this portion of the inquiry. Unfortunately, I did not include any of these students in interviews, so I have no insight into their understandings of slavery beyond their concept maps and limited classwork. Yet, based on what I was able to analyze, I found similarities in how these students developed their conceptualizations of slavery. I share Layton's progression in Figure III.9 and describe it more fully in the next section.

<div style="border:1px solid">

Figure III.9. LP5: Layton's Developing Conceptualization of Slavery

1. When people kill people.

2. When people fight, they kill people.

3. This picture is a slave auction. My question is: Why are people being sold? Because they wanted to make money. Another question was: Does this girl have a family or is she an orphan? She had a family, but **she is getting sold away from them**.

4. My claim is that **slavery is when people get taken against their will and they are put on slave ships** . . . I conclude **slavery is people get taken against their will**.

5. Slavery is when people work in a field and **be owned [sic] by a master**.

Time

Figure III.9. Selected excerpts from Layton's classwork show a typical progression for students in LP5 from an initial misconception or emerging understanding about slavery (1-2), to describing slavery as an institution of power (2-5), but never describing the racialized aspects of this power. **Bold print** indicates language related to power.

</div>

Layton: Slavery is "when people kill people." Layton, a White special education student, attended Ms. McKinley's class for roughly half the school day. When attending Ms. McKinley's class, Layton was accompanied by a designated paraeducator who supported his participation in class and helped him complete his classwork.

Before the inquiry. On his pre-inquiry concept map, Layton began with a misconception about slavery. He wrote that slavery is "when people kill people" and illustrated a figure holding sharp object (November 1, 2017).

During the inquiry. As the inquiry began, Layton repeated his misconception again in his first journal response to the question "What is slavery?" by writing that slavery is "when people fight, they kill people" (November 7, 2017). However, over the first week of the inquiry he worked with a small group to analyze an image of a slave auction. When he shared his analysis on Seesaw, he began to include the idea of power by describing family separation.

> This picture is a slave auction. My question is: Why are people being sold? Because they wanted to make money. Another question was: Does this girl have a family or is she an orphan? *She had a family, but she is getting sold away from them.* (November 11, 2017)

In addition, when analyzing images related to the story of Henry Brown three weeks later, Layton inferred the book would describe slave ships when he saw a steam boat in an image (November 28, 2017). This indicated he understood that enslaved people arrived on ships. He elaborated this idea further during the next school day: Layton wrote the following claim about slavery, conceptualizing slavery as an institution of power where people were taken against their will aboard slave ships: "My claim is that slavery is when *people get taken against their will and they are put on slave ships.* They are sent off to a plantation" (November 29, 2017). However, despite moving towards a more solidified concept of slavery as power, Layton does not mention any specific groups of people.

After the inquiry. In his Seesaw narration about his post-concept map, Layton responded to the inquiry question "What is slavery?" by saying: "Slavery is when people work in a field and *be owned [sic] by a master*" (January 19, 2018). This indicated Layton solidified the concept of power by the end of the inquiry, but still made no mention of racial groups.

Discussion

How did third-grade students conceptualize enslavement before, during, and after participation in their social studies inquiry? How did students connect their conceptualizations of

enslavement to the present? To answer these questions, I comment on the application of the Teaching Tolerance codes to the students' pre- and post-concept maps and classwork, and then discuss how students incorporated the ideas of power and race into their artifacts over time. In both sections, I point out what the data suggest about the students' development of historical consciousness, and then return to this concept more fully in a final section that explores the findings using the model of historical consciousness presented earlier in this chapter from Seixas (2016).

Students' Developing Conceptualizations of Enslavement

Students demonstrated that they began the inquiry with varied understandings of enslavement; however, what strikes me is that nearly all of the responses on students' pre-inquiry concept maps related, in some way, to the idea of power. Of the eight students who included any concepts from the Teaching Tolerance framework, all eight included the concept of power by mentioning that slavery was forced, was violent, or involved human ownership. In addition, nearly all of the remaining 11 students whose inquiry maps I coded *Emerging understanding* or *Misconception* also had responses that somehow related to power. For example, half of the students who offered misconceptions suggested they understood slavery as an unequal power dynamic between the social actors involved: Cole and Cora drew illustrations of one person shouting at another, and Will said slavery is "*making* other people work." Furthermore, four out of six of the students whose pre-inquiry concept maps included a misconception wrote about violence, such as war, fighting, or killing. What this suggests to me is that going into the inquiry, many of the students understood that enslavement related to power, albeit with various degrees of accuracy; however, what they seemed to lack was language for the specific groups or people involved. Only three students explicitly named African Americans as the enslaved group on their

pre-concept maps—one of whom also named the enslavers as Whites. Taken together, the students' concept maps suggested that they already related the idea of power to enslavement, but beyond this, they demonstrated limited background knowledge, with few students mentioning race.

As students participated in the inquiry, their classwork included the code *Institution of power* most frequently, appearing in roughly 60% of all classwork completed across the six weeks of instruction. The subcodes revealed that all students began to include more specific ideas about power, whether by naming enslavement as forced or describing slave ships, human ownership, violence, or family separation. The artifacts show that students expanded their language to include terms and phrases related to power, such as "forced," "stolen," "sold," "whipped or something worse," and "separated." Yet, while the inquiry instruction seemed effective at honing students' thinking about power, the coding revealed more limited inclusion of racial categories to name the social actors involved in enslavement. I applied the *Race* code to artifacts created during the inquiry to only a quarter of the total artifacts. The subcodes revealed that when students *did* name a racial group in their classwork, they were 7 times more likely to name enslaved people as African Americans than to name enslavers as Whites.

On their post-concept maps, all but one student included aspects of enslavement as an institution of power, making it again the most frequently included concept during this phase of the inquiry. Students described power on their post-inquiry maps in ways similar to their classroom artifacts: The majority of the subcodes focused on describing violence and a smaller number focused on human ownership, slave ship conditions, family separation, and describing enslavement as forced. Students included the concept of *Economic gain* second most frequently, with 80% of the class mentioning that slavery involved forced labor. I also coded mentions that

119

slavery was a central cause of the Civil War at a rate of just over 80%, showing another clear area of growth for the students. Lastly, students' inclusion of racial categories on their post-inquiry concept maps mirrored the pattern found in their classroom artifacts: Students were 4 times time more likely to name African Americans than Whites.

The application of Teaching Tolerance's key concepts to the students' artifacts revealed one clear pattern in the students' sensemaking corroborated by previous research by Barton (1997)—that students focused on the actions of *individuals* in the past but seemingly ignored the role of "political, economic, or other societal institutions" (p. 312). For example, while participation in the inquiry supported Ms. McKinley's students' sensemaking about enslavement as an *Institution of power* and *Economic gain*, the subcodes for these concepts demonstrated that students' understanding remained nascent when compared to the Teaching Tolerance framework, which related to broader institutional structures for enslavement. Namely, students conceptualized power and economic gain as related to interactions between *individuals*—such as getting whipped by an overseer or being forced to work by a master—but did not focus on the systemic nature of these concepts, such as how enslavers profited and that slave capital was central to the development of the U.S. economy. Considering what this means for the students' historical consciousness, lack of understanding of the institutional nature of power and economic gain related to enslavement limits students' understandings of the present day (e.g., the influence of enslavement on the disparities between Black and White Americans, such as inequality in wealth and educational attainment). This suggests further research might investigate a progression in how students learn about enslavement as an idea of individual relationships to one of broader institutional structures, in order to support them in understanding the present.

120

The learning pathway analysis demonstrates that learning about race occurred for many students, especially given their lack of background knowledge related to race. In particular, we can consider that the vast majority of the students came to see enslavement as racialized. The learning pathways suggest that students began the inquiry with nascent ideas about power, but few (only the three students in LP4) used racial terms. By the end of the inquiry, we can see all students across pathways LP1 to LP3 also came to include the idea of race in their classwork over time. This suggests that history education plays a role in helping students to see and name race. However, the students' sensemaking around race varied. Notably, the students in LP5 never attended to race in their classroom artifacts. Furthermore, few students used the term "Whites" across their classwork during the inquiry. This points to another gap between the students' understandings and the Teaching Tolerance framework. While the students named racial groups, their classwork did not attend to the idea that enslavement shaped beliefs about race and that White supremacy "was both a product and legacy of slavery" (Teaching Tolerance, 2018a, p. 6).

The learning pathways analysis reveals nuances in the White focal students' sensemaking about race. In particular, three of the students—Emily (LP1), Will (LP2), and Allison (LP4)—showed some difficulty in understanding the way race operates in contemporary society. In the case of Emily, she did acknowledge that after slavery, African Americans endured segregated schools and restaurants. However, when considering the present day, she only thought the African American enslaved mother in the photo would have improved socioeconomic independence. In other words, she did not see the continuities between the ways race operated in the past and the present, although she did acknowledge race. Will's comments about the enslaved mother before and after the inquiry showed he did not consider her experience in terms of her race. Rather, in both cases, he commented that she would no longer be enslaved, but that she

would still have to work if she were living today. Allison's comments showed a more nuanced understanding than either Emily or Will. Allison acknowledged that people's experiences differed by race as she said that if the enslaved mother were living today, she would still "have black skin" before the inquiry and acknowledged this again at the end of the inquiry by saying "she'd still be Black." Yet, she was unsure what hardships African American people face today. Furthermore, she summarized that today the woman would "probably being [sic] able to have a good life."

By contrast, John (LP3) showed a greater awareness of how race operated both in the past, in contemporary society, and in his own life. In our pre-inquiry interview, John seemed to lack much awareness of African Americans' experiences as evidenced by the fact that he confused indigenous people with African Americans, saying that African Americans helped the Pilgrims when they came to America. Furthermore, he was unable to connect how the enslaved mother's life would be similar if she were living today. By the end of the inquiry, however, John gave a response during our interview that indicated he understood how race operated in the past. For example, when inferring what the enslaved mother might have been thinking, he responded that the oppressor was specifically White by stating, "these Whites are mean." Furthermore, he realized that African American people in contemporary society may still fear oppression from Whites. John is the only student in this study who explicitly connected his study of enslavement to his own lived experiences. During our post-inquiry interview, he also told me he had considered that his African American friends may have ancestors who were enslaved. Yet, he also told me that he is nervous to discuss African American history with his friends due to the shame he feels about their ancestors' experiences.

My analysis of the learning pathways by students' racial backgrounds did not reveal differences in the students' sensemaking, although existing literature shows stark differences in the ways African American and White students interpret U.S. history (Epstein, 2009). The four students of color in Ms. McKinley's class were split across pathways, including two students in LP1, one student in LP2, and one student in LP5. However, given that none of these students were focal students, the use of students' written classwork as the sole source of data for their understanding limits my insight into how their thinking may have been similar or dissimilar to each other and their peers.

Furthermore, my analysis of the learning pathways by students' socioeconomic status based on the parent-reported data from their consent forms did not show clear differences in students' sensemaking, with the exception of the three students in LP4. These students in LP4 (all White female students) demonstrated the highest level of background knowledge coming into the inquiry and none of their guardians reported they received free- or reduced-priced lunch. This suggests some potential stratification between students by socioeconomic status, but given the small sample size it is difficult to make claims about what this suggests.

Although space prevents me from providing a full exploration of how students developed their thinking as a result of particular features of the inquiry (e.g., the use of certain texts, instructional activities, etc.), I would like to explore two points about how some of the language used in the classroom may have limited the students' sensemaking about enslavement. First, the data suggest that the use of the term "forced immigration" created some confusion for Will (LP2) early in the inquiry. When analyzing a map of the transatlantic slave trade, Will narrated that Africans "immigrated" to "help with the crops" although he acknowledged they "don't get paid." Although Ms. McKinley pushed him to consider whether this was voluntary or forced

immigration, the term "immigration" itself denotes agency and is therefore incongruent with enslavement. Given students spent six weeks studying enslavement, they all came to see it as forced. However, the term "forced immigration" does not represent the specificity and harsh realities of African Americans' experiences, as noted by King (2004) and Ladson-Billings (2017).

The second way the curriculum may have limited students' understandings is revealed in the grammatical patterns shown in my analysis. Namely, students used the passive voice when describing enslavement, which omitted the enslavers, including their identities and motivations. One possible explanation for this is that students adopted the grammar of the informational texts they read. Ms. McKinley often used nonfiction informational passages from the website ReadWorks.org, which provides a free curriculum library of texts for K-12 students. For example, the passage "Sailing for Freedom" (ReadWorks, 2009), which students read during the first week of the inquiry, begins this way:

> In 1839, a group of Africans *was forced* aboard the original ship. The Africans *had been* kidnapped and sold into slavery. *Their owners* were taking them to work on an island in the Caribbean Sea. However, the Africans rebelled and took control of the ship. To rebel is to fight back.

While the passage readily identified Africans as the oppressed group, the author makes no mention of who was doing the forcing or kidnapping. The term "owners" is the exception, but this term obscures both their race and motivations.

In addition to reading the nonfiction passage from ReadWorks (2009), students relied on another nonfiction text entitled *If You Lived When There Was Slavery in America* (Kamma, 2004) to research their inquiry questions. During the first week of the inquiry, students analyzed visual primary sources (i.e., photographs, lithographs) related to enslavement in small groups and generated their own inquiry questions based on the sources. To find the answers to their

124

questions, however, students used the book *If You Lived When There Was Slavery in America* (Kamma, 2004) as their main source of evidence. Patterson and Shuttleworth (2019) found this title obscured the role of Whites in enslavement through the use of passive voice. Unfortunately, in this case, the use of primary source analysis and generation of research questions—the disciplinary aspects of the teaching—only led students back to texts that obscured Whites. Given that the pre-inquiry maps demonstrated that students had limited language resources for describing enslavement it is likely the few nonfiction texts the students read held authority. None of the reading practices Ms. McKinley taught would have helped students notice the grammatical structure in these texts, however, suggesting that additional reading practices are needed.

Towards Historical Consciousness About Enslavement

Returning to the idea of historical consciousness, we can consider what the students' historical learning about enslavement meant for how they may have related the past, present, and future. The conceptual framework I presented from Seixas (2016) attends to how students connect their inquiry learning to their own lives in the present day. However, the data presented reveal that only John reported an explicit connection between his own life outside of school and his classroom study of enslavement. What I find interesting about John's response is that the connections he made between his own life and the study of enslavement related to shame and fear about having a conversation with his African American peers about difficult history. Other than John's comment, no students were able to make connections between their historical inquiry into enslavement and their own lives. Allison and Emily did draw some comparisons between enslavement and contemporary society; however, in both of their comments, they viewed racial discrimination as ending during the civil rights era. This is unsurprising given that the inquiry instruction did not explicitly make connections between the past and present. The data suggest

125

that in the absence of teachers supporting students in making those connections, students have difficulty making connections between the past and present independently. And, as shown by John's comment, even if students *do* recognize those connections, they may hesitate to act on them due to feelings of shame. Furthermore, the authors of the Teaching Tolerance framework hope that learning about enslavement will act as a resource for students to see enslavement's legacy in present-day forms of systemic racism. However, this study demonstrates that if students conceptualize enslavement at the level of individuals and groups, and not at the level of social, political, and economic structures, their historical learning may act as a less useful resource for understanding that those systemic forms of racism transcend time into the present. Therefore, one pressing area of research is to understand how K-12 students might move from learning about enslavement as interactions of individuals in history to a more sophisticated understanding of the social, economic, and political structures that gave rise to and sustained legal enslavement for nearly 250 years and how shifts in students' understandings of slavery act as a resource for understanding systemic racism in U.S. society today.

Limitations

This study was not without limitations. In the second phase of analysis, I could have pursued any number of questions about the code application given the breadth of coding and the number of artifacts. Therefore, I acknowledge the construction of learning pathways would vary depending on variables of interest to the researcher. For example, I could have constructed the pathways based solely on how students described race—perhaps grouping students by those who mentioned both African American and Whites, those who just mentioned Whites, and those who named neither. Furthermore, my research question and organization of this study suggest that learning is a linear process. However, Lee and Ashby (2000) demonstrate that younger students

learn history in an often nonlinear fashion, with students showing variability in their development throughout elementary school. Furthermore, during the student interviews I did not ask students to compare the similarities and differences between time periods for the White men in the Bibb (1848) image during the interview, showing my own thinking about race, namely that I was interested in how children through about enslaved people rather than their enslavers (i.e., Whites).

Table A.1.

Instructional Calendar and Curriculum Materials

Inquiry Question	Week/Dates	Total Days	Texts Read/Analyzed
What is slavery?	1. November 7-10, 2017	2	Children's Literature: • *Circle Unbroken*. (Raven, 2004) • *Meet Addy: An American Girl*. (Porter, 1993) Documents: • African American woman being auctioned off in front of crowd of men. Library of Congress. (1856) • Five generations on Smith's Plantation, Beaufort, South Carolina. Library of Congress. (1862) • Slave auction at Richmond, VA. Library of Congress. (1856) • The slave deck of the bark "Wildfire," brought into Key West on April 30, 1860. Library of Congress. (1860) • The underground railroad. Library of Congress. (1893) • The whole black family at the Hermitage, Savannah, Georgia. Library of Congress. (date unknown) Informational Texts: • *If You Lived When There was Slavery in America*. (Kamma, 2004) • *If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad.* (Levine, 1988) • "Sailing for Freedom." (ReadWorks, 2012) • *Slavery in America: A True Book.* (Blashfield, 2011) Maps: • "Map of Africa." (Maher & Selwyn, 1991) • "Slave Trade from Africa to the Americas 1650-1860." (University of Richmond, 2014)
	2. November 13-17, 2017*	2	Children's Literature: • *Addy Learns a Lesson*. (Porter, 1993) • *When Harriet Met Sojourner.* (Clinton, 2007) Informational Texts: • "The Underground Railroad." (ReadWorks, 2012)
	3. November 20-21, 2017	2	Children's Literature: • *Freedom River.* (Rappaport, 2006) • *Night Boat to Freedom.* (Raven, 2006)

128

	4. November 27-December 1, 2017	5	Children's Literature: • *Henry's Freedom Box.* (Levine, 2007) • *Unspoken: A Story from the Underground Railroad.* (Cole, 2012) • *Step Right Up.* (Bowman, 2016) Documents: • The resurrection of Henry Box Brown at Philadelphia, who escaped from Richmond, VA. Library of Congress. (1850) • Engraving of the box in which Henry Box Brown escaped from slavery in Richmond, VA. Library of Congress. (1850) Informational Texts: • "Harriet Tubman and The Underground Railroad." (ReadWorks, 2014)
How was our country divided during the Civil War?	5. December 4-8, 2017	5	Children's Literature: • *Addy's Surprise: A Christmas Story.* (Porter, 1993) • *Abe's Honest Words.* (Rappot, 2008) • *Pink and Say.* (Polacco, 1994) Maps: • "Map of the United States. 1860."
	6. December 11-15, 2017	5	Children's Literature: • *Ben and the Emancipation Proclamation.* (Sherman, 2009) • *Happy Birthday, Addy!* (Porter, 1994) • *Under the Freedom Tree.* (VanHecke, 2014) • *The Wagon.* (Johnston, 1994) Documents: • Thirteenth Amendment. Library of Congress. (1865) Informational Texts: • *Just a Few Words, Mr. Lincoln.* (Fritz, 1993)

*Ms. McKinley was absent for three days this week and the substitute teacher did not teach social studies.

APPENDIX B

Student Consent Form

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am inviting you and your child to participate in a research study, which I have designed to learn more about your child's teacher and your child's social studies learning in the 2017-2018 school year. This study is part of my doctoral dissertation at the University of Michigan entitled: *History in the Heartland: The Development of Historical Consciousness in Third Grade*. I write to inform you about the purpose of the study, to state that participation is voluntary, to explain any risks and benefits of participation, and to inform you of your privacy. My hope is that this information will help you make an informed decision to participate.

Purpose of the Study: This study will help me understand how third graders think and learn about the historical inquiry topics they will learn about in social studies this year, including how they think about the topics and their own lives, both in-and-out of school. Your child's teacher is a well-regarded social studies educator and my hope is that in studying her classroom I can learn more about how young children develop their thinking. I also hope to learn more about how children learn about the past outside of school and how this relates to the social studies learning happening in school.

Participation: This study will take place for the duration of the 2017-2018 school year. With your consent, I would like to photocopy the classwork your child completes during social studies instruction. In addition, I would like to video record your child, and the classroom, during regular school lessons.

Most importantly, I am inviting you and your child to participate in semi-structured interviews. For students, these interviews will occur up to seven times throughout the school year for no more than 30 minutes each during the regular school day. I will work with the teacher to ensure students do not miss class instruction to participate in these interviews. During interviews, I will talk with students about how they are developing their ideas about the history both in and out of school.

Risks and Benefits: There are no foreseeable risks to participating in the study and there is no penalty for refusing to participate. Potential benefits are that child's may enjoy the interviews and photo documentation task. The study, as a whole, will benefit the field of social studies education as we learn more about how to support students' development.

Privacy: Data collected in study will be kept strictly confidential. I will not include your child's full name in any presentations or publications that result from this study. Your child's privacy, and that of your child's school and district, will be protected to the maximum extent allowed by law.

Please contact me with any questions regarding this research project; I am happy to speak further about this work.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ryan Hughes
Doctoral Candidate
School of Education
University of Michigan
Phone: (415) 713-9877
Email: hughesre@umich.edu

Do you voluntarily allow **your child's classwork** to be included in this study?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Do you voluntarily allow **your child to be video recorded** during the regular classroom instruction**?**

Yes ☐   No ☐

Do you voluntarily allow **your child to be interviewed** in this study?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Would **you like to participate in a parent/guardian interview** for this study?

Yes ☐   No ☐

_____   _____   _____
(Parent/Guardian Signature)   (Parent/Guardian Printed Name)   (Date)

_____   _____

131

(Child's Printed Name)   (Parent/Guardian's Email)

Background information about your child (Optional)
(Please note: you have the right to skip any questions you do not wish to answer; this information will never be reported with names or other identifying information):

Child's gender: Female ☐   Male ☐

Child's race/ethnicity:
☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native
☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Not Hispanic or Latino
☐ Multiracial
☐ Other: _____

Language(s) spoken in your home: _____

Services that your child receives:

☐ Special Education
☐ Title I for Reading or Math
☐ Visits the Reading Specialist
☐ Gifted/Talented Services
☐ English as a Second Language
☐ Other: _____

Does your child qualify for free or reduced-price lunch?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Figure C.1. Pre- and Post-Inquiry Concept Mapping Task Template:
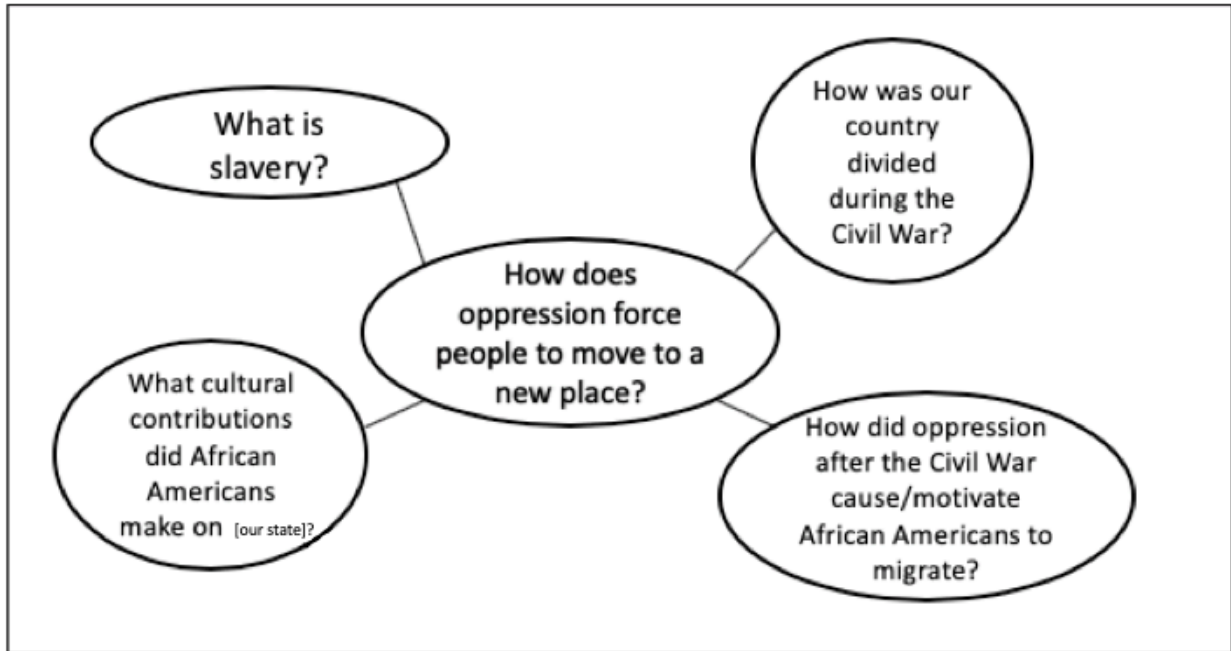
Figure C.1. Template for pre- and post-inquiry concept mapping task.

Administration:

We are about to research new inquiry questions in social studies. I am curious how you're

thinking about the answers to these questions today. I'm going to pass out this blank concept

"bubble" map and you're going to add your ideas. You can respond to the questions with words,

and/or drawings. Remember there are no right or wrong answers; I just want to see what you

know about these questions today. Try to think of as many ideas as you can, but feel free to leave

them blank if you do not have anything to share today. Later, Mr. Hughes might interview you,

so he can learn more about the map you create.

APPENDIX D

Student Interview Protocol

Introduction

Thank you for meeting with me today. I am interested to hear about how you think and learn about your social studies inquiry questions. You can share anything you are thinking; there are no right or wrong answers. If you don't have an answer or idea about a question you can pass. Before we start do you have any questions for me? Is it alright for me to video record our conversation so I can remember your ideas later?

Concept Maps

Let's look at the concept map you made in class and talk about it together. Tell me about what you added.
  1. *Where did you learn about or hear about [item on map]? Have you studied about that in school? (If not, where did you learn about them? If so, did you learn more about them outside of school?)*
  2. *Is anything you didn't include that you would add?*
  3. *Is there anything you purposefully left off?*
  4. *Why did you add this?*

Historical Significance

What would you consider to be the two or three most important things, people, places, or events on your concept map in shaping how things are today?
  1. *Why did you pick these items?*
  2. *Where did you learn about them? Have you talked to your parent about these items? If so, tell me what you discussed.*

Empathy as Care

What or who on your map do you care most about?
  1. *Where did you learn about [item child names]?*
  2. *Why is that person/place/event important to you?*
  3. *Is there anyone missing from your map that you is important to you?*

Who or what stories on your concept map do you feel connected to? Tell me about them.

134

Moral Dimension

Think about people in your concept map. Are there people you have strong feelings for or against?

1. *Where did you learn about [item child names]?*
2. *What is it that you like [dislike] about [that/them]?*
3. *How did you decide if you like or dislike them?*

When you think about the people in your concept map, are there any groups or people which come to mind who have had a particularly difficult time?

1. *Where did you learn about him/her?*
2. *Is there anything we should do today because of what happened to them? If so, what could we do?*

Do you think we can learn from anything on your concept map to help us live today? If so, what lessons can we learn and from whom?

School and Family History

Have you ever discussed any of the topics on you map with your parents? If so, what did you discuss? With other relatives? Who initiated the discussion (did you ask, or did they start telling)?

Do you think your family, or your ancestors, were involved with anything listed on your concept map? How do you know?

Historical Perspectives

Slave Auction (Bibb, 1849)

Greensboro Four (Moebes, 1960)

1. Tell me what you know about this person. What was their life like?
2. What types of feelings might this person have felt based on what you know about them?
3. Was there anything that was hard or easy for them?
4. What do you think was important to them?
5. If they were living today, how might their lives be different? How might their lives be the same?

Table E.1.

Code Book with Data Exemplars

Codes and Subcodes		Data Exemplars
Civil War		My proof is that the Civil War happened because of slavery. (Rebecca) Our country was divided over slavery. (Will)
Economic gain	Mentioned forced labor	Slavery is when you are taken against your will and have to work without getting paid. (Brennan) A master takes slaves against their will and the master tells them they must work for him. (Lucy) Slavery is a master buys you to work. (Emily)
	Mentioned auctions	They're getting taken to, um, an auction. (Brennan) When the slaves got to America, they were sold at slave auctions. (Kaylee)
Evidence		I found this by reading *Slave Trade in Early America*. I know this because in the book it talks about slavery. (Bailey) This image is called "Five Generations of Slavery" from the Library of Congress. (Cole)
Geographic expanse		They go to North or South America or the south part of South America. (Brennan) Slaves come from Africa and go different places. (Rebecca)
Institution of power	Described enslavement as forced	So, slavery is when you're being taken against your will. (Will) A person gets captured from Africa and gets taken to America. (Cassie)
	Mentioned family separation	Is his wife going to get split up from her kids? (Chelsea) If you escaped, they would whip you or worse, they sell you away from your family. (Cora)
	Described human ownership	Once they were sold, they were that person's property. (Allison) Slavery is where people work in a field and be owned by a master. (Layton)
	Mentioned violence	Slaves had to do stuff for people; they couldn't refuse otherwise they could get killed or hurt. (John) If you did not do what you were supposed to you would be whipped. (Allison)
	Described slave ships	They are put on a slave ship. (Lucy) They went on the slave ships. They have really bad conditions. They only could be up on the deck for one hour a day and then it was so crowded in there. (Kaylee)
Legal sanction		Black people had no rights. (Rebecca)

137

		So, they basically changed the Constitution to say no more slavery. (Bailey)
Race	Named Africa/African American /Black	Slavery is people being stolen from Africa. (Kash)
		Whites treated African Americans like animals. (Allison)
	Named White	The master—who is the boss of you—masters were only White men. (Emily)
Resistance	Described the Underground Railroad	At nighttime when some people would go around singing songs, telling them the songs to tell them the way to the safe houses, which is the Underground Railroad system. (Rebecca)
		There were safe houses to hide for slaves to hide from the slave catchers. (John)
	Mentioned Harriet Tubman	Harriet Tubman helped get people out of slavery. (Noelle)
		Harriet Tubman helped more than 300 slaves escape. (Will)
	Mentioned risk of punishment	When they captured them [after trying to escape], they would get whipped or sent to a different plantation. (Chelsea)
Varied Lived Experiences		Kids helped with work at age 5. (Kaylee)
		If you were pregnant you would still have to work, no resting. Once you have the baby, you have put it in a basket or put it in a little thing on your back and then you can carry it around. (Allison)

Figure F.1. Data Display for Codes Applied to Artifacts Across the Inquiry

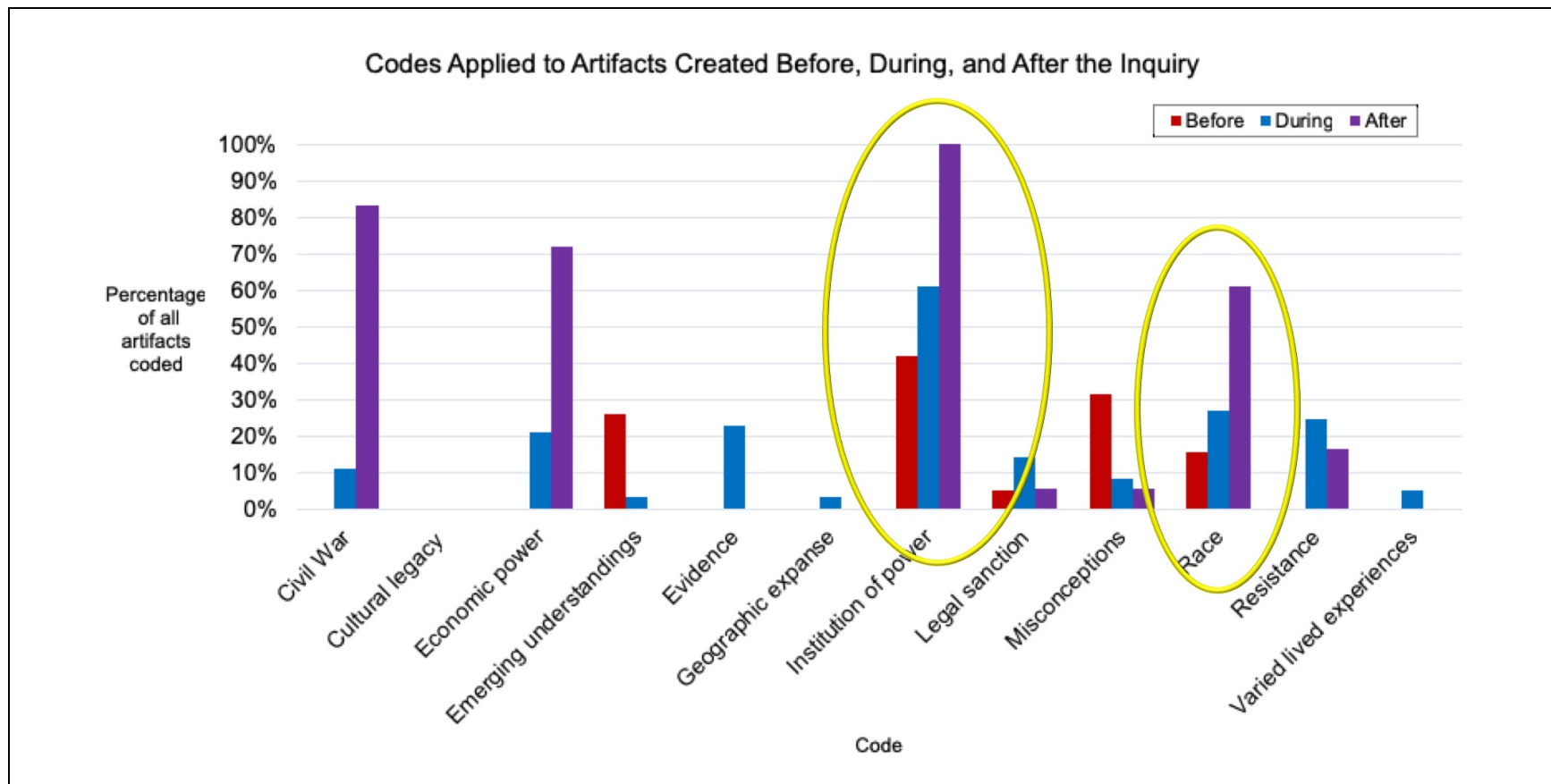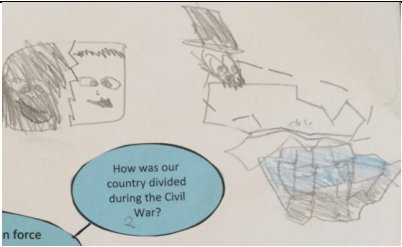*Figure F.1.* Data display for codes applied to artifacts across the inquiry.

Table G.1.
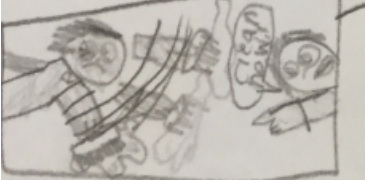
Students' Pre- and Post-Inquiry Concept Maps Responses

Student	Inquiry Question	Pre-Inquiry Concept Map (written response)	Post-Inquiry Concept Map (written response)	Post-Inquiry Concept Map (verbal, audio-recorded response)
Allison	*What is slavery?*	Makeing [making] people do things Forcing people to do something Makeing [making] African Americans maids	Getting whipped by an overseer Slavery is African Americans working hard for masters	(No audio recording created)
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	War Mexicans	South wanted slavery North didn't want slavery	
Bailey	*What is slavery?*	People that are working for athor [other] people	Slavery is when you have to work in fields and pick the plants and plant the crops and the master could whip you and there was an overseer that watched you to make sure you were working.	Slavery is when you have to work in fields and pick the plants and plant the crops and the master could whip you and there was an overseer that watched you to make sure you were working.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	Because people were killing people	Our country was divided during the Civil War by the North people fighting the South to end slavery.	Our country was divided during the Civil War by the North people were fighting the South to end slavery.

140

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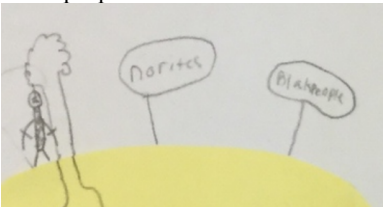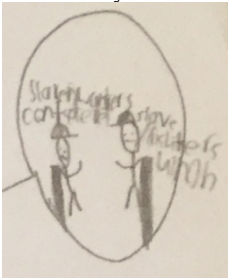|				
Blake	*What is slavery?*	Cilling [killing] Ceepd [kept]	Get wiped [whipped] Seperated [separated] Hurt Have to obey Killed	Some people got killed in slavery and they, the black people h—have to obey their masters and some people get hurt and they were, they got whipped and sometimes they got separated.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	Fighting Trump's wall	Fighting Killed	Some people were fighting, some people even got killed to save our country.
Bradley	*What is slavery?*	They are moving to a new place	Take people from their families Bad	(Recording inaudible)
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	They got split apart	Black and White	
Brennan	*What is slavery?*	Slavery is when someone controls another person.	Slavery is when someone ownes [owns] someone and that person who is owned, they work for there [their] master without getting payed [paid].	Slavery is when someone owns another person and they work for their master without getting paid.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	Difrent [different] people were fiting [fighting] because some people liked the culture and some people didn't.	Our country was divided during the Civil War. The South wanted slavery, but the North did not. So, the Sout [South] made a new country. So, Abraham Licoln [Lincoln] declared war.	Our country was divided during the Civil War. The South wanted slavery, but the North did not. So, the South made a new country. So, Abraham Lincoln declared war.
Brian	*What is slavery?*	(Illustration of figure working in a field getting whipped)	Plantashon [plantation] Wip [whip] UGRR [Underground Railroad] running away Acsion [auction] Slave ship	Okay, so the slave ships. Slave ships is when you just like get piled up onto each other and chained and then you come to America to be a slave. Now for the auction table; when you get to America, you, you go to an auction and when somebody buys you, you go to a plantation and you work like animals. Sometimes if you were bad you got whipped. And then some, some slaves went on the Underground Railroad. So that's why I drew two little guys right there and running away. It was not really underground, and it was not a railroad. It was just called the Underground Railroad to throw the masters off.

	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	(No response)	(Illustration of a black/White face and President Lincoln looking at a map of the divided nation)	I did a picture that had a Black person and a White person in it. And the picture is like ripped apart—the black person is on one side and the White person on the other side. The picture is not together no more. And then I drew a little picture that kind of looks like the United States and one half is blue and one half is gray. The gray is the Confederate, which wanted slavery. The blue was for people who didn't want slavery. They had a Civil War. And then I just drew like an all-White picture of the United States and about where I drew the gray line it's coming apart and then I drew Abraham Lincoln looking at it like: "No, you can't do this!"
Cassie	*What is slavery?*	Slavery is when you get chains on your rist [wrists] and people tell you what to do	Harrit Tubman [Harriet Tubman] Sold people Slave auction Plantachion [plantation] Underground Railroad Shakles [Shackles] Whip Dogs Slave ship From Africa Split families Safe houses	(No audio recording created)
		(No response)	Robert E. Lee Slavery Aberham [Abraham Lincoln]	
Chelsea	*What is slavery?*	War	Whipped hurt Work hard Not treated fairly at all Bad conditions People were not treated fairly Ended in 1865	Slavery is when you're not treated fairly at all. They're really bad conditions. People were not treated nicely. It's ended in 1865 you to work hard or you would get whipped. There were bad conditions back on ships and some jumped overboard and some just died.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	People didn't think the same	Emancipation Proclamation North did not want slavery Our country was divided the South wanted slavery	The Emancipation Proclamation is when Abraham Lincoln wrote it to end slavery, but, so, another one is the North did not want slavery, the north was fighting so they couldn't have slavery.

				They did not want slavery. And the South wanted slavery and the North was like, "No, we don't think it's right." And the North won the Civil War.
Cole	*What is slavery?*	(Illustration of person being told "Work now!")	Masters Doing work all day African Americans get taken against their will Horrific conditions Very little money	Slavery is when African Americans got taken against their will and they have to do at work all day and they have masters that, um, want, that own them. And they have horrific conditions; they're horrible and there's very little money that was made.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	(No response)	Abe Lincoln Fight to end slavery North vs. South 1861-1865	Um, it was the North vs. South and it was the fight to end slavery. It was from 1861 to 1865 and Abraham Lincoln mostly, um, um, did speeches about it.
Cora	*What is slavery?*	(Illustration of two figures)	(Illustration of person being told "Get to work!")	I drew a picture of a slave getting whipped because he wasn't doing his work.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	(No response)	(Illustration of the Confederate and American flags)	I drew two flags. I put the Mexico flag and the United States flag.
Emily	*What is slavery?*	Poeple [People] fiting [fighting]	Whipp [whipped] Overseer	Slavery is like people working, um, only black people had to work. There was an overseer. He would whip you if you wouldn't work. The slaves had to work in the master's house.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	(no response)	North South	It was slavery. There was less slavery in the North and more slavery in the South.

John	*What is slavery?*	People being forced to do stuff	African Americans They were forced from Africa The Big Dipper Little Dipper Whites treating AA [African Americans] like animals	Slavery is African Americans working hard for masters and when they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing they get whipped by and overseer.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	Our country was divided because people were killing people	One did not want slavery Because of slavery One wanted slavery	The South wanted slavery and North didn't want slavery so that's how they were separated. Abe Lincoln made the Gettys, er—the Emancipation Proclamation, but that didn't work.
Kaylee	*What is slavery?*	War	Slave boat Run Wiped [whipped] It is when you work all day long Slavery is when a master is watching a slave and a slave is a black person Water Food Plantashon [Plantation] Work	You have no water, well, you have a little bit, some food. There's a plantation. You have to work all day and they can get whipped and you can run and slave boat. Slavery is when a master is watching a slave and a slave is a black person. And this is when a slave works all day long.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	(No response)	Gray Blue Work Slavery War	A war, slavery, work, blue and gray army.
Layton	*What is slavery?*	When people kill people	Work in field for a master	Slavery is where people work in a field and be owned [sic] by a master.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	It probably broke in half because people were shooting at the ground	South North Slaves in the South	The teams were South and North. Slaves were not treated fairly.
Lucy	*What is slavery?*	It is a time that is cold and you goes [go on] sleds	Slavery is black working for White picking crops	Slavery is black people working for Whites and they are also picking crops.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	(No response)	North wins South loust [lost] No more slavery	The North won, so the North said no more slavery. The South said there is slavery, but the North won so they told them no more.
Noelle	*What is slavery?*	Wite [White] people catching African Americans and making them do stuf [stuff]	White people took Black people from their home White people made Black people to work Seperate [separate] families	So what I put is White people took Black people from their homes and then I put White people made Black people to work and then I did separate family.
	How was our country divided	Because of what they look like or what they believe in	Able Lincoln wanted it to stop he wrote speeches	So first I put Abe Lincoln wanted it to stop he wrote speeches. Another one I did was

144

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			South and North were fighting South wanted to be its own country	the South and North were fighting. And another one said South wanted to be its own country.
	during the Civil War?			
Rebecca	*What is slavery?*	No rites [rights] Black people (drawing)	No muny [money] Work hard Not fare [fair] Slave ship Africa Plantashion [Plantation] Wip [Whip] Overseer Master lazy Master Dogs	(No audio recording created)
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	People didn't think the same thing	U.S.A only Slavery North, South Beliefs	
Will	*What is slavery?*	Slavery is people making other people to work	Slavery is when people are taken against their will from Africa (drawing) (Illustration of an enslaved person working in front of an overseer)	Slavery is when people are taken against their will from Africa and I drew a little picture of like, um, people—like a slave working in the field and with an overseer basically on a horse, like watching and making sure they won't run away or they don't do anything.
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	(No response)	North South Over slavery (drawing) (Illustration of a Confederate and Union supporter/soldier)	So, American was the North and the South divided. Um, I drew the slave wanters [sic] over here and I told the name, which is the Confederate. And then the slave dislikers [sic], which is the Union. The war was over slavery.

Interpreting African American History: White Students Learning About Difficult History Through Inquiry in Third Grade

"History, despite its wrenching pain,
Cannot be unlived, and if faced
With courage, need not be lived again"
—Maya Angelou, *On the Pulse of Morning*, 1993

This quote from Maya Angelou presents an underlying assumption about the study of history held by many scholars and citizens—that studying difficult events in history is a useful tool for present-day cross-cultural understanding and reconciliation. Within the field of history education, this idea has purchase; in particular, history education scholars specifically advocate for historical inquiry instruction as a method to support reconciliation among various groups in society with traumatic and/or conflicted pasts (Epstein & Peck, 2017). Scholars view inquiry as a promising method since it allows students to consider differing interpretations of the past and challenge the underlying historical evidence used to craft those interpretations, which, in turn, can challenge prevailing ideological certainties and open up possibilities for reconciliation (McCully, 2017). This is a widely held hope in many national contexts, and advocacy for a disciplinary-based, multi-perspective approach to history education for personal and group transformation is central to curriculum policies in Northern Ireland, South Africa, and many nations in Central and Eastern Europe (Guyver, 2017; McCully, 2017).

When considering teaching about difficult national history for possible reconciliation in the U.S. context, however, two challenges persist. The first is that the U.S. social studies

curriculum tends to tell the stories of difficult racial history through sanctioned messages and silences about how and why certain episodes concerning racial conflict in history occurred and mask the long-term, systemic effects of racism (Brown & Brown, 2015; Chandler & Branscombe, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2003, 2017; Rubin, 2019). Wills (2001) argues that the school history curriculum often obscures the actions and interactions between various social groups in U.S. history; for example, enslavement is told through a narrative where African Americans and Whites are "missing in interaction" in the historical content. He explains how the focus in classrooms is often on African American heroes, such as Martin Luther King Jr., and little attention is paid to White racism:

> To the extent that the politics of remembrance in classrooms mirrors the collective memory of mainstream society, students will likely find themselves retelling the story of King and his advocacy of non-violent change year after year while *not remembering* the discriminatory practices and violence of Whites in our shared past . . . the commemorative narrative constructed in these classrooms obscures White agency in the system of segregation in the South and effectively silenced student talk about racism and the acts of violence perpetrated against non-violent African American protestors during the civil rights movement. (Wills, 2005, pp. 127-128)

Furthermore, narratives about enslavement (Bickford & Rich, 2014; Brown & Brown, 2010; Thomas et al., 2016) and segregation and the civil rights movement (Bickford & Schuette, 2016; Busey & Walker, 2017; Kohl, 2005) often found in school curriculum materials are critiqued as incomplete and overly simplistic. In particular, curriculum knowledge (i.e., textbooks, children's literature) tends to present racial events in history only to the extent that they have been solved. For example, *Brown vs. Board of Education* (Hess, 2005) or the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Crowley, 2013) are often taught as events within a greater narrative of U.S. national progress; however, learning a master narrative that the events of the civil rights movement have somehow solved racism prevents us from understanding the challenges of our own time (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Guinier, 2004; Hall, 2005). For example, teaching about the history of legal racial

147

segregation and the struggle for African American voting rights in the 20th century without also addressing contemporary racial issues such as the "hyper-segregation" (Ladson-Billings, 2017) found in many communities and continued instances of voting fraud to disenfranchise African American citizens (Crowley, 2013) reproduces the narrative that we live in a "postracial society" (Bobo, 2011). Therefore, we need a better understanding of how using historical inquiry to teach difficult topics in African American history might disrupt, or reproduce, racism in contemporary society.

The second issue in the U.S. context is that momentum for a disciplinary approach to history teaching has largely occurred at the secondary level and dovetailed with efforts to bolster adolescent literacy. Therefore, most approaches to inquiry in schools are designed with the goals of building historical literacy and pathways to content knowledge, but not about teaching inquiry for present-day reconciliation. These studies have not provided insight into students' thinking about difficult African American history even when it was taught with an inquiry approach (De La Paz et al., 2017; Reisman, 2015). However, the idea that a disciplinary approach—that is, inquiry teaching—may bring about reconciliation in the U.S. is gaining wider attention (Fogo & Breakstone, 2019). For example, Teaching Tolerance recently published a curricular guide that recommends inquiry as the best method to teach about the history of enslavement. They argue that "understanding the far-reaching and overlapping effects of slavery and white supremacy demands deep engagement on the part of students, a type of engagement that inquiry is well suited to support" (Swan et al., 2018, p. 12). Yet, while disciplinary historical inquiry remains a widely suggested and potentially promising approach to learning about difficult history, no research to date explores its efficacy. Furthermore, some scholars caution that historical inquiry methods in the social studies classroom do not necessarily mean that greater attention will be

148

paid to race (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015). Therefore, we need research about how inquiries about difficult history conceived to support literacy and content learning might also open up—or shut down—possibilities for reconciliation by understanding how inquiry allows students to develop a full understanding of our shared history and their racial literacy.

In this study, I explore the relationship between students' participation in historical inquiry instruction and their development of historical consciousness, or how they use the past to orient themselves in the present and construct expectations for the future. To do so, I analyze data from eight third-grade students who participated in a sustained social studies inquiry focused on African American history, from enslavement through the Voting Rights Acts. I was curious to learn about how these all-White students ultimately took up, modified, or rejected the events related to this difficult history as evidenced through their written historical narratives and one-on-one interviews. Specifically, I ask: After participation in a historical inquiry centered on difficult events related to African American history (e.g., enslavement, sharecropping, segregation), how did eight White third-grade students understand the events they studied as evidenced through their written historical narratives and interviews? What do students' understandings indicate about their thinking related to agency and oppression?

Literature Review

Historical Consciousness

A term that finds its origins in German scholarship of the 1970s, *historical consciousness* is fundamentally about how humans, both individually and collectively, orient themselves in time and coordinate their interpretations of the past, understanding of the present, and outlook and perspectives on the future (Körber, 2015; Rüsen, 1993; Seixas, 2004). Historical consciousness manifests itself through the historical narratives an individual creates as the

149

logical structure and language of the narrative reveal the author's values, judgments, point-of-view, and ties they make between the past and present. Since narrations of the past always occur in the present, they inherently reveal the narrator's values and uses of the past. Nordgren (2016) argues that individuals may narrate history for a variety of reasons, such as to communicate "assertions, expectations, commitments, emotions, and/or declarations" (p. 493) which, in turn, may allow the narrator to "explain the world, constitute identities, and/or influence the world" (p. 494). Furthermore, historical narratives show how individuals use history. Rüsen (1989) articulates a typology for considering how individuals use history, which includes four levels (or "types") of historical consciousness:

- Type 1, Traditional: Individuals use history to uphold traditions in society.
- Type 2, Exemplary: Individuals use history to generate rules of conduct for modern life.
- Type 3, Critical: Individuals use history to mobilize specific counternarratives to render value systems problematic and to criticize society.
- Type 4, Genetic: Individuals move beyond viewing history as timeless, progressive, or declining and use history to explain continuity and change.

Although it is acknowledged that people do not develop through these types in a linear progression (see P. Lee, 2004), Seixas (2005) argues that moving students from "type one to two to three to four would be a desirable goal for history education" (p. 145). Yet, little research exists that investigates the relationship between historical learning at school and how students develop their historical consciousness.

Prior studies of historical consciousness often rely on large-scale survey measures to probe how people use the past in their everyday lives. Such studies have surveyed adults in Australia (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010), Canada (Conrad, Letourneau, & Northrup, 2009), and the United States (Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998). Angvik and von Borries (1997) conducted the largest project to date on youth's historical consciousness: They surveyed nearly 32,000

adolescents across 27 European countries in their project entitled *Youth and History: The Comparative European Project on Historical Consciousness Among Teenagers*. Participants in the study responded to 280 fixed statements using a Likert scale on a range of topics, including how they understood historical information and how these understandings influenced their political attitudes and expectations for the future. The *Youth and History* project was primarily designed to compare historical socialization in different countries and to determine if there was a trend towards a united European historical consciousness across nation-states. Therefore, the project was less concerned about how students may have developed their historical consciousness through school history education. Additionally, many scholars argue that large-scale studies of historical consciousness may not fully capture the nuances of young people's thinking given the theoretical complexity of historical consciousness and, therefore, call for small-scale qualitative studies into this topic (Billmann-Mahecha & Hausen, 2005; P. Lee, 2004; Seixas, 2005). Finally, studies of historical consciousness have yet to uncover how students might develop their thinking about specific historical events and how their understandings of the past might eschew, or further reproduce, racism in the present. Therefore, in this study, I examine the historical consciousness of eight White students as they participated in an inquiry on African American history and what their learning suggests about how they connected, or did not connect, their studies to contemporary society.

Historical Inquiry

If historical consciousness exists on a continuum of sophistication as Rüsen (1989) theorizes, then how might schools support students in developing more sophisticated ways of using history and relating the past, present, and future? One common answer is to support students in better understanding and utilizing the processes of the discipline (Körber, 2015;

151

Rüsen, 1993; Seixas, 2004) through historical inquiry. Historical inquiry in classrooms allows students to participate in the disciplinary practices of professional historians, such as posing historical questions, gathering and analyzing evidence, applying disciplinary concepts, and synthesizing and communicating findings (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Holt, 1990; National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). As students participate in classroom inquiry, they are provided opportunities to utilize the thought processes that form the intellectual base of history, often referred to as historical thinking, or disciplinary literacy, practices. These practices (e.g., considering a document's author to assess its trustworthiness) undergird historians' interpretive work as they evaluate evidence in order to write interpretations of the past. Through their participation in inquiry, students have the opportunity to read and analyze sources and construct interpretations of their own. Therefore, this instructional paradigm allows students to participate in knowledge construction and critique rather than digesting other people's interpretations. Seixas (2015) defines six broad historical thinking concepts central to the academic discipline of history, which teachers can address with students to grow their historical understandings:

1. Historical Significance: The concept that events, people, and developments viewed as historically significant are constructed by differing criteria over time.
2. Historical Evidence: The concept that history is interpretation based on sources (both primary and secondary) using historical ways of analyzing evidence.
3. Continuity and Change: The concept of change over time which can result in interpretations of progress or decline.
4. Cause and Consequence: The concept that events were not inevitable, but rather the result of multiple factors.
5. Historical Perspectives: The concept that historical actors' worldviews must be considered within their historical context.
6. The Ethical Dimension: The concept that historical interpretations can help us determine how we respond to the past in the present.

Several history education scholars have shown that elementary-aged students are capable of practicing these sophisticated disciplinary concepts when provided with opportunities in school (Levstik & Barton, 2008; Portal, 1987; VanSledright, 2002). Elementary-aged students

demonstrate the abilities to think chronologically (Barton & Levstik, 1996); read and interpret multiple sources of evidence (Fillpot, 2012; Levstik & Barton, 2008; Nokes, 2014; VanSledright, 2002); and construct historical accounts (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997). Taken together, this research supports the assertion that schools might do more to apprentice students into historical literacy at earlier ages. However, research has yet to consider the role classroom instruction plays in students' development and therefore more instructional research in the context of elementary school social studies is warranted. In the handful of studies that did examine elementary students' thinking vis-à-vis their classroom history instruction, students did not participate in historical inquiry (Schweber, 2008). Lastly, since historical consciousness concerns the interplay among all of these historical thinking concepts as well as the students' lives outside of school, further research is needed to fully address this complexity.

Multiple studies have found that teaching history through inquiry supports students' reading and reasoning with historical evidence (Fillpot, 2012; Nokes, Dole, & Hacker, 2007; Reisman, 2012; VanSledright, 2002) as well as their ability to write arguments about the past supported by such evidence (De La Paz et al., 2017; Monte-Sano, 2008, 2011). Although it is likely the opportunities afforded to students in these studies supported the development of their historical consciousness, researchers tend to report their findings about students' historical literacy development without attention to the ways participation in inquiry shaped—or did not shape—students' historical consciousness (for exepctions at the secondary level see Goldberg et al., 2008; Kolikant & Pollack, 2009). As historical literacy researchers Monte-Sano and Reisman (2015) note, researching students' learning without attention to their development of historical consciousness "runs the risk of closing itself off to important questions of how the past is used in the present" (p. 282).

153

Researchers tying historical inquiry with literacy promote the method of doing history as a means to develop the thinking, reading, and writing skills students need as citizens. Learning historical reading and writing practices teaches students invaluable skills such as how to evaluate claims or ground their claims in evidence—much needed in today's world of partisan cable news, nonstop social media reports, and politically charged accusations of fake news and alternative facts. As VanSledright (2004) notes, the citizen's job is "detecting spin, hype, snake-oil sales pitches, disguised agendas, veiled partisanship, and weak claims" (p. 232). Thus, historical inquiry is a sort of pedagogy in service of democracy, as it aims to help produce independent-minded citizens who are capable of reasoning and critical thinking (Laville, 2004).

Yet, history's ability to engage students in evidence-based argumentation is just one of the many ways history prepares students for citizenship. In addition, history is essential for developing students' orientations between the past, present, and future, which will undoubtedly play a critical role in how they confront, investigate, and deliberate about important contemporary issues in our democratic society (Barton & Levstik, 2004). As Segall (1999) argues, we need a better understanding of how students use school history to develop understandings of themselves and how these understandings prepare them to act as citizens:

> The educational value in studying history is, thus, not only the study of the past itself, for "its own sake," but the understanding such a study might provide as to which particular pasts and ways of storying the past we have chosen to call our own, and how those choices have positioned us to act (or not act) in the world. (p. 364)

However, empirical research says little about how learning difficult African American history might position White students to act (or not act) in the world around issues of racism. Ladson-Billings (2017) argues there are persistent challenges with representations of race in the U.S. school curriculum and that schools often work to "fund" (p. 1) the social concept of race in ways that only perpetuate racism. Therefore, the U.S. school history curriculum may be a poor

resource for equipping White students with the knowledge about race they need to challenge prevailing racist ideologies in society.

Although further research about how the school history curriculum presents race and how that presentation funds—or defunds—the concept, one useful typology for thinking about how race is presented in the curriculum comes from King (2004). King proposes a four-level typology for knowledge about race in the curriculum that moves from hegemony to autonomy:

1. Invisibilizing knowledge: Racial knowledge is buried in the curriculum within a focus on a monocultural society and uses the language of "we" and "our" to signal a notion of common interest. Contributions of Europeans and European Americans are regarded over all others. (p. 362)
2. Marginalizing knowledge: Racial knowledge in the curriculum conflates the experiences of different racial groups into one immigrant experience, where various groups are represented, but the nature of their representations distorts the specific (and harsh) realities of their lived experiences. For example, conflating the experiences of European Americans coming as immigrants to Ellis Island and African Americans coming as "forced immigrants" on slave trade ships. (p. 362)
3. Expanding knowledge: Racial knowledge is present in the curriculum through the addition of expanding canons; for example, adding African American literature to the curriculum without disrupting or interrogating the legitimacy of why the official curriculum represents a hegemonic European canon. (p. 363)
4. Deciphering knowledge: Racial knowledge in the curriculum is deciphered. Students consider how the official curriculum makes particular images, ideas, perspectives, values, and ideologies about race available through certain kinds of texts. Through deciphering the presence of race and racial ideology in ostensibly White texts, students are exposed to the belief structure about race imbued in text and other discourse. (p. 363-364)

What appeals to me about this typology from King (2004) is a link I see between deciphering knowledge and disciplinary literacy practices in history. For example, Wineburg and Reisman (2015) believe that disciplinary ways of reading historical sources hold value for young readers as they promote questioning and interrogating the author, thereby changing the "one-way relationship between the text and reader" (p. 637) so that students read as skeptics rather than consumers of information. Therefore, it might be the case that strategies for deciphering racial knowledge in historical texts and disciplinary literacy practices in history can synergize through

155

inquiry to open up possibilities for challenging racial ideologies. Yet, historical thinking practices do not specifically attend to race, and therefore more research is needed to understand how historical inquiry about African American history might be used to equip White students with deciphering knowledge about race and, in turn, how knowledge about race supports or hinders the development of historical consciousness.

Theoretical Framework

To study how their history education may—or may not—have prepared students to act in the world, I used a theoretical framework for history education known as historical consciousness. A term that finds its origins in German scholarship of the 1970s, historical consciousness is fundamentally about how humans, both individually and collectively, orient themselves in time and coordinate their interpretations of the past, understanding of the present, and outlook and perspectives on the future (Rüsen, 1993; Seixas, 2004).

I use Seixas' adaptation (2016) of Rüsen's framing of historical consciousness (1989) as my conceptual framework, as shown in Figure IV.1. The upper half of the figure (in blue) represents "disciplinary history." Here, students participate in disciplinary inquiry, which begins with posing questions and presenting initial theories about the past. Students then use historical methods and disciplinary practices in pursuit of their inquiry question(s). It is important to note that students bring their own unique sociocultural lens and historical orientation to bear as they participate in inquiry (Epstein, 2009; Levstik & Barton, 2008). As they further develop their historical knowledge through inquiry, they confirm, extend, and challenge ideas about the past held by themselves and others. Then, students represent their historical interpretations in forms such as written accounts. These historical representations make explicit and implicit arguments about the past.

156

The lower half of the figure (in red) represents "life practice," or the ways external elements outside of school, such as public memory and identity, shape students' orientation to the present and their interest in the past. Working through this conceptual cycle allows students to develop important aspects of their historical consciousness as they use disciplinary methods to challenge commonly held views about the past and use their academic experiences to reorient themselves in the present. In this study, I take up Seixas' (2016) call to investigate the interaction of these two—represented in the figure by the purple arrows and middle zone—by attending to how participation in classroom historical inquiry shapes students' historical knowledge of a particular topic and how this orients them towards the present day.

Figure IV.1. Theoretical framework for the development of historical consciousness

Figure IV.1. Theoretical framework for the development of historical consciousness from Seixas (2016).
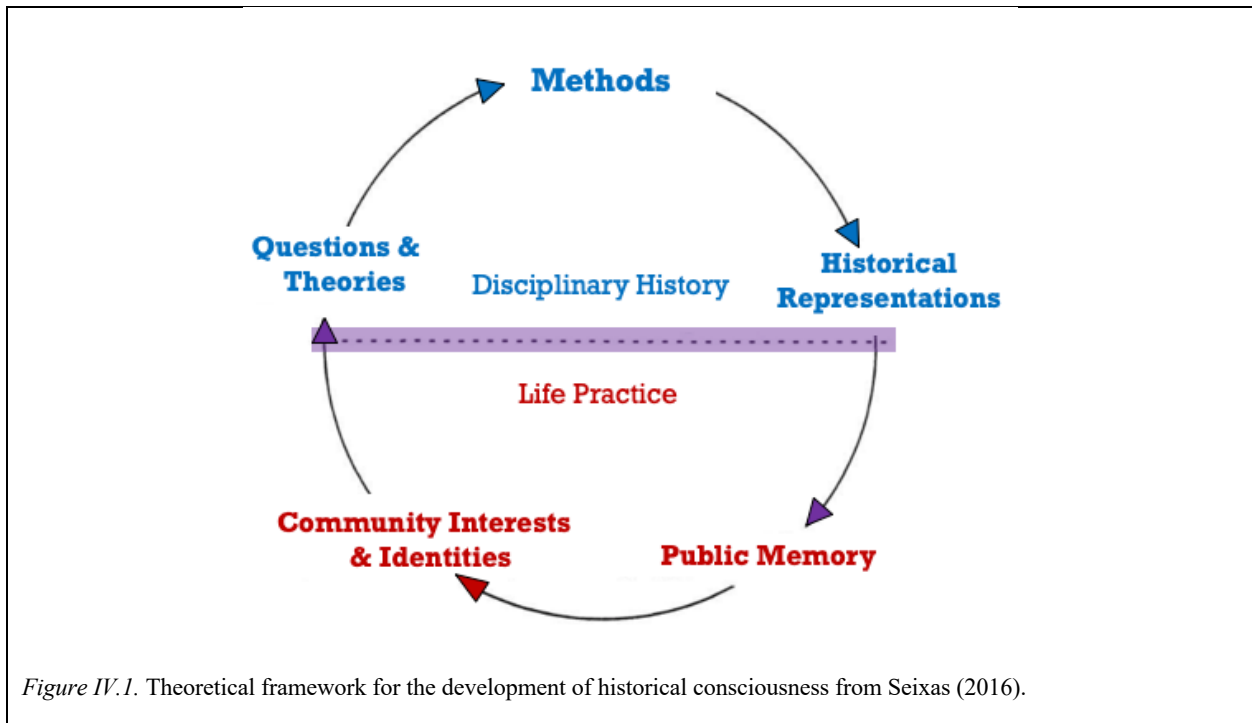
Context

I collected data for this paper during an ethnographic study of third-grade students' participation in a social studies inquiry curriculum taught by their teacher, Ms. Trisha McKinley,[6] during the 2017-2018 school year. Ms. McKinley was a veteran public-school teacher of 27 years at the time of data collection. Her curriculum included five primary subject areas: language arts, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. However, Ms. McKinley often taught science or social studies content throughout the school day by integrating it into portions of her language arts and writing instruction time. For example, during the inquiry on African American history, Ms. McKinley taught reading comprehension during the morning literacy block using books about topics such as enslavement or the civil rights movement; during writing time, when the students wrote historical narratives in response to their social studies inquiry questions; and during social studies lessons, when they participated in source analysis, mapping, and timelining activities. During my observations, it was common for me to witness three hours of instructional time focused on social studies content, given Ms. McKinley's integration of social studies, language arts, and writing.

African American history inquiry. The "Forced Immigration" inquiry lasted from November 2017 through January 2018, for a total of 10 school weeks. Prior to this inquiry, students spent August through September on an inquiry about immigration. Ms. McKinley organized the "Forced Immigration" inquiry through a set of questions that followed a chronological progression of African American history, as shown in Table IV.1.

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[6] All names used in this paper are pseudonyms.

Table IV.1

Organizing Questions for Forced Immigration Inquiry

Question Type	Question	Dates Taught	Days of Instruction
Compelling	*How does oppression force people to move to a new place?*	November 7, 2017-January 15, 2018	37
Supporting	*What is slavery?*	November 7-November 30, 2017	12
	How was our country divided during the Civil War?	December 1-December 15, 2017	11
	How did oppression after the Civil War cause/motivate African Americans to migrate? and *What cultural contributions did African Americans make on [our state]?*	December 18, 2017-January 15, 2018	14

During the inquiry, students built their historical content knowledge through reading and analysis of a variety of texts. Ms. McKinley did not use a standardized textbook during the inquiry; rather, the class read over three dozen texts including historical fiction literature, primary source documents, and informational texts. Ms. McKinley carefully integrated her social studies and literacy teaching, which meant she often taught genre- or text-specific reading practices as the students learned historical content. For example, when analyzing primary source images, Ms. McKinley asked students to use disciplinary reading heuristics (Wineburg, 1991); when reading historical fiction picture books, Ms. McKinley's students worked on reading practices such as determining the setting, plot, characters, problem-solution, and point of view, as well as comparing and contrasting texts.

159

Participants

My participants included Ms. McKinley and eight of the third graders she taught during the 2017-2018 school year, who consented to participate in interviews as part of this study. I invited families to participate in this study at Back-to-School night event held at the school site in August 2017 and provided them with consent information included as Appendix A. I primarily selected these focal students because their guardians consented to their participation in interviews. While all eight students identified as White, they represent some diversity in terms of gender, academic ability, and socioeconomic background (see Table IV.2).

Table IV.2
Student Participants

Name	Gender*	Race*	Reading Level**	Educational Services*	Free or Reduced-priced lunch?*
Allison	F	White	On		X
Blake	M	White	Below		X
Cassie	F	White	On		
Emily	F	White	Below	Title 1 for Reading	
John	M	White	Above	Talented and Gifted	
Lucy	F	White	Below		
Rebecca	F	White	On		
Will	M	White	On		

*These categories were reported by students' guardians on student consent forms.
**Reading levels were reported to me by Ms. McKinley

Data Sources

I used two data sources in this paper to understand the students' sensemaking about African American history: (a) students' written historical narratives in response to their inquiry questions and (b) one-on-one interviews with eight focal students before and after the African American history inquiry.

Written historical narratives. Students constructed written historical narratives that answered each of the inquiry's supporting questions as they participated in the African American history inquiry. I selected these narratives as a data source because historical narratives are

viewed as "the linguistic form within which historical consciousness realizes its function of orientation" (Rüsen, 1989, p. 42). In other words, historical narratives reveal how their authors orient themselves in time through the ways they interpret past events.

Ms. McKinley scaffolded the writing process through multiple whole-class lessons. She began by having students individually brainstorm keywords they thought might answer an inquiry question. Then, Ms. McKinley collected all of the students' keywords and typed them on smaller pieces of paper that could be sorted. Working as a class gathered around a table, the students sorted the words so that each paragraph had a main topic and supporting details. Ms. McKinley then recorded the organization of the keywords on a graphic organizer that students referred to as they wrote (see Figure IV.2). Students first handwrote their narratives, and they then read their narratives aloud to a voice-to-typing tool on Google Docs, which also produced an electronic copy. The voice-generated versions created in Google Docs are those I analyzed for this study.

Figure IV.2. Keyword Sorting Lesson

Figure IV.2. Ms. McKinley leads students through a keyword sorting lesson as they prepare to write their historical narratives in response to the inquiry question "What is Slavery?" She records the decisions the class makes about how to organize their narratives during the word sort on a graphic organizer.

Given the process students used to write their narratives, the students' writing followed the same organizational structure. As shown in Table IV.3, the first three paragraphs answered the question "What is slavery?" and included one paragraph about the slave trade, one about life under enslavement, and one about resistance to enslavement. Next, students wrote one paragraph about the U.S. Civil War and one about emancipation in response to the inquiry question "How was our country divided during the Civil War?" Last, students included three paragraphs in response to the question "How did oppression after the Civil War cause/motivate African Americans to migrate?" which focused on sharecropping, segregation, and lack of African American voting rights, respectively.

Table IV.3

Organization of Historical Narratives by Inquiry Question

Inquiry Question	Paragraph Number	Main Idea/Topic
What is slavery?	1	Slave Trade
	2	Life Under Enslavement
	3	Resistance to Enslavement
How was our country divided during the Civil War?	4	The Civil War
	5	Emancipation
How did oppression after the Civil War cause/motivate African Americans to migrate?	6	Sharecropping
	7	Legal Segregation
	8	Lack of Voting Rights

Although the structure for each student's narrative was the same, students produced their writing individually and made their own choices about the specific content and organization. Furthermore, the descriptive statistics, included in Table IV.4, show that students' narratives varied in their overall word count, with some students writing close to double the number of words as others. Coffin (2006) delineated four genres of arguments produced by students in history classrooms that range in complexity: historical recount, historical account, historical explanation, and historical argument. I define the writing in this study as *historical account*, as

162

the writing's purpose focused on accounting for why things happened in a particular sequence

and explaining, rather than simply recording the past (Coffin, 2006, p. 58).

Table IV.4
Historical Accounts: Descriptive Statistics*

Student	Word count	Number of sentences	Average words per sentence
Blake	303	34	8.9
Lucy	326	36	9
Emily	385	35	11
Rebecca	385	38	10.2
John	434	39	11.1
Will	505	44	11.5
Allison	569	51	11.2
Cassie	600	55	10.9
Average	438	42	10.4

**Note*. Table is organized in ascending order by word count

Student interviews. In order to further understand students' thinking, I interviewed the

eight student participants after the inquiry (see Appendix B for the interview protocol). Before

the interviews, students created a concept map as part of this study which asked them to write or

draw in response to their inquiry questions. During the interviews, I asked students more about

the history they included on their maps and various questions related to historical thinking

concepts. Interviews lasted between 10 and 15 minutes. I video-recorded the interviews and

transcribed the video recordings before I began analysis. In this paper, I decided to focus on a

subset of the interview data where all eight participants were able to share answers to the same

two questions. In the first question, I asked students to tell me which events and/or people from

their concept maps they believed were most important for future students to learn about if next

year's third-grade class had less time for the same inquiry overall. In the second question, I asked

students to tell me which people or events from their concept maps they cared about or were

most important to them. Since both questions asked students to make an argument that valued

some events and topics over others, I figured these narrations would help me understand how the students interpreted the history they studied.

<div align="center">**Data Analysis**</div>

Historical Narratives

To analyze the students' written historical accounts, I used a discourse analysis approach informed by systemic functional linguistics. Developed by Halliday (1985), this linguistic theory argues that human language is produced within a social context and that language both reflects and shapes the context in which it is used. Often, these meanings, construed through language, are not obvious to the reader, speaker, or listener. In an earlier study that examined how Ms. McKinley's students developed their conceptualizations of enslavement (see Chapter III), I found the students' written classwork about enslavement obscured the enslavers (and their motivations and identities) through the use of passive voice (e.g., "Slaves were captured from Africa" makes no mention of who was doing the capturing). Therefore, I selected a functional grammar approach to code students' historical writing because this approach allows us to understand how the text represents and evaluates the people, concepts, or events it presented. In particular, I used the grammatical coding to determine: (a) the *social actors* students represented in the text and (b) how the text explained the historical *cause*, *consequence*, and *change* for events within their narratives.

Social actors. As Schleppegrell (2004) explains, "from a functional perspective, an English clause can include a process, typically realized in a verb or verbal group; participants, typically realized in nouns or nominal groups; and circumstances, typically realized in prepositional phrases or adverbs" (p. 52). An example of this analysis is provided at (1) from Schleppegrell (2004) about how these linguistic features operate in English and at (2) from my

analysis of a clause from Allison's historical writing about the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

(1) In English	each clause	may include	a process, participants, and circumstances
(2) In 1870,	African American men	got to	vote
Circumstance	**Participant**	**Process**	**Participants**

I began by identifying the process in each clause (i.e., the verb) first, which then helped me identify the participants represented in each clause of the students' narratives. This allowed me to see the human actors presented in the text, such as "African American men" from (2). However, I only coded social actors if I could clearly understand the social actor's role in the oppressive history. Was the social actor presented as the victim, the oppressor, or a change agent who resisted the status quo? This question guided the first set of codes I applied to the data: *victim, oppressor,* and/or *change agent.* For example, at (3) I share an analysis of the full paragraph from Allison using a color-coded scheme for each: Purple language indicates the victimized social actors ("African American men," "blacks"), blue language indicates the oppressors ("White people"), and green language indicates the change agents ("Martin Luther King Jr.," "people").

(3)   Last, there was a lack of voting rights. In 1870 **African American men** got to vote, but many didn't because there was violence and poll taxes for them, but not white men. **White people** tried to keep them from voting by making **blacks** take literacy tests and pay poll taxes. There were many protests because of unequal rights. Marches were held by **Martin Luther King Jr**. It took many **people** standing up to get voting rights.

Notice that "African American men" is coded as oppressed because "many didn't [vote] because there was violence and poll taxes for them, but not white men"; however, I do not code "white

165

men" in that sentence since they are used to make a comparison, and thereby are not understood as victims, oppressors, or change agents from that sentence alone. In the next sentence, though, "White people" is coded as the oppressors because Allison explicitly states that Whites committed voting fraud by "making blacks take literacy tests and pay poll taxes" and thereby implicates them as the oppressors. Although Allison did not use them in this paragraph, I made a choice not to code pronouns (e.g., she, them) as social actors unless the writer did not clearly identify the person or group they referenced.

After determining the social actors as victims, oppressors, and change agents, I noticed that students often presented the social actors as either individual human actors or abstract groups. For example, only one of the seven social actors presented by Allison at (3) is an individual human actor ("Martin Luther King Jr."); the other six are abstractions realized though nominal groups: "African American men," "white men," "White people," "blacks," and "people." These two categories are referred to as *individualization* (i.e., naming individuals) and *assimilation* (i.e., naming groups) in Critical Discourse Analysis, respectively (see Van Leeuwen, 2008), and I added them to my coding scheme to further delineate how students used language in their writing.

Finally, I created one last code, *nonhuman actors*, as I noticed that some of the social actors were even more abstract participants than the nominalizations included by Allison at (3). For example, students included nonhuman social actors which were realized through the grammatical transformation of a noun to a verb such as "slave auctions" at (4) and "safe houses" at (5):

(4)   The **slave auction** split some families apart. (Lucy)

(5)   **Safe houses** would help slaves escape to the next station. (Emily)

The final coding scheme revealed the ways students represented social relationships in their historical narratives, shown at (6):

(6) **Individualization**			Martin Luther King Jr.
Assimilation	African American men, blacks	White people	people
Non-human		slave auction	safe houses
	Victims	**Oppressor**	**Change Agents**

Cause, consequence, and change. After determining the social actors contained within each narrative, I coded how students expressed the cause, consequence, and change for each event they studied. To do so, I coded the language students used to express temporality and causality. From a functional linguistics approach, writers of history express temporality and causality through the use of temporal references that build real time (e.g., "In 1619") and temporal references (e.g., after, then) used to scaffold the explanation being offered (Schleppegrell, 2004). Furthermore, when conjunctions are used in history texts, they often express results, imply causality, or construe conditional meaning. For example, at (7) we can see how Will uses both a temporal reference ("In 1870") and a conjunction ("but") when explaining the African American voter suppression after the Civil War:

(7) **In 1870,** the 15th Amendment was made to the Constitution.
It said that black men could vote.
But they still had to do poll taxes and take a literacy test.

The coding of the temporal references and conjunctions, in addition to the social actors, helped me make sense of the students' arguments. I coded the specific language for cause, consequence, and change under descriptive categories which I report in the findings. For a further example of the coding used in this study, see Appendix C.

Interviews. After being out of the field for some months, I first began by watching the video recordings of each student's post-inquiry interview. As I watched these eight interviews, I

167

filled in a simple table that listed the interview questions across the top with the responses from each student. There were two sets of questions that all students were able to provide answers to during the interview, so I decided to pursue these responses since I was interested in comparing students in order to understand differences in their sensemaking about African American history. The first set of question asked students to tell me which events and/or people from the inquiry they believe were most important for future students to learn about if next year's third-grade class had less time for the same inquiry overall. The second set of questions related to the concept of affective care for the people and events in the past: I asked students to tell me which people or events from their historical study they cared about or were most important to them. In total, the students provided 29 responses which were transcribed and coded. I used the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to develop a coding scheme. I read and compared students' responses, grouped by event, to begin to understand the ways the student comments revealed their uses of the past in the present and descriptive categories. For example, Allison said she cared about a civil rights icon—Ruby Bridges—because "she really care about what people were thinking about her or when a girl [segregationist] said she was gonna hang her and kill her too; she yelled that out a million times." Initially I applied the descriptive code *admired Bridge's resolve*; however, in the next round of coding I took commonly occurring descriptive codes and grouped them into categories by theme (Patton, 1990). For example, the excerpt from Allison's writing about Ruby Bridges was ultimately coded as *appreciates personal qualities*. Ultimately, this left me with a total of eight codes, as shown in Figure IV.3, that propose ways in which students used the past in the present.

Figure IV.3. Coding scheme for students' interview responses

USE OF THE PAST	STUDENTS' RESPONSES
To memorialize racial oppression	R M C B W L A
To appreciate change agents	A J R J R E L
To understand contemporary society	R E L A
To appreciate personal qualities	A A R
To memorialize sacrifice during war	L W A
To develop historical understandings	A J J
To acquire factual knowledge	B W

KEY

Event
- ENSLAVEMENT
- CIVIL WAR AND EMANCIPATION
- SEGREGATION
- VOTING RIGHTS

△ Important for other to study

○ Cared about

Students (N=8)
A= Allison
B= Blake
C= Cassie
E= Emily
J= John
L= Lucy
R= Rebecca
W= Will

Figure IV.3. Coding scheme for students' interview responses.

Findings

After participation in a historical inquiry centered on difficult events related to African American history (e.g., enslavement, sharecropping, segregation), how did eight White third-grade students understand the events they studied as evidenced through their written historical narratives and interviews? What do students' understandings indicate about their thinking related to agency and oppression? To answer these questions, I organize the findings by five historical events the students studied in chronological order from the 1600s through the 1960s: (a) enslavement, (b) the Civil War and emancipation, (c) sharecropping, (d) segregation, and (e) lack of African American voting rights. For each event, I begin by presenting an analysis of the students' written historical accounts. I share an overview of the language students used in their writing to represent the victimized social actors (*victims*), those oppressing the victimized social actors (*oppressor*), and the social actors named as resisting or changing the oppression (*change*

agents). In addition to providing a sense of who the students understood as taking part in each historical event, the language choices either rendered the social actors as more individual and concrete (e.g., Harriet Tubman) or downplay the human actors through abstraction (e.g., The South*)*. After presenting the human actors, I share an analysis of how students explained the cause and consequences of each event, as well as how the social actors identified as *change agents* resisted or changed the status quo. Lastly, I share instances from my interviews with the students where they named that particular event—or social actors related to it—as historically significant or personally worthwhile.

Enslavement: "Slavery was a Hard Time for Slaves"

Historical writing. Students wrote the first three paragraphs of their narratives in response to the inquiry question "What is slavery?" Prompted by the graphic organizer they developed together as a class, students all began their accounts by describing the slave trade in the first paragraph, followed by an explanation of life under enslavement, and, finally, resistance to enslavement.

Social actors. Table IV.5 shows the language students used to describe the social actors within the first three paragraphs of their historical accounts. Students mentioned the oppressed social actors most frequently, accounting for about half of all social actors mentioned (48%). When students named the oppressed group, they almost always named enslaved people as a generalized group—"slaves" (85%). However, two students—John and Cassie—used more specific and racialized language, "Africans," which accounted for 15% of the total references to the victimized group. Allison and Cassie also named a specific individual human actor as a victim of enslavement: Harriet Tubman (5%). For example, Cassie wrote: "Another abolitionist was Harriet Tubman. She was born a slave."

Table IV.5

Social Actors Included in Students' Historical Accounts About Enslavement (N=8)

Social Actors	Assimilation	Individualization	Nonhuman	Total	%*
Victims	**36**	**2**	**0**	**38**	**47%**
"slaves"	32	0	0	32	84%
"Africans"	4	0	0	4	11%
"Harriet Tubman"	0	2	0	2	5%
Oppressor	**16**	**0**	**1**	**17**	**21%**
"master"	9	0	0	9	53%
"overseer"	7	0	0	7	42%
"slave auction"	0	0	1	1	5%
Change agents	**20**	**5**	**1**	**26**	**32%**
"slaves"	11	0	0	11	42%
"abolitionists"	9	0	0	9	35%
"Harriet Tubman"	0	3	0	3	12%
"Sojourner Truth"	0	2	0	2	8%
"safe houses"	0	0	1	1	3%
Total number of social actors mentioned:	**72**	**7**	**2**	**81**	**100%**

*Bold is the percentage of victims, oppressors, and change agents for all narratives; non-bold percentages are percentages within one of those categories (i.e., victims, oppressors, and change agents).

Students mentioned the oppressors less frequently than the victims, accounting for 21% of all social actors mentioned. In addition to mentioning them less overall, the students used more abstract language when describing the oppressors, with no students mentioning individual human actors as enslavers. Rather they assimilated them into groups—either "masters" or "overseers"—95% of the time. One student, Lucy, named a nonhuman actor, which accounts for the other 5% of the total references to the oppressor; her grammar implicated the "slave auction" as the source of the oppression, writing: "The *slave auction* split some families apart." This nominalization of the slave auction functions to render the human enslavers' identity and motivations invisible.

Students named social actors as change agents who resisted enslavement more often than the oppressors (32% of all social actors). Students named 42% of social actors resisting

enslavement as "slaves," while 35% of these social actors were "abolitionists." In addition to these two assimilated groups, some students explicitly named individuals as resisting enslavement. This included Harriet Tubman (12%) and Sojourner Truth (8%). One student, Emily, also named a nonhuman actor, "safe houses," as resisting enslavement (3%).

Cause, consequence, and change. In their narratives, students did not provide an explanation for the cause of the slave trade in their first paragraphs, as shown in Table IV.6. Grammatically, students accomplished this through the use of passive voice in their writing about the slave trade, which meant that each clause only had one participant. For example, notice how Cassie's paragraph at (1) references the victims in bold (*Africans, they, you, they)*, but no other participants:

> (1) In 1619, **Africans** *were taken* from Africa against their will
> **They** were taken from the slave coast
> and [they] [*were*] *put* on slave ships
> **you** *were cept* [kept] under the deck for 23 hours
> And [you] *could only* come up for one hour a day
> In America **they** *got sold* at the slave auction.

In Cassie's writing, like that of her peers, events are presented as something that just happened, as students use the passive verb processes to omit the participants doing the actions to the enslaved and thereby effacing the enslavers' identities, including their race, and their motives.

Table IV.6
Explanations of Cause, Consequence, and Change Related to Enslavement in Students'
Historical Accounts (N=8)

	Total number of students	% of students
Cause		
plantation labor	8	100%
Consequence		
slaves taken on ships	8	100%
slaves sold	8	100%
slaves worked on plantations	8	100%
slaves taken against their will	7	88%
slaves endured ship's conditions	7	88%
slaves split from families	7	88%
slaves whipped/punished by overseer	6	75%
slaves inspected by their masters	5	63%
slaves got sick or died	2	25%
Change		
slaves escaped to freedom on the Underground Railroad	8	100%
abolitionists helped slaves escape to freedom	6	75%
Harriet Tubman helped slaves escape to freedom	3	38%
Sojourner Truth helped slaves escape to freedom	2	25%

*Note. Indicates total number of students who included specific cause, consequence, or change in their accounts.

Whereas no students provided the cause of the slave trade, all students did show an awareness of plantation labor, which indicated the economic motivation for enslavement. John, for example, explained that after enslaved people were sold at an auction, "The slaves were on plantations where their masters owned them."

Students wrote fluently about the consequences of enslavement but framed the consequences only as they related to the victims. All students, for example, wrote that enslaved people endured the horrors of being forced onto ships, sold at auctions, and taken to labor on plantations. Others included a host of other consequences for enslaved people as well, including being taken against their will (88%), enduring harsh conditions on slave ships (88%), being split from their families (88%), getting whipped or punished by an overseer (75%), being inspected by their master (63%), and getting sick or dying (25%). The conjunction analysis also revealed that the six students who wrote about getting whipped or punished by an overseer all included the

173

word *if*, which grammatically established punishment as a consequence of the enslaved people's misbehavior, as in the following example from Emily at (2) and Will at (3):

> (2) **If** you did not work, the overseer would whip you.

> (3) The overseer would whip slaves **if** they did not do their work.

As evidenced by these excerpts, the students' historical writing about enslavement followed a pattern of thinking about oppression "in terms of its consequences on the victims" (Morrison, 1992, p. 11).

All students also mentioned efforts to resist enslavement in their accounts by explaining that enslaved people escaped on the Underground Railroad. Furthermore, six students (75%) included that abolitionists helped enslaved people escape to freedom, with some students naming Harriet Tubman (38%) or Sojourner Truth (25%) specifically.

Interviews. During one-on-one interviews with the students at the conclusion of the inquiry, six students out of eight—Allison, Blake, Cassie, John, Rebecca, and Will—argued that Ms. McKinley should teach about the history of enslavement in the next school year.

Half of these students argued that learning about enslavement was important for memorializing its consequences for enslaved people. These responses from students mirrored the patterns in their accounts as they discussed enslavement in terms of its consequences for the victims. For example, Rebecca said students specifically needed to learn about the mistreatment of African Americans:

> They [future third graders] should know how they [enslaved people] were treated; how the people were treated and what they would have to go through in their lives. There was a lot of bad things about what they [enslavers] did to other human beings.

Similar to Rebecca, Will viewed teaching about enslavement as important as; he believed "a lot of people don't know that much, like what they [enslavers] did to them, like how they [enslaved

people] worked and what violence they did to them." Cassie responded that learning about enslavement is essential because it can teach students "to don't treat people really bad [sic], like animals and stuff." Cassie's response also indicated she thought about the historical events in terms of the mistreatment of African Americas, similar to Will and Rebecca.

Allison and John provided a similar justification for learning about enslavement. Both students told me they believed enslavement was a significant event as it led to subsequent events in U.S. history. Allison explained, "it wouldn't make sense to learn about the Civil War and the lack of voting rights, if they [future students] didn't even learn about how they were forced from Africa," which indicated she understood there was a causal relationship between the slave trade, the Civil War, and African American voter suppression in the 20th century. John provided a similar response, but described the relationship between enslavement and later historical events with slightly more elaboration than Allison:

> If you learned about sharecropping, then you would know it's kinda like slavery. You would know that the Civil War happened because of that [enslavement], and you would know that these oppressions [segregation, voting rights suppression] happened because they couldn't have slavery anymore.

The last student who identified enslavement as a topic worth teaching about next school year, Blake, did not share his reasoning beyond commenting that students should learn about enslavement "to inform them of how slavery was."

During the post-inquiry interviews, Blake and Will also said they cared about enslaved people. Blake said he cared about "slaves" because they got treated unfairly and because they get "whipped and hurt." Blake's focus on memorializing violent oppression contrasted with Will's response, which focused on both enslaved people's oppression and agency: "I do like slaves 'cause they tried to escape. They mostly got caught, but some got away."

175

In sum, the students' historical writing and interviews seem to suggest a pattern of thinking about enslavement without much emphasis on the motivations of the enslavers. Allison's concluding sentence to this section of her account summed up an idea that all students came to understand: "Slavery was a hard time for slaves."

The Civil War and Emancipation: "The law said no more slavery"

Historical writing. Next in their historical accounts, students wrote two paragraphs about the U.S. Civil War and emancipation in response to the inquiry question "How was our country divided during the Civil War?"

Social actors. As evidenced by Table IV.7, inclusion of the victims was missing from students' accounts about the U.S. Civil War and emancipation. Rather, students included social actors who favored enslavement (20%) and those they viewed as enacting change (80%) during this portion of their accounts.

Table IV.7

Social Actors Included in Students' Historical Accounts about the Civil War and Emancipation (N=8)

Social Actors	Assimilation	Individualization	Nonhuman	Total	%*
Victims	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0%**
Oppressor	**1**	**3**	**1**	**5**	**20%**
"Robert E. Lee"	0	3	0	3	60%
"The Confederates"	1	0	0	1	20%
"The South"	0	0	1	1	20%
Change agents	**1**	**16**	**8**	**25**	**80%**
"Abraham Lincoln"	0	13	0	13	42%
"13th Amendment"	0	0	6	6	35%
"Ulysses S. Grant"	0	3	0	3	12%
"The North"	0	0	2	2	8%
"The Union"	1		0	1	3%
Total number of social actors mentioned:	**2**	**19**	**9**	**30**	**100%**

*Bold is the percentage of victims, oppressors, and change agents for all narratives; non-bold percentages are percentages within one of those categories (i.e., victims, oppressors, and change agents).

I coded a social actor as an oppressor in this section of the writing if the student explicitly mentioned that the social actor was in favor of enslavement. Three students mentioned "Robert E. Lee," a Confederate war general, making up 60% of the time students mentioned oppressors overall. These instances mark the first time in their accounts where students made reference to a specific individual in favor of enslavement; previously they were assimilated groups (e.g., masters, overseers). In addition, two other students included oppressive social actors in their narratives. Will assimilated the oppressors into an abstract group of people he referred to as "The Confederates" (20%), while Lucy named a nonhuman social actor, "The South" (20%).

Students largely focused their narratives around change agents credited for trying to end enslavement. Students mentioned President "Abraham Lincoln" most frequently—just over half of all social actors in this category (52%)—which made him the most frequently named individual in the students' narratives up to this point. Students also included the 13th Amendment as a nonhuman social actor that ultimately ended enslavement (35% of all change agents

177

mentioned). A smaller number of accounts mentioned other social actors as change agents:

"Ulysses S. Grant" (12%), "The North" (8%), and "The Union" (3%).

Cause, consequence, and change. All of the students—with the exception of Cassie—

wrote that enslavement was the central cause of the Civil War, as shown in Table IV.8. For

example, Blake established the details of the conflict and its cause as follows: **"The war lasted**

four long years. It was from 1861 through 1865. They fought over slavery."

Table IV.8
Explanations of Cause, Consequence, and Change Related to the Civil War and Emancipation in Students' Historical Accounts (N=7*)

	Total number of students	% of students
Cause		
legal enslavement	6	86%
Consequence		
13th Amendment abolished enslavement	7	100%
Abraham Lincoln assassinated	3	43%
Change		
Abraham Lincoln wrote the Emancipation Proclamation	7	100%
Ulysses S. Grant led the Civil War to end enslavement	3	43%
Abraham Lincoln wrote the 13th Amendment to abolish enslavement	2	29%
North/Union fought to abolish enslavement	2	29%

**Note.* Indicates total number of students who included specific cause, consequence, or change in their accounts. Emily's writing for this section was missing.

All focal students (100%) wrote that abolition of legal enslavement was the central

consequence of the war and named the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as enacting this

change. In addition, three students also included the assassination of Abraham Lincoln as another

consequence (43%). Lucy, for example, named both consequences at (4). Notice Lucy used the

temporal reference "last but not least," which signals to the reader these are final consequences

of the war.

> (4) **Last but not least**, the 13th Amendment changed the Constitution.
> It was a new law saying no more slavery!
> Lincoln was also assassinated.

Mentions of Abraham Lincoln in this section made him the most often individualized social actor in students' narratives up to this point. Students credited him with attempting to abolish enslavement through the Emancipation Proclamation; however, they also mentioned the speech was ineffective and, thus, the constitutional amendment was needed. For example, at (5) Will used "last" to signal that the 13th Amendment was needed after the Emancipation Proclamation "didn't work" to free enslaved people:

> (5) Abe Lincoln wrote a speech called the Emancipation Proclamation.
> The South did not really agree with the Emancipation Proclamation,
> the speech didn't work.
> **Last,** the 13th Amendment was made to the Constitution
> when they had to change it to a law.
> The law said no more slavery!

A smaller number of students included that Ulysses S. Grant led the war against enslavement (43%) or that "The North" (29%) or "The Union" (29%) fought to abolish enslavement.

Interviews. During the interviews, half of the students—Allison, Lucy, Rebecca, and Will—argued that Ms. McKinley should teach about the Civil War next school year. Allison, along with John and Rebecca, said that students should learn about Abraham Lincoln. However, whether these students said that the Civil War or Abraham Lincoln were important to study, somewhere in their explanations all students said that this event or person was important to the abolition of enslavement.

Allison, Lucy, and Will made very similar arguments about why Ms. McKinley should teach about the Civil War; all three students said learning about the Civil War is important for memorializing the sacrifice of those who fought and died:

Allison: I think that they [future students] should be knowing [sic] that it's the bloodiest war, and how so many people died in that war. I think it was 600,000 who died.

| Lucy: | It's important because it was the bloodiest war. And it's really important to a lot of people because some people died, more than a lot of people died. |
| Will: | One really important part of our history like a lot of men died and they didn't want to die for nothing—they wanted to die for not having slavery. |

Differing from these three responses, Rebecca argued that learning about the Civil War held value for understanding contemporary society:

> It was one of the things that made us free and if we didn't have the war, we probably wouldn't be how we are today. We might not have as much freedom and as much equal rights [sic] and slavery might still be going on if we didn't have the Civil War.

This response indicated Rebecca believed that studying the Civil War would help students in understanding the present, such as how we derived modern-day freedoms and legal rights. This interpretation from Rebecca is reflected in her narrative as she—like many of her peers—credited the war with changing the U.S. Constitution.

Allison, John, and Rebecca all spoke about the importance of Abraham Lincoln because they credited him with improving conditions and expanding legal rights for African American people.

Allison and John both said they believed that third graders should learn about Abraham Lincoln next school year. Allison specifically cited Lincoln's support for abolishing enslavement in the United States Constitution, which helped African American people:

> They need to know how a lot of people hated him, especially in the South because he wanted to free their slaves. And so, after that law came [13th Amendment], and he was watching a play at Ford's theater—I always forget the name of who shot him. Even though a lot of people hated him in the South, he was still a really good President to make that law. **He had an amazing life and he helped the African Americans actually have a good life, too.**

Similarly, John commented that students should learn about Lincoln because he "never wanted the Civil War to start and he worked to end slavery."

Two students, John and Rebecca, also said they cared about Lincoln. When I asked John why he cared about Abraham Lincoln, he provided a similar explanation as to why he believed students should learn about him—because he was a change agent who was "trying to stop the Civil War and stop slavery" and that these actions cost Lincoln his life: "because of him stopping slavery, he died because somebody was mad that slavery was over and shot him."

Rebecca, who also said she cared about President Abraham Lincoln, and commented similarly: "He was strong, but he was kind because he tried really hard to get slavery over and all those oppressions over. He tried his best, but he didn't quite get them all over before he got assassinated."

In sum, students' historical writing and interview comments credited President Lincoln for his role in the abolition of enslavement, but they were clear that a legal remedy, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, made the final change. As Blake summarized plainly, the key takeaway after the Civil War was that "the law said no more slavery."

Sharecropping: "They worked just as hard"

Historical writing. After writing about the Civil War and emancipation, students included a paragraph about sharecropping in their historical accounts. This was the first paragraph in response to the inquiry question "How did oppression after the Civil War cause or motivate African Americans to migrate?"

Social actors. Whereas students did not name any social actors as victims in the previous section about the Civil War and emancipation, they mentioned the victimized social actors most frequently (50%) when writing about sharecropping. As shown in Table IV.9, all students used assimilation terms when referring to the oppressed group: "freedmen" (59%), "sharecropper" (25%), "black people" (8%), and "freed slaves" (8%). Lucy's use of the term "black people" is

181

the first time we see her name the race of the victim in her narrative, making her the third student to do so after John and Cassie, who mentioned "Africans" earlier in their narratives. Just as students used assimilation terms to name the victimized group under sharecropping, they did the same when naming the oppressor. Students most commonly referred to them as "landowners" (82%), but also mentioned there were still "overseers" (18%) during this period. However, regardless of whether they used language naming landowners or overseers, no students identified the race of the oppressors in their paragraphs about sharecropping. Only one student, Blake, also named "freedmen" as change agents.

Table IV.9

Social Actors Included in Students' Historical Accounts about Sharecropping (N=8)

Social Actors	Assimilation	Individualization	Nonhuman	Total	%*
Victims	**12**	**0**	**0**	**12**	**50%**
"freedmen"	7	0	0	7	59%
"sharecropper"	3	0	0	3	25%
"black people"	1	0	0	1	8%
"freed slaves"	1	0	0	1	8%
Oppressor	**11**	**0**	**0**	**11**	**46%**
"landowner"	9	0	0	9	82%
"overseer"	2	0	0	2	18%
Change agents	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**4%**
"freedmen"	1	0	0	1	100%
Total number of social actors mentioned:	**24**	**0**	**0**	**24**	**100%**

*Bold is the percentage of victims, oppressors, and change agents for all narratives; non-bold percentages are percentages within one of those categories (i.e., victims, oppressors, and change agents).

Cause, consequence, and change. As evidenced by Table IV.10, students named the cause and consequences in a very uniform way. No students provided a cause for the system of sharecropping; however, all students did explicitly acknowledge that the end of enslavement gave rise to sharecropping. Some students, such as John at (6) and Will at (7), used temporal references to signal the relationship between enslavement and sharecropping:

182

(6) **After slavery,** sharecropping came. It was like slavery, you lived in an old slave quarter and you didn't have that much food.

(7) **From 1865 to the 1900s,** it was sort of like slavery and the conditions were very bad.

Similar to the ways they wrote about the origins of enslavement, students presented sharecropping as something that just happened. For example, we can see in John's writing at (6) that sharecropping just "came," and in Will's writing at (7) he claims sharecropping began after the U.S. Civil War (1865), but does not provide a cause as to why it started. All students included three consequences of sharecropping for freedmen: that they continued to labor in fields, had to share half their money with the landowner, and that their living conditions were similar to those experienced under enslavement.

Table IV.10
Explanations of Cause, Consequence, and Change Related to Sharecropping (N=8)

	Total number of students	% of students
Cause		
end of enslavement	8	100%
Consequence		
freedmen required to share money with landowner	8	100%
freedmen lived in conditions similar to those under enslavement	8	100%
freedmen worked in the fields	8	100%
Change		
freedmen could earn money to migrate	1	12.5%

Whereas students said that abolitionists had helped enslaved people escape before the Civil War, students were far less likely to mention any possibility of escaping sharecropping. However, one student, Blake, wrote: "They had to earn their money to migrate to other places." This indicated he saw the freedmen as having some agency within the constraints of the system. Other students were less optimistic about the sharecropper's prospects for change, such as Lucy who wrote: "It was hard to earn enough money to leave the South."

During our interviews, no students named sharecropping as an event they believed Ms. McKinley should teach about next school year or one that they felt personally connected to. However, the uniformity of their narratives provides insight into the ways students made sense of sharecropping—as a form of economic oppression. As Cassie summarized, under sharecropping "[t]hey worked just as hard."

Segregation: "Signs separated colored and white people"

Historical writing. As students continued to respond to the inquiry question "How did oppression after the Civil War cause or motivate African Americans to migrate?" they wrote a paragraph about legal segregation.

Social Actors. As shown in Table IV.11, 31% of all social actors named by the students in this paragraph were those oppressed by segregation. Students used racialized terms to describe the victims when writing about segregation as they made reference to the assimilated groups "Black people" (60%) or "African Americans" (40%). This marked the first time in their narratives that students uniformly used racial terms to refer to the victimized social actors, although three students (Cassie, John, and Lucy) had also named the race of the victimized social actors previously.

Table IV.11

Social Actors Included in Students' Historical Accounts about Segregation (N=8)

Social Actors	Assimilation	Individualization	Nonhuman	Total	%*
Victims	**10**	**0**	**0**	**10**	**31%**
"Black people"	6	0	0	6	60%
"African Americans"	4	0	0	4	40%
Oppressor	**3**	**0**	**6**	**9**	**28%**
"signs"	0	0	3	3	33%
"Jim Crow laws"	0	0	2	2	22%
"some people/the people who like segregation"	2	0	0	2	23%
"police"	1	0	0	1	11%
"segregation"	0	0	1	1	11%
Change agents	**5**	**8**	**0**	**13**	**41%**
"activists"	3	0	0	3	23%
"Rosa Parks"	0	3	0	3	23%
"Martin Luther King Jr."	0	2	0	2	14%
"Ruby Bridges"	0	1	0	1	8%
"Edna Griffin"	0	1	0	1	8%
"Greensboro Four"	1	0	0	1	8%
"Thurgood Marshall"	0	1	0	1	8%
"Little Rock Nine"	1	0	0	1	8%
Total number of social actors mentioned:	**18**	**8**	**6**	**32**	**100%**

*Bold is the percentage of victims, oppressors, and change agents for all narratives; non-bold percentages are percentages within one of those categories (i.e., victims, oppressors, and change agents).

Students' use of racialized terms to describe the victims contrasted sharply with the language used to describe the oppressors. Although students named the oppressors nearly as often as the victims, they primarily identified nonhuman social actors as perpetrating racial segregation with just over half of all references to the oppressor named as "signs" (33%) or "Jim Crow Laws" (22%). For example, both Blake at (8) and John at (9) used these nominalizations, which obscure the human agents behind segregation:

> (8) **Signs** separated colored and white people. There were no equal rights for black people.

> (9) **Jim Crow laws** made it so no African Americans could go into white areas.

In Blake's writing, he included mention of "white people," however, the grammatical construction of his writing implicated the "signs" as doing the action ("separated"). Similarly, John also mentioned the "white areas," but implicated the "Jim Crow laws" as committing the oppression, not White people. Two other students named the oppressors as human, but their references were vague mentions of assimilated groups of "people" who were in favor of segregation without any further details included (23%). Cassie at (10), for example, wrote:

(10) **The people who wanted segregation** segregated everything.

Emily also mentioned human actors as an assimilated group of oppressors—"the police"—for their role in arresting Martin Luther King Jr (11%). Last, Will at (11) used the nominalized term "segregation" as the social actor responsible for separating people by race.

(11) **Segregation** separated black and white people.

When writing about segregation, students included change agents most often, naming them 13 times in total (41% of all social actors mentioned). Five mentions of the change agents were assimilated groups—either "activists" (23%), "The Greensboro Four" (8%), or "The Little Rock Nine" (8%)—the latter two groups referring to the four student activists who started sit-in protests against segregation at lunch counters in Greensboro, North Carolina and the nine students who integrated a segregated school in Little Rock, Arkansas, respectively. However, students named the majority of change agents resisting segregation as individual, Black human actors: "Rosa Parks" (23%), "Martin Luther King Jr." (14%), "Ruby Bridges" (8%), "Edna Griffin" (8%), and "Thurgood Marshall" (8%).

Cause, consequence, and change. In their historical accounts, the students did not explicitly provide a cause for racial segregation, as shown in Table IV.12. Since they largely portrayed segregation as caused by nonhuman actors (i.e., "signs," "Jim Crow Laws") students

186

presented segregation as something that "just happened" similar to the ways they portrayed the causes of the slave trade and sharecropping.

Table IV.12
Explanations of Cause, Consequence, and Change Related to Segregation (N=8)

	Total number of students	% of students
Cause		
none named	8	100%
Consequence		
racially segregated facilities	8	100%
unequal rights for African Americans	4	50%
Change		
Activists stood up against segregation	3	37.5%
Rosa Parks did not give up her seat on the bus/led bus boycott	2	25%
Martin Luther King Jr. led marches and gave speeches	1	12.5%
Ruby Bridges stood up against segregation	1	12.5%
Edna Griffin started a sit-in against segregated lunch counters	1	12.5%
Greensboro Four started a sit-in against segregated lunch counters	1	12.5%
Thurgood Marshall argued against school segregation before the Supreme Court	1	12.5%
The Little Rock Nine stood up against segregation	1	12.5%

While students did not share the motivations behind racial segregation, all students did mention that a consequence of legal segregation was segregated facilities. They did this by mentioning various sites of segregation (e.g., neighborhoods, jails). Blake, who said that "signs" separated people at (8), explained at (12) these signs appeared in many places:

> (12)   There were signs put on hotels, that said white and colored only at laundromats, drinking fountains, bathrooms, and many other places.

Although Blake indicated he understood the consequences of segregation in terms of how it organized society, he makes use of the passive voice ("there were signs put") which obscures the human actors who put the signs on the public facilities he named. In addition to all students naming segregated facilities as a consequence of segregation, half of the students also included that segregation created unequal rights for African Americans.

187

Finally, students included an array of change agents who stood up to segregation. However, students' descriptions were relatively short on detail. For example, Rebecca wrote at (13) that "activists" and individual change agents stood up against segregation, but does not explain how this occurred:

(13)   There are some activists that didn't like segregation and the Jim Crow laws. Rosa Parks, the Little Rock Nine, and Ruby Bridges stood up against segregation to try and stop it.

The most specific description of the resistance to segregation came from Emily, who described the efforts of Martin Luther King Jr. at (14) and the backlash he faced:

(14)   Martin Luther King Jr. wanted to help stop segregation.
He did speeches and led marches.
But helping stop segregation made some people mad at him.
The police arrested him many times but he did not stop.

Emily used the conjunction "but" to construe the resistance King faced in his efforts against segregation.

Interviews. Three students—Emily, John, and Will—discussed the importance of teaching about segregation to next year's third graders. Additionally, Lucy argued that students should learn about Ruby Bridges specifically.

Emily and Lucy's comments were similar in that they argued that learning the history of segregation is important so that students understand it no longer exists. Emily told me that students need to learn about segregation because "it was such a big thing; everything was segregated and now it's not." Similarly, Lucy said that Ms. McKinley should teach students about Ruby Bridges, an African American woman who integrated an all-White school as a child in 1960, "because she was the first person to go to first grade [at an all-White school] and then somebody said that segregation is over, so nobody can be afraid to go to school anymore." Although Emily and Lucy both oversimplify racial progress since the civil rights era in these

188

comments, their focus on the end of segregation—rather than its beginnings—match the focus of their historical accounts. Furthermore, in neither comment is it obvious who is doing the segregating, and, in the case of Lucy, who ended it ("somebody").

John argued that studying segregation would help students develop their understanding of the past since segregation related to other historical oppressions, such as lack of voting rights and sharecropping, which is a similar to his response arguing for the importance of teaching about enslavement:

> Segregation is probably the most important [event to teach about] because that kinda goes with the lack of voting rights, too. That was kind of like segregation on voting. And segregation is pretty much in sharecropping because Whites didn't have to do it, only Blacks had to do it.

Will, the final student who told me that segregation was an important topic to study, argued that students should learn about segregation to develop positive ethics, saying: "It's important for them to learn about segregation because they can learn how to treat people the way you want to be treated."

Students also named segregation, Edna Griffin, and Ruby Bridges as events and/or people in the past they cared for. Allison said she cared that segregation ended because "if segregation didn't stop, then now we wouldn't even have [sic] Black kids at our school." This indicated that Allison considered what segregation in the past meant for her experiences in the present, but like Emily and Lucy, Allison's comment showed she viewed the end of segregation as definitive. Lucy also said she cared about segregation, but expressed she viewed it as unfair for African Americans: "They were the people [African Americans] that had to get split up, and we [Whites] weren't the people that had to get split up. So, it's not really fair that they had to get split up and we didn't." While Lucy's comment suggests she felt sympathetic that African Americans

endured the injustice of segregation, her language does not clearly reveal who was responsible for segregation or why segregation laws specifically targeted African American citizens.

Both Allison and Rebecca said they cared about Edna Griffin for her role in the civil rights movement. Griffin was a civil rights activist and plaintiff in *State of Iowa v. Katz* (1949), a court case that challenged segregated seating practices in drug stores in the Midwest. Both students praised Griffin for her personal qualities, such as her capacity and resolve. Allison said she liked "how Edna Griffin started the sit-in to stop segregation." Similarly, Rebecca said she also appreciated Griffin's actions: "I like that she tried to stand up for people and she didn't like how she was being treated and she stood up for herself." Although Allison and Rebecca admired Griffin, both comments concealed the human actors she stood up to, with Allison using the nominalization "segregation" and Rebecca using the passive voice ("she didn't like how she was being treated") to omit who was doing the mistreatment.

Finally, Allison mentioned she cared about another civil rights icon during our interview because she also admired her personal qualities: Ruby Bridges. She specifically mentioned Bridges' resolve while integrating an all-White school despite repeated threats from a segregationist: "She didn't really care about what people were thinking about her or when a girl [segregationist] said she was gonna hang her and kill her too; she yelled that out a million times." In this comment Allison did mention an individual human actor who repeatedly threatened Bridges ("a girl"), which she learned about in a book about Ruby Bridges (Coles, 1995) that Ms. McKinley read aloud to the class. Other than this, students spoke of the oppressors during the time of segregation in more abstract terms than other events up to this point in their narratives. As Blake explained, after all, "*Signs* [emphasis added] separated colored and white people."

Voting Rights: "Almost 100 years later President Johnson made the Voting Rights Act so they could vote"

Historical writing. In the last paragraph of their narratives, students explained the struggle for African American voting rights from the period after the Civil War through the civil rights movement, which was investigated with the inquiry question "How were African Americans oppressed after the Civil War?"

Social Actors. When describing the victimized and oppressive social actors within their writing about voting rights, students used exclusively assimilated racial terms. Across their historical writing, students mentioned the oppressed social actors 29% of the time, as shown in Table IV.13. Similar to their writing about segregation, all students referred to the victimized social actors as an assimilated group—either "African American/Black men" or "African Americans/Blacks." Students mentioned the oppressed social actors far fewer times overall (12% of all social actors); however, they made uniform reference to "White people" as the oppressors. These references are the first time any students mentioned the race of the oppressors.

I coded social actors as change agents most frequently within this portion of the students' narratives (59%). The majority of these social actors were nonhuman: students included the "15th Amendment" to the U.S. Constitution, which enfranchised African American men, most often (29%), followed by the "Voting Rights Act," a legislative remedy to address disenfranchisement, which accounted for 21% of the social actors in this category. Beyond these nonhuman actors, students named two individuals as change agents: "Martin Luther King Jr." (25%) and President "Lyndon B. Johnson" (17%). A smaller number of students also referred to "activists" (8%) as social actors related to the struggle for voting rights.

191

Table IV.13

Social Actors Included in Students' Historical Accounts about Voting Rights (N=8)

Social Actors	Assimilation	Individualization	Nonhuman	Total	%*
Victims	**11**	**---**	**---**	**11**	**29%**
"African American men/black men"	8	---	---	8	73%
"African Americans/blacks"	3	---	---	3	27%
Oppressor	**3**	**---**	**---**	**3**	**12%**
"white people"	3	---	---	3	100%
Change agents	**2**	**10**	**12**	**24**	**59%**
"15th Amendment"	---	---	7	7	29%
"Martin Luther King Jr."	---	6	---	6	25%
"Voting Rights Act"	---	---	5	5	21%
"Lyndon B. Johnson"	---	4	---	4	17%
"activists"	2	---	---	2	8%
Total number of social actors mentioned:	**16**	**10**	**12**	**38**	**100%**

*Bold is the percentage of victims, oppressors, and change agents for all narratives; non-bold percentages are percentages within one of those categories (i.e., victims, oppressors, and change agents).

Cause, consequence, and change. Students' writing demonstrated limited sensemaking

about the cause of African American voters' disenfranchisement, as shown in Table IV.14.

Although all students wrote about poll taxes and/or literacy tests as means to prevent African

Americans from exercising their right to vote, no students included mention of any reason *why*

those in power created these barriers to African American suffrage. Half of the students also

included that violence was used as a means to prevent voting, but only in Lucy's writing at (15)

is there direct mention of Whites at the perpetrators of the violence:

> (15) White people tried to stop them with literacy tests, poll taxes, and sometime [sic] violence**.**

The other three students used grammar that made the perpetrators of the violence unclear,

including Allison at (16), Blake at (17), and John at (18):

(16) In 1870, African American men got to vote, but many didn't because there was violence and poll taxes for them, but not White men.

(17) They had to take literacy tests and they had to pay poll taxes and there was a lot violence.

(18) But white people did not like the Fifteenth Amendment and made African Americans pay poll taxes, pass literacy tests, and sometimes they had violence done to them.

Notice that Allison at (16) says there was not violence for White men but does not name who caused the violence for African American men. Similarly, Blake at (17) states there was violence, but does not mention who is involved. John at (18) shifts from active voice when describing poll taxes and literacy tests ("made African Americans pay poll taxes") to passive voice ("had violence done to them") when describing racial violence, which obscures who is doing the violence.

Of the three students who explicitly named "White people" as the oppressors in their writing—Allison, John, and Lucy—none suggested possible motivation. John at (18) above, for example, implicates Whites directly for African American voter disenfranchisement without regard for their motivations. John uses the conjunction "and" to implicate "White people" as those preventing African Americans from voting; however, there is no cause provided. White people, it would seem, are acting with no purpose.

193

Table IV.14

Explanations of Cause, Consequence, and Change Related to Voting Rights (N=8)

	Total number of students	% of students
Cause		
none named	8	100%
Consequence		
African American men had to take poll tests and/or literacy tests	8	100%
Violence against African Americans	4	50%
Change		
15th Amendment enfranchised African American men	7	88%
Voting Rights Act passed/signed by Lyndon B. Johnson	5	62.5%
Martin Luther King Jr. led marches	5	62.5%
activists gave speeches and protested	2	12.5%

Students included that both legal remedies and civil rights protests helped African Americans earn the right to vote. Nearly all of the students—seven out of eight (88%)—mentioned that the 15th Amendment enfranchised African American men after the Civil War in ways similar to John at (15) above. Five of the students (62.5%) also said it took a piece of federal legislation—the Voting Rights Act of 1965—to enfranchise voters. In addition, five students also mentioned that "Martin Luther King Jr." led marches for the right to vote (62.5%), and a smaller number mentioned that "activists protested" (12.5%).

Interviews. Three students—Allison, Emily, and Lucy—responded that third graders should learn about African Americans' struggle for voting rights during the civil rights era. Allison argued that Ms. McKinley should teach about the struggle for voting rights to memorialize violence, saying that students needed to know about those who died attempting to secure the ballot: "I think they should really know 'lack of voting rights' because there was also violence and they should know about those things. Some people even died from that." Similar to her use of language in her narrative above at (16), Allison acknowledges the violence during this period in her interview response, but she does not specify who is behind the violence.

194

Emily and Lucy both argued that learning about the struggle for voting rights was important because they viewed it as increasing African Americans' political capacity. Emily said the struggle for voting rights is generally worthwhile to learn about because it "helped end segregation because like Black people could vote." Lucy responded that voting rights was important because "Black men and Black women got to vote, finally." As these comments from Emily and Lucy suggest, voting rights was discussed as something that was long awaited, but also easily granted. As Emily summarized in her narrative, "Almost 100 years later President Johnson made the Voting Rights Act so they could vote."

Discussion

The analysis of students' historical writing and interview comments revealed clear patterns in the ways the White third-grade students made sense of African American history through their inquiry. To consider what the data suggest about how students understood agency and oppression, we can begin by thinking about how the students represented social actors in their narratives. The three main coding categories for social actors demonstrated that students named change agents most frequently (about 43% of all social actors named), the victimized social actors second most frequently (35%), and the oppressive social actors least frequently (22%).

When considering how students named social actors as change agents, one clear pattern is they named change agents by using proper nouns more than any other category; I coded 44% of all change agents named by students as individualized. In fact, the vast majority of individualized social actors named across students' narratives—nearly 90%—were change agents. In other words, while the individual human victims and oppressors were largely nameless in the students' narrative (e.g., slaves, masters), students did mention change agents by their names (e.g., Harriet

Tubman). The historical figures students named as having the agency to change conditions for African Americans were largely split between White and African American figures. However, the White individuals named by students followed a pattern of being males who held high office in the government or the military (Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and Lyndon B. Johnson). In contrast, the African American social actors students named were both male (Martin Luther King Jr., Thurgood Marshall) and female (Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks, Ruby Bridges, Edna Griffin). Students also assimilated the change agents into groups (33%) and represented them as nonhuman social actors (23%). Students named three groups most frequently, including both "slaves" and "abolitionists" who resisted the institution of enslavement and "activists" during the civil rights era. Nonhuman social actors made up a smaller percentage of change agents (about 23%); however, nearly all of the nonhuman change agents included specific legislative remedies aimed at improving *African American* rights with the 13th and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and Voting Right Acts of 1965 accounting for all but three of the nonhuman change agents named. The other three nonhuman change agents included two references to an abstract group—"The North"—and one nominalization of the term "safe houses," which helped enslaved people escape to freedom.

Whereas students named change agents as individual historical figures most often in their narratives (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr.), students named the victimized social actors as an assimilated group (e.g., African Americans) the vast majority of the time. In fact, 97% of all references to the victimized group used assimilated terms. One interesting pattern is that the majority of students used nonracialized, assimilated language (e.g., slaves, sharecroppers, freedmen) when describing more distant historical events, but eventually all students moved to using racialized, assimilated language (e.g., African Americans, Blacks) when writing about

196

voting rights. This suggests that all of the students in this study seemed to arrive at the same conclusion by the end of the inquiry: African American were the oppressed social actors. However, students rarely individualized African American victims in their narratives, other than two students who explicitly named Harriet Tubman, a famous abolitionist, as formerly enslaved.

But *who* was oppressing the African Americans? Students named the oppressors less frequently than the change agents or victims across their narratives, with references to the oppressors accounting for only about a fifth of all social actors named. The oppressors, like the victims, were most often named by students as an assimilated group (75% of all references to the oppressors). However, whereas all students used assimilated racial terms to name the victimized group by the end of their narratives (e.g., African Americans), only three of the eight students explicitly named "Whites" or "White People" as the perpetrators of the oppression. Beyond these mentions, students used nonracialized, assimilated language (e.g., master, landowners, the Confederates) for the oppressors throughout their narratives. In addition to using assimilated language that obscured the racial identity of the oppressors, students' language choices named the oppressors as nonhuman about 18% of the time (e.g., Jim Crow laws, slave auction) which served to further abstract those behind events such as enslavement and segregation. Three students did individualize the oppressor by naming *Robert E. Lee* as the Confederate general during the Civil War (7% of all references to the oppressor). However, beyond naming this single historical actor who held an elite status as a war general, those oppressing the African American people remained nameless throughout over 300 years of history.

The suppression and/or abstraction of the oppressive social actors from their narratives often made it difficult for students to name the causes behind several of the events they studied including the slave trade, segregation, and disenfranchisement. In the absence of key social

197

actors in African American history such as enslavers or segregationists, students narrated a series of events that—at times—seemed to just occur without any purpose or reason. Even for the three students who did name Whites as the perpetrators of disenfranchisement, none of the students provided their motivations. Students did name that economic motivation on the part of the oppressors caused plantation enslavement and sharecropping; yet, they named the oppressors in these paragraphs as "masters" and "landowners." The use of this raceless, assimilated language makes it difficult to know if students understood that economic systems ultimately functioned to elevate White people over African Americans along the lines of both class and race. Furthermore, no students explicitly named racism as an underlying factor across events they chronicled and, therefore, it may be difficult for students to understand the historical continuities in the ways White supremacy motivated and shaped social, political, economic, and legal systems across time periods. This may limit their understanding of oppression as an enduring concept that extends into the present.

When naming the consequences for various events in their writing, students largely focused on the consequences for the victims. With the exception of two consequences of the Civil War (the passage of the 13th Amendment and the assassination of Abraham Lincoln), all of the consequences included in the students' narratives detailed the dehumanizing treatment of African Americans. This reflects a long-standing pattern in American culture of storying racism "in terms of its consequences on the victims—of always defining [racism] asymmetrically from the perspective of its impact on the object of racist policy and attitude" (Morrison, 1992, p. 11).

Students presented change in ways that showed continuous progress for African Americans from enslavement through the 1960s. Whereas students could not always identify the causes of oppression, they easily identified who or what changed conditions for African

Americans. One interesting pattern is that students generally balanced African American and White agency as leading to change. However, the fate of African Americans is ultimately determined by those in power through legislative remedies (e.g., constitutional amendments). For example, students wrote that African Americans protested against segregation and disenfranchisement, but that it took the Voting Rights Act to remedy this. For example, recall that Emily wrote "Almost 100 years later President Johnson made the Voting Rights Act so they could vote," which demonstrates this pattern attributing the most consequential change to White male politicians.

In addition to students' historical accounts, their interview comments revealed further insight into how they were thinking about agency and oppression in the past. In terms of agency, I coded five out of seven of the responses as *to appreciate change agents* related to comments about President Abraham Lincoln and/or the Civil War as changing conditions for African Americans. For example, two students (Emily and Lucy) argued for teaching about how voting rights expanded African Americans' political agency, but neither identified any specific human change agents related to that event. Another code that reveals the ways students thought about agency is *to appreciate personal qualities.* Both Allison and Rebecca said they appreciated civil rights change agents, such as Edna Griffin and Ruby Bridges, with both students saying they admired their tenacity and resolve.

In terms of what the interview responses revealed about students' thinking about oppression, I also coded several responses as *memorialized racial oppression.* Five of them related to enslavement with students mentioning the "bad things" and "violence" enslaved people endured, which was unsurprising given the details of dehumanization students included in their narratives. In addition to responses about enslavement, Lucy said she felt bad about racial

segregation and Allison remarked about the importance of teaching students about violence related to disenfranchisement. However, in none of the comments about oppression did any of the students explicitly name who caused the oppression. For example, Lucy said during segregation people had to get "split up," but didn't say who was doing the splitting. Therefore, the ways students described oppression in their interviews largely matched the patterns of silence around the racial identity and motivations of the oppressors.

When considering what the students' interview responses reveal about the ways they related the past and present, we can see a clear pattern that students tended to think in terms of progress; that is, they always believed conditions were improving for African Americans. Rebecca commented that next year's third graders should learn about the Civil War because it "made us free" and gave us "freedom" and "equal rights." However, Rebecca's progressive interpretation does not acknowledge the limitations of the Civil War in improving conditions for African Americans (e.g., sharecropping) despite spending several weeks of instruction on them. Similarly, when describing segregation, both Emily and Lucy reported segregation had ended. In only one interview comment from Allison did any of the students connect the study of history to their own lives, and this also showed progressive thinking around race relations. Allison said, "if segregation didn't stop, then we wouldn't even have [sic] black kids at our school." What I find interesting about Allison's sensemaking is that she doesn't understand the nuances of segregation in schools in the present day, but why would she? After all, she had just learned in school that segregation ended in the 1960s, and in her own life she attends a racially integrated school.

Towards Historical Consciousness

I first wish to explore how students' historical interpretations of African American history relates to the theoretical framework for historical consciousness from Seixas (2016). To

understand how the historical inquiry instruction influenced students' historical consciousness, we can first consider the overall patterns in how the students represented agency and oppression in the past. Namely, students' accounts of African American history portray them as having agency during victimization, but they largely credited White male figures with ultimately improving the conditions for African Americans with the use of legislative remedies. Students portrayed oppression through a focus on the consequences for African Americans—who all students identified as the oppressed group—but always suggested their conditions were improving. However, the focus on oppression was relatively one-sided as the oppressors, and their identities and motives, were largely absent from the students' narratives. Several students connected their historical learning to the present day, but always portrayed civil rights as a solved issue. Therefore, it seems the socially constructed historical understandings students produced are likely to only sustain and legitimize racism in the present, as students viewed issues such as segregation and voting rights as resolved social issues, rather than persisting and systemic forms of racial injustice. In other words, rather than opening up possibilities for challenging dominant ideologies about race and promoting antiracism, the inquiry in Ms. McKinley's classroom tended to lead students toward solidifying problematic views about race that prevent them from understanding the challenges of our time. Even during a sustained inquiry lasting 10 weeks, where students read dozens and dozens of texts, they constructed simple historical accounts of change: first there was enslavement, then there was freedom; once there was segregation, disenfranchisement, and violence, now there is racial harmony. Yet, no students offered explanations of what has caused hundreds of years of systemic inequality, considered why changes took so long to enact, or grappled with the persistence of inequality that questions the effectiveness of previous remedies. Although some students were able to connect the upper

and lower halves of Seixas' (2016) model by connecting their inquiry to the present day, they did so with the misconception racism is resolved, which may lead them to produce a colorblind ideology. Therefore, these findings show the challenges of designing historical inquiries in the U.S. to teach White elementary students about African American history in ways that open up further conversations about dealing with present-day racism (cf. McCully, 2017).

We can also consider the students' historical learning through Rüsen's typology for historical consciousness (1989). Comprised of four "types" of historical consciousness, I would argue that the narratives and interview comments from the students showed they demonstrated Type 2 of Rüsen's scheme—the exemplary (or progressive) type. At Type 2 (Exemplary), students would "understand that change over time occurs according to laws" (Seixas, 2005, p. 147) and view history as continuously progressing. I believe Ms. McKinley's students moved past Type 1 (Traditional) because they were able to see change over time and the human agents who brought it about—at least in some limited way. Therefore, we can consider the next step in the development of students' historical consciousness would be moving from Type 2 (Exemplary) to Type 3 (Critique). In the critical mode, history functions as the tool by which continuity is ruptured, "deconstructed, decoded—so that it loses its power as a source for present-day orientation" (Rüsen, 1993, p. 74). But what more would students need to learn in order for this rupture in progressive thinking about African American history to occur? One answer is that students would need to know that segregation and voting disenfranchisement are not far-away, solved issues in history, but rather ongoing social problems. Although history education researchers have identified that elementary students tend to present "notions that everything gets better, and that the past can be viewed in terms of deficits" (Lee, 2005, p. 45), I am arguing that not actively working to disrupt White elementary school children's notions of

historical progress as they relate to African American history may limit development of their historical consciousness. In other words, if White students adopt a colorblind ideology because our school history curriculum teaches them that racism was solved in the last century by White male politicians, it will limit how they connect the past and present.

In addition to supporting students in critiquing the historical narrative of African American progress through connecting the past to ongoing systemic racism, teachers might also consider using historical inquiry methods to equip students with what King (2004) calls *deciphering knowledge* about race and racism. One concern raised by this study is that students did not seem to acquire much knowledge about racism and how it operates. Despite exposure to dozens of texts about African American history at their reading level—including children's historical fiction picture books, informational books, and visual primary sources—these texts only provided students with language resources for describing oppression as assimilated, raceless, nameless, and nonhuman. Since many research studies examining children's texts about African American history find that these patterns of silence about race and racism are pervasive (Bickford & Rich, 2014; Bickford & Schuette, 2016; Brown & Brown, 2010; Thomas et al., 2016) other ways of reading and interrogating these texts in the classroom are needed. This means developing reading heuristics, tools, and supports that help the students in deciphering the particular images, perspectives, and ideologies about race available through the historical texts they read. These tools would support disciplinary ways of reading in history (Wineburg, 1991) as they would seek to expose the authors' distortions and bias about race in ways that question the reliability of the historical interpretations they present. Furthermore, the presence of such ways of reading in the classroom would directly engage students in developing their historical

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consciousness by discussing their own lived experiences with race and racism as they learn how to decipher and critique the ostensibly White texts found in our schools.

APPENDIX A

Student Consent Form

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am inviting you and your child to participate in a research study, which I have designed to learn more about your child's teacher and your child's social studies learning in the 2017-2018 school year. This study is part of my doctoral dissertation at the University of Michigan entitled: *History in the Heartland: The Development of Historical Consciousness in Third Grade*. I write to inform you about the purpose of the study, to state that participation is voluntary, to explain any risks and benefits of participation, and to inform you of your privacy. My hope is that this information will help you make an informed decision to participate.

<u>Purpose of the Study:</u> This study will help me understand how third graders think and learn about the historical inquiry topics they will learn about in social studies this year, including how they think about the topics and their own lives, both in-and-out of school. Your child's teacher is a well-regarded social studies educator and my hope is that in studying her classroom I can learn more about how young children develop their thinking. I also hope to learn more about how children learn about the past outside of school and how this relates to the social studies learning happening in school.

<u>Participation:</u> This study will take place for the duration of the 2017-2018 school year. With your consent, I would like to photocopy the classwork your child completes during social studies instruction. In addition, I would like to video record your child, and the classroom, during regular school lessons.

Most importantly, I am inviting you and your child to participate in semi-structured interviews. For students, these interviews will occur up to seven times throughout the school year for no more than 30 minutes each during the regular school day. I will work with the teacher to ensure students do not miss class instruction to participate in these interviews. During interviews, I will talk with students about how they are developing their ideas about the history both in and out of school.

<u>Risks and Benefits:</u> There are no foreseeable risks to participating in the study and there is no penalty for refusing to participate. Potential benefits are that child's may enjoy the interviews and photo documentation task. The study, as a whole, will benefit the field of social studies education as we learn more about how to support students' development.

<u>Privacy:</u> Data collected in study will be kept strictly confidential. I will not include your child's full name in any presentations or publications that result from this study. Your child's privacy, and that of your child's school and district, will be protected to the maximum extent allowed by law.

Please contact me with any questions regarding this research project; I am happy to speak further about this work.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ryan Hughes
Doctoral Candidate
School of Education
University of Michigan
Phone: (415) 713-9877
Email: hughesre@umich.edu

Do you voluntarily allow **your child's classwork** to be included in this study?

▢   ▢

Yes   No

Do you voluntarily allow **your child to be video recorded** during the regular classroom instruction**?**

Yes ▢   No ▢

Do you voluntarily allow **your child to be interviewed** in this study?

▢
Yes   No ▢

Would **you like to participate in a parent/guardian interview** for this study?

▢   ▢

Yes   No

_____   _____   _____
(Parent/Guardian Signature)   (Parent/Guardian Printed Name)   (Date)

_____   _____
(Child's Printed Name)   (Parent/Guardian's Name)

Background information about your child (Optional)
(Please note: you have the right to skip any questions you do not wish to answer; this information will never be reported with names or other identifying information):

Child's gender: Female ☐   Male ☐

Child's race/ethnicity:
☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native
☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Not Hispanic or Latino
☐ Multiracial
☐ Other: _____

Language(s) spoken in your home: _____

Services that your child receives:

☐ Special Education
☐ Title I for Reading or Math
☐ Visits the Reading Specialist
☐ Gifted/Talented Services
☐ English as a Second Language
☐ Other: _____

Does your child qualify for free or reduced-price lunch?

Yes ☐   No ☐

APPENDIX B

Student Interview Protocol

Introduction

Thank you for meeting with me today. I am interested to hear about how you think and learn about your social studies inquiry questions. You can share anything you are thinking; there are no right or wrong answers. If you don't have an answer or idea about a question you can pass. Before we start do you have any questions for me? Is it alright for me to video record our conversation so I can remember your ideas later?

Concept Maps

Let's look at the concept map you made in class and talk about it together. Tell me about what you added.
    5. *Where did you learn about or hear about [item on map]? Have you studied about that in school? (If not, where did you learn about them? If so, did you learn more about them outside of school?)*
    6. *Is anything you didn't include that you would add?*
    7. *Is there anything you purposefully left off?*
    8. *Why did you add this?*

Historical Significance

What would you consider to be the two or three most important things, people, places, or events on your concept map in shaping how things are today?
    3. *Why did you pick these items?*
    4. *Where did you learn about them? Have you talked to your parent about these items? If so, tell me what you discussed.*

Empathy as Care

What or who on your map do you care most about?
    4. *Where did you learn about [item child names]?*
    5. *Why is that person/place/event important to you?*
    6. *Is there anyone missing from your map that you is important to you?*

Who or what stories on your concept map do you feel connected to? Tell me about them.

Moral Dimension

Think about people in your concept map. Are there people you have strong feelings for or against?

    4. *Where did you learn about [item child names]?*

    5. *What is it that you like [dislike] about [that/them]?*

    6. *How did you decide if you like or dislike them?*

When you think about the people in your concept map, are there any groups or people which come to mind who have had a particularly difficult time?

    3. *Where did you learn about him/her?*

    4. *Is there anything we should do today because of what happened to them? If so, what could we do?*

Do you think we can learn from anything on your concept map to help us live today? If so, what lessons can we learn and from whom?

School and Family History

Have you ever discussed any of the topics on you map with your parents? If so, what did you discuss? With other relatives? Who initiated the discussion (did you ask, or did they start telling)?

Do you think your family, or your ancestors, were involved with anything listed on your concept map? How do you know?

Historical Perspectives

Slave Auction (Bibb, 1849)

Greensboro Four (Moebes, 1960)

7. Tell me what you know about this person. What was their life like?
8. What types of feelings might this person have felt based on what you know about them?
9. Was there anything that was hard or easy for them?
10. What do you think was important to them?
11. If they were living today, how might their lives be different? How might their lives be the same?

Example of Focal Students' Coded Historical Narratives

Key
<u>Purple Underlined</u> = Victim
<u>Blue Underlined</u> = Oppressor
<u>Green Underlined</u> = Change Agent
Bold = temporal references, language scaffolding explanation

Allison
What is slavery?
In 1619 <u>slaves</u> *were* captured from Africa
and taken against their will.
They *were* captured
And *taken* to the slave coast
and *put* on a ship.
They *had* horrible conditions.
You *had* to stay in steerage for 23 hours and
could only *come up* for one hour.

When you *got to* America
you *were sold* at the slave auction
and often you were split from your families.
You *were also checked and sold* to a <u>master</u>.
They *were put* on plantations to work.
They *would harvest* cotton.
There *was* an <u>overseer</u>
who watch them and whipped them
if a <u>slave</u> wasn't doing what they're supposed to do.

What <u>slaves</u> *wanted most was* freedom.
They *escaped* on a path called the Underground Railroad with codes and safe houses.
People who *helped* slaves were called <u>Abolitionists</u> like <u>Harriet Tubman</u>.
She was a <u>slave</u>
and *made* 19 trips back to the South
and *helped* 300 other <u>slaves</u> escape.
Slavery *was* a hard time for <u>slaves</u>.

How was our country divided during the Civil War?

The war *was* for four years **and** *was* from 1861 to 1865. R

Ulysses S. Grant *was fighting for no slavery*, but **Robert E. Lee** *was fighting for slavery.*

The sides were the southern and northern states.

The blue was for no slavery and the gray was for slavery

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

First, I review my key findings and analytic points for each chapter and suggest areas for further research based on these points. Then, I provide a brief conclusion to the dissertation as a whole.

In Chapter II, I ask: How did an expert teacher apprentice her third-grade students into disciplinary literacy in history through disciplinary ways of reading, analyzing, and employing historical evidence? Key findings and analytic points from this chapter included:

- Ms. McKinley taught social studies for several hours per week by integrating it with literacy instruction. She used historical fiction picture books and primary sources when teaching about practices related to historical evidence.

- Ms. McKinley taught students that authors of historical fiction picture books relied on different types of historical evidence (e.g., oral histories, letters, etc.) when writing these books, thereby teaching students about the constructed nature of historical accounts.

- Ms. McKinley selected visual primary source documents for the students to analyze related to the events and/or topics they studied. She explicitly modeled source analysis for the students using a heuristic "SOCC" (Sourcing, Observing, Contextualizing, and Corroborating) and a graphic organizer (Fillpot, 2009) designed to engage students in disciplinary reading practices (Wineburg, 1991).

Ms. McKinley used an instructional sequence that began with small-group analysis, followed by small-group presentations to the class.

- Ms. McKinley coached the students to employ evidence verbally as they worked in small groups with the original primary source photographs. Furthermore, she apprenticed students into the practice of employing historical evidence when they wrote historical accounts by selecting and pasting in primary source images as well as a list of works cited.

- Across the inquiry, historical fiction was the primary genre of texts read by the class; however, these sources of historical information did not face the same level of disciplinary scrutiny as the visual primary sources. Other than naming that the authors of the historical fiction picture books relied on sources of evidence when writing them, these texts were not interrogated for their reliability and therefore likely went accepted as historical truth by the students (cf. Levstik, 1989).

- The data also raise questions about the role of teaching difficult history (i.e., enslavement) through a mainly "analytic stance" (Barton & Levstik, 2004, p. 69), as one instance showed making evidence-based claims was prioritized over probing students' comments that conflated some aspects of experiences between the Pilgrims and enslaved Africans.

- Ms. McKinley's teaching demonstrates that the use of visual primary sources is one potential type of historical document students can work with to build their disciplinary literacy practices despite their nascent general literacy practices with written texts.

- Overall, this case study corroborates existing literature that U.S. elementary schoolers can participate in disciplinary literacy in history (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997; Nokes, 2014; VanSledright, 2002), but is the first study to examine how these practices are enacted with students younger than fifth grade.

Based on these findings, future research might examine:

- The ages students might begin to work with written primary source documents as part of their social studies instruction. Existing research shows successful approaches in fifth grade (Nokes, 2014; VanSledright, 2002), middle school (De La Paz et al., 2017), and high school (Reisman, 2015) classrooms, but further research is needed across the elementary grades.

- How teachers plan their instruction about enslavement, such as how they make choices about the curriculum materials and instructional practices that encourage—or discourage—students' engagement in the ethical, moral, and emotional dimensions of difficult history (cf. Klein, 2017).

- Ways to support elementary school students in questioning the representation and information found in children's literature through the use of disciplinary tools to interrupt the idea that these texts contain historical truth.

In Chapter III, I ask: How did third-grade students conceptualize enslavement before, during, and after participation in a social studies inquiry focused on the history of enslavement in North America? How did students connect their conceptualizations of enslavement to the present? Key findings and analytic points from this chapter included:

- Students' pre-inquiry concept maps demonstrated a general lack of background knowledge about enslavement, with the majority of their responses coded as

emerging understandings or misconceptions. However, the majority of the class related enslavement to power in some way. Of the students whose pre-inquiry concept maps included concepts from the Teaching Tolerance framework (Teaching Tolerance, 2018a), all of them included the idea of power, and three students also mentioned race.

- During six weeks of inquiry instruction, students read a variety of texts and their conceptualizations of enslavement grew in complexity and accuracy. The two most frequently applied key concepts from the Teaching Tolerance framework included *Institution of power* and *Race.* Students wrote about enslavement as an institution of power in more than 60% of their classwork and described power dynamics between individuals (e.g., overseers whipping enslaved people). Students included race (i.e., naming a racial group) less often, in about a quarter of their classwork. Furthermore, when naming a racial group in their classwork students, were 7 times more likely to name "Africans" or "African Americans" than "Whites."

- After the inquiry, students included the key concepts *Institution of power* and *Economic Gain* most frequently on their post-concept maps. Their mentions of power most often related to overseers whipping enslaved people, while their mentions of economic gain focused on forced labor (e.g., "you go to a plantation and you work like an animal").

- An analysis of the students' use of language across their inquiry showed that of 16 students who did not include racial terms in their pre-inquiry concept maps, 13 of them followed a consistent pattern of first including descriptions of power in their

217

classwork and then later including race; however, three of the students developed the idea of power as the inquiry progressed, but never used racial terms in any of their artifacts.

- My language analysis about power and race revealed that students often omitted White enslavers in their classwork through the use of passive verbs (e.g., slaves were taken), the *get*-passive (e.g., you get taken away), use of the generalized *you* (e.g., you are kidnapped). Many of the nonfiction, informational texts students worked with in the classroom also contained these linguistic patterns.

- During interviews after the inquiry, three of the four students showed growth in content knowledge about enslavement but could not name continuities for African Americans from the past to the present.

- One student (John) did name that African American people in contemporary society may still fear oppression from Whites. Furthermore, he was the only student who connected his lived experience to the history he studied in school, telling me he considered that his African American friends might have had ancestors who endured enslavement, but he was nervous to ask them about it, implying he felt shame around discussing the topic.

- When comparing the ways students conceptualized enslavement to the Teaching Tolerance framework, we see the students' concepts are more nascent as they focused on how power, economic gain, and race operated at the individual level, rather than at a systemic or institutional level. This may limit students' historical consciousness, as it makes it difficult to connect enslavement to ongoing forms of systemic and institutionalized racism.

- Furthermore, since the data showed that the students often omitted the enslavers and their racial identities from their classwork, this also suggests the inquiry did not promote critical thinking about the construction of racialized identities, thereby suggesting another way the curriculum may limit students from making connections between the past and the present.

- Students' lack of attention to the systemic and institutionalized racism and the racial identity of the enslavers demonstrates that existing curriculum materials for young children related to enslavement may lead to students' developing oversimplified understandings, which is a common concern of educational researchers (Bickford & Rich, 2014; Thomas et al., 2016).

- Although one student—John—was able to link the inquiry to his own life, no other students made connections between their study of enslavement and their own lives or contemporary society. This suggests that in the absence of the teachers making explicit connections between the past and present, students have difficulty making these connections on their own.

- Taken together, this study demonstrates that inquiry instruction as a method for learning about enslavement may not open up possibilities for learning about Whiteness and White supremacy unless those concepts are represented in the texts students read and analyze (cf. Swan et al., 2018).

Based on these findings, future research might examine:

- Students' learning about enslavement through the social studies curriculum across contexts, grade levels, and various student populations. Such research is the only way to establish the general learning progression for teaching about enslavement.

Particular attention must be paid to helping students move from viewing enslavement as interactions and exchanges between individuals to systemic and institutional forms of power, economic gain, and White supremacy that persist into the present.

- The development of additional disciplinary reading tools to help students notice how the authors of nonfiction, informational texts make use of language in ways that omit Whites and their role in enslavement (e.g., passive voice).

- How teachers might connect the topic of enslavement to the students' own lives including their racial identities, their own lived experiences with race and racism in the present, and contemporary issues rooted in enslavement (e.g., intergenerational wealth inequality between African Americans and Whites).

Lastly, in Chapter IV, I ask: After participation in a historical inquiry centered on difficult events related to African American history (e.g., enslavement, sharecropping, segregation), how did eight White third-grade students understand the events they studied as evidenced through their written historical narratives and interviews? What do students' understandings indicate about their thinking related to agency and oppression? Key findings and analytic points from this chapter included:

- Students represented agency most often in their historical narratives by naming heroic figures who they viewed as improving conditions for African Americans. They included both African Americans (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr.) and White figures (e.g., Abraham Lincoln) at roughly the same rate. However, students often credited the White figures for ultimately enacting change through legislative

remedies (e.g., constitutional amendments) and argued these remedies progressively improved conditions for African American people.

- When describing agency during interviews, students most often argued for teaching about Abraham Lincoln's role in emancipation in future school years, followed by teaching about the struggle for voting rights. Two students also said they admired the characters of Civil Right heroines (e.g., Ruby Bridges).

- Students represented oppression in their narratives through the inclusion of the victimized social actors, which made up roughly one third of all social actors named.

- Students named the oppressed group with assimilated terms (e.g., "slaves") the vast majority of the time (97%). Whereas the students used nonracialized, assimilated terms when describing the oppressed group in more distant historical events (e.g., "slaves," "sharecroppers," "freedmen"), all students used racialized, assimilated terms (e.g., "African Americans," "Blacks") by the end of their narratives, which spanned up to the 1960s.

- Students' understandings of oppression were largely defined through the victims' experiences across time periods as they narrated their accounts as a series of consequences for the victims (e.g., enslavement, lack of rights).

- During interviews, students most often commented that enslavement should be taught about in schools to memorialize oppression. The comments most often mentioned the dehumanization of African Americans as an important teaching point following the pattern in their narratives of thinking about oppression through the victims' experiences.

221

- However, students' descriptions of oppression were relatively one-sided as they included the oppressive social actors fewer times overall (about a fifth of all social actors). Students represented the oppressors using more abstract language. They used nonracialized, assimilated language for the oppressors the vast majority of the time (e.g., master, landowners) and only three students named "Whites" or "White People" as the oppressors in their narratives. Furthermore, about a fifth of all references to the oppressors used abstract nominalizations (e.g., Jim Crow laws separated African American people.)

- Given that students did not often represent the oppressive social actors, they also often failed to include the cause of the oppression in their narratives. No students, for example, explicitly named the cause of enslavement or segregation.

- Out of the 29 interview responses, in only five responses did students make any direct references to the oppressive social actors, who they named as "they" (three times), "a girl," and "people in the South."

- Four students provided interview responses that explicitly linked the past and present. All four comments revealed students thought about conditions for African Americans as continually improving over time and three stated definitively that racial segregation ended during the civil rights era. For example, Allison remarked on her own schooling experience, saying that if segregation had not ended, then she would not have African American students in her school.

- On the whole, the data showed that the White third graders in this study interpreted African American history through a lens of continued progress

brought about by White figures (e.g., Abraham Lincoln), the 13th Amendment, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

- The data showed that when students made connections between their study of African American history and the present day—thereby linking the upper and lower halves of Seixas' (2016) framework—they always did so in ways that portrayed historical progress for African Americans without acknowledging the limitations of past efforts, which are visible today in ongoing forms of systemic racial inequality.

- However, connecting the past to the present with misconceptions that racism has been solved may lead students to produce a colorblind ideology, which will limit their historical consciousness.

- To expand their historical consciousness, students need opportunities to critique the narrative of progress (cf. Rüsen, 1989), which in this case would mean teaching that segregation and voting disenfranchisement are not far-away, solved social issues in history, but rather ongoing social problems.

- These findings highlight the challenges of designing historical inquiries in the U.S. to teach White elementary students about African American history in ways that open up further discussions about dismantling racism (cf. McCully, 2017) given that few texts available at the students' reading levels mention Whiteness and White supremacy.

- One solution is to develop reading heuristics, tools, and supports for students that teach them to decipher the particular images, perspectives, and ideologies about race available through the historical texts they read (cf. King, 2004).

- The presence of such ways of reading in the classroom would directly engage students in developing their historical consciousness by discussing their own lived experiences with race and racism as they learn how to decipher and critique the ostensibly White texts found in our schools.

Based on these findings, future research might examine:

- How to support teachers in tying historical inquiries about African American history to the present day. This would involve finding ways to connect students' lived experiences, race, and racism to the inquiry as well as to current events that show the limitations of past and current efforts to address racism.

- How to support teaching students in deciphering how the historical texts in the classroom (e.g., primary sources, children's literature) present images, perspectives, and ideologies about race; for example, by describing the human actors behind systemic racism as assimilated, raceless, nameless, and nonhuman.

- Researchers should continue to blend critical theories for history education (e.g., Seixas, 2016) and critical race theories in education (e.g., King, 2004) when studying the social studies curriculum so we can learn more about how various forms of racism are reproduced or disrupted in our schools.

Taken together, the findings from this dissertation highlight the importance of attending to not only how students might learn historical inquiry practices (as I did in Chapter II), but also to what topics students inquire about, the sense they make of those topics, and how they connect to those topics (as I did in Chapters III and IV, using Seixas' (2016) framework as my guide). Seixas' (2016) framework helps us to see that although Ms. McKinley's goal is to teach her students social justice dispositions using inquiry methods and content on African American

history, the inquiry led students to reproduce narratives that presented racism as a solved social issue. This will likely only perpetuate racism within contemporary society, rather than challenge prevailing narratives and reshape public memory about African American history in ways that are more complex and more honest. In other words, it's not enough to change how you teach, you have to change what you teach, and the materials used. Seixas' framework also helps us see that although a teacher can hold expertise in historical inquiry, this does not necessarily translate into expertise in teaching historical content in ways that support students in understanding race and racism. Therefore, although many in the field have assumed that teaching about difficult history through inquiry might act to promote the common good, we can see how participation in an inquiry using certain pedagogies, texts, and language may not give students foundational knowledge about the past that helps them understand the ways that racism transcends time. The key limitation of Seixas' framework—as demonstrated in Chapter IV—is that it does not account for what representations of race are made available through an inquiry and how those representations shape students' historical knowledge. Future frameworks should consider how the pedagogies, texts, and language of an inquiry influence students' ideas about race. Only then can we begin to understand how school history might act to equip students with historical knowledge that could change conditions for African Americans in the present.

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