Principles of Action Research EDCS812-J51-SUMMER-2021   My Grades   Collection   ?

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Mark ⯯

☐	**Thread:** Collaborate	**Posted Date:** June 28, 2021 12:23 PM
	Post: RE: Collaborate	**Status:** Published
	Author: 👤 **Shaun O'malley**	

Yeah, I fully embrace the technological advance of today, but also recognize how they can complicate and make things more complex than they need to be.

Oof.   "I also heard a presentation at the Learning and the Brain Conference a few years ago which stated that white males that exhibit ADHD behaviors are referred for testing, whereas black males are not and are referred for discipline." This line made me pause.

It is such an eye opening comment.

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☐	**Thread:** Aspire	**Posted Date:** June 28, 2021 12:10 PM
	Post: D	**Status:** Published
	Author: 👤 **Shaun O'malley**	

Did you watch the documentary from Jane Elliott's class? And then the the documentary from those same students 20 years later? I was shocked that a teacher could teach something like that in 1968 and I definitely think it would be challenging to do today, especially since so many people seem to have a problem with CRT and talking about racism. I watched Jane's intervention multipe times and still I am just shocked a teacher could have that sort of autonomy in a classroom to conduct such an experiement with her students.

I think about my past educational experiences and I remember during African American History month, having teachers talk about the great works that African American's have done (inventions, theories, speeches, etc), but I don't think it was ever really contextual in that we never talked about stereotypes, racism, slavery, etc. It makes sense why a white-normative agenda wouldn't want to talk about race in a critical way. And I bet current curriculums for MLK created by a white-normative politic probably "gloss" over the full story...

- Eye of the Storm. (1970). Peter Williams, starring Jane Elliott, ABC, 1970, Youtube,

     https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gi2T0ZdKVc.

- A Class Divided. (1985). William Peters, starring Jane Elliott, PBS, 1985, Frontline,
     PBS, https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/class-divided/.

Forum Statistics

👤 O'malley Shaun (16)

GRADE
6/23/21 2:16 AM   **22.00** /25

Comments

Feedback to Learner
6/29/21 1:32 PM

Your Original Post was a little long (-1) and should have centered the reading for the week (-1), but your creative approach clearly sparked a lot of interesting discussion in multiple directions!

Your above-and-beyond Guided Responses also kept the conversations going, and I like how you reminded your peers of connections to your prior class, as well as how you highlighted an inherent challenge of conducting high-quality action research: those who benefit from the status quo may resist any attempts to change it.

Work on APA format for future posts (-1). The manual itself is a must-have for doc students, but the website is a solid reference for quick-and-easy guidelines: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples

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Thread:	Disrupt	**Posted Date:**	June 27, 2021 1:23 PM
Post:	RE: Disrupt	**Status:**	Published
Author:	Shaun O'malley		

Katie,

First off...Who doesn't know Dan Levy...Schitt's Creek was fantastic. I don't think that MOOCS are going to be the most disruptive future for education sadly...but I do think that OER's are extremely helfpul in making educaiton accessible and affordable for people. When MOOCS first started, Sebastian Thurn said that he could literally connect to millions of students through one MOOC, more than he would ever connect with in his entire career in teaching. Could you imagine having that kind of audience?

And Kahn Academy is amazing. Kahn Academy went into NYC schools and implemented their learning platform. Teachers gave students these prelminary tests and based upon how the students did, the learning platform developed a specific curriculum for each indiviual student focusing on each individual student's weakness and having the curriculum spend more time on those weaknesses for each individual student. It was a pretty unique and impressive study.

There is a school here in Tennessee, Lipscomb University. I linked the article about competency based learning. When it first started competency based learning, you would go in and take an 8 hours test. The test would test you on various activities like they would give you an email inbox with 800 emails and you had to sort through all the emails, put emails in folders, delete the trash, etc and it would evaluate you on critical thinking, decision making, logical thinking, etc. That is just one of the many activities that you would complete in this test. At the end of the day you could earn up to 31 credits. Could you imagine paying $1,500 to earn 31 credits? That is basically your entire first year of education in 8 hours for $1,500. This is huge. It could speed up the rate of completion to a degree and reduce the cost significantly. 4 years is a long time to spend receiving a degree, especially when C-suite executives feel like education is letting people down by. not fullying developing them with the proper skill sets to be successful in college.

I am sorry to hear about the recover of remains at residential schools. I am not fully aware of how those schools function in Canada (why students go there? are they sent there), but regardless the situation is truly tragic.

As for Neo-Liberal policies...hmm. I feel that that are many disruptive pedagogies that can be invesgitaged to change the path fo higher education. I don't know if the incorporation of technology is necessary the only or best path, but I do think that education needs to change and I think eventually it will change.

I think that education has created a bubble for itself...and the problem with bubbles...they eventually burst. If educational institutions are viewed as these arenas for the exchange of values and ideas and free thought and they are now controlled by corporations and partnerships with corporations because of a need for survival, institutions will lose their way.

Standing up for values though can be hard. I actually lost a job because I stood up for my values and doing what was ethical. And unfortunately now when I apply for jobs, I have that little * next to my name, especially when a future employer calls and says, "Is this candidate rehireable." We know that educational is a very tight niche community and that once you get that * it is extremely hard to shake it.

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Thread:	Disrupt	**Posted Date:** June 26, 2021 1:20 PM
Post:	RE: Disrupt	**Status:** Published
Author:	👤 **Shaun O'malley**	

Taylor,

I agree...once a teacher, always a teacher. I am currently serving as the Service Manager at a restaurant and I feel like a majority of the work that I did in Higher Edcuation is applicable to the work I am doing now...Having tough conversations and dialogue with employees, coaching and developing them, encouraging them, etc. I even create bulletin boards. Sheesh.

I do question what is the purpose of schooling in a pluralistic society. But also what is the purpose of education (at least Higher Education) from my viewpoint today? People are making it in the world without having a college degree. College is expensive and students are in debt because of their education and the question is...if people are viewing education as inadequate to prepare someone to immediately enter the working world and be successful at their job...what is the point of education? You can pretty much learn everything and anything you need or want to know by watching a 5 minute youtube video. So what are we doing?

Joel Myers, the founder of Accuweather gives a speech about the future of higher education in a digital world. Myers states that 99% of all innovation and development has happened in the past 100 years whereas humans have been on the planet for 100,000 years. That means that 99% of all progress has occurred in 1/10th of 1% of human history. Myers states that we are creating 2.5 billion gb of data every day and of all data that has ever been recorded and entered...95% has been created within the past 2 years.

Meyer argues that if higher education institutions are to remain successful, they will have to focus on distance/online education (which thanks to COVID-19, many institutions that were ill-prepared now have a jump start on that) and that there needs to be a shift from a teaching based paradigm to a pedagogy that promotes learning-based initiatives. Thoughts?

Is it that education has become less valuable? Has society changed so much that our means and methods of teaching just become so antiquated that they are not effective? I think a lot of what executives feel is that students do not know how to engage in conflict, social interaction, etc in the workplace.

Phones, social media, gaming consoles have become so prevelant in society, that students forget how to actually interact with each other, to address concerns with each other, to engage with each other.

- Joel Myers Speech on Higher Education in the Digital Age
  https://vimeo.com/79327140

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Thread:	Involved	**Posted Date:** June 26, 2021 1:05 PM
Post:	RE: Involved	**Status:** Published
Author:	👤 **Shaun O'malley**	

I can totally understand that a disertation can seem like some huge, daunting, looming task, and even though it is the end-cap of the entire program, I think that there is a lot of other learning that can be and will be had in the program outside of the disertation. At the end of

the day, we all want to do revolutionary work that makes huge changes to the status quo, tackles injustice and makes a more equitable place...but too, the disertation is only one action research project that we will conduct in our lifetimes and the learning that we can get or take away from this program outside of just the research I am hoping will be invaluable.

I say all that, yet I have not really had to do a whole lot of actual action research so I guess ask me again at the end of the program how large, looming, daunting of a task it will end up being. I do however like your metaphor of therapy being like action research.

Just curious, you said your Master's thesis involved action research. What was your topic in your Master's Thesis?

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Thread:	Disrupt	**Posted Date:**	June 23, 2021 12:48 PM
Post:	Disrupt	**Edited Date:**	June 26, 2021 12:55 PM
Author:	Shaun O'malley	**Status:**	Published

https://sc.voicethread.com/share/17942083/

Courtney O'Connell's Ted Talk talks a lot about disruptive innovation in education, specifically higher education, and ever since I heard that term, I was fascinated and hooked on creating opportunities to disrupt the current field of education. Curriculums are the foundation for educational inquiry, so I cannot think of a better place to start. Today's students are paying double or triple for a college education than students from 30 to 40 years ago, yet the learning has remained pretty static. A study conducted by Northwestern University shows that 54% of C-suite executives feel that US Higher Education lags behind both developed and developing countries in preparing students for the workforce. We also know that 96% of these executives feel that innovation in higher education is necessary to keep the work force globally competitive. 97% of these executives feel that experiential learning and 89% of these executives feel entrepreneurship are the top two most important areas of focus that colleges and universities need to foster on campus. 73% of executives polled said there is a skills gap in today's US workforce and that 87% feel college students lack the skills critical to success in the field they enter (Northwestern). Executives want students to be educated on important topics such as conflict resolution, social interaction, crisis management, financial responsibility, how to be an active and engaged citizen in the world around them, etc over just the necessaries of how to complete a job.

Creating a curriculum that focuses on the needs of all students is extremely important, especially with today's students. As Mykee Fowlin illustrates, Star Shapes do not fit into triangle holes. We still use curriculums, pedagogy and methods that have been around for decades. (Why is the Carnegie Credit Hour still the end all be all measure of knowledge attainment?)

Things are starting to change. Technological advances are starting to make their way into instructional design and curriculums will have to incorporate these new methods of learning aquisition into their foundations. Gamefication, electronic badges, competency-based learning, assessment of prior knowledge, and systems like Kahn Academy, asynchronous learning/distance education, MOOCS, are all adding to the ways we disrupt the current curriculum and modes of instruction. And asset-based pedagogy is starting to change the content that curriculums are starting to include in order to meet the challenges of today's more diverse student body.

I believe that action research provides the answer to disrupting the curriculum. It provides the appropriate avenue to take a problem, collect data, and make systematic change to better meet our student's needs. Things should not remain static for forever, especially when our students are changing every single day, every single minute, with every single trend that arises and we owe it to them to be on the cutting edge of these changes, to offer opportunities that support their needs, advance their dreams and allow them to grow and

develop. We too must grow and develop with them. What better way to do all this then to be a Curriculum Expert in control of how knowledge is acquired. The readings show that Action Research, not only helps aid in the professional development of the research, but also aids in the competency to make systematic changes and fight injustice.   Systematic change and social injustices are both part of the educational system.

I am most perplexed by how to narrow down a topic to conduct research on. I also am currently not a part of an educational environment, so that creates a bit of chaos on figuring out how to best collect data for a research project when I am not on the inside of an educational environment. But what I do love about Action Research is that it provides hope for the future, and I believe we need HOPE more now than ever before.

- Northeastern University
  https://news.northeastern.edu/2012/11/27/innovation-summit/#_ga=2.207144659.1129121592.1624459158-1659967360.1624459157
- Northeastern University
  https://news.northeastern.edu/2013/09/17/innovation-summit-2013/#_ga=2.207144659.1129121592.1624459158-1659967360.1624459157
- Electronic Badges
  https://youtu.be/HgLLq7ybDtc
- Competency Based Learning
  https://www.lipscomb.edu/news/competency-based-education-and-core-assessment-faith-your-future-experience-your-past
- Gamefication
  https://www.gamify.com/what-is-gamification
- MOOCS
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYwTA5RA9eU
- Kahn Academy
  https://youtu.be/gM95HHI4gLk
- Go All In On Education - Ted Talk by Courtney O'Connell
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAivYEy6URI

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Thread:	Practice
Post:	RE: Practice
Author:	Shaun O'malley
Posted Date:	June 26, 2021 12:26 PM
Status:	Published

This is such a super awesome idea. It never really occurred to me until the last class why Professional Development was included in this program, but the articles from the last class really hit the ball home for me.

You are absolutely right, we put our teachers into the classroom (basically sending them to the wolves) and never give them the full breadth of resources of how to incorporate new technologies, new ideas, new and creative ways to present the material.

Did you watch Jane Elliot's Intervention in her class on race (Eye of the Storm)? That intervention was so bold. This is what we need...BOLD ACTIONS and BOLD INSTRUCTIONS to revitalize education. Watching the video of the intervention and then watching the way the student's felt about the intervention 20 years later was really powerful (A Class Divided). And then to watch Jane do it to people outside of her classroom was really interesting as well because the adults acted even more negatively than her students.

I always admire people who can create rich, powerful, inspiring learning opportunities for their students. Like for instance, the person that created the privilege walk to talk about privilege in class...https://youtu.be/4K5fbQ1-zps. <-- Powerful.

I have actually conducted this activity in class before. It is always a vulnerable activity. The 3 times I conducted it, the person at the very back of the room was always a POC. ALWAYS.

But, in some way it is also empowering because when I conducted the activity in class at Penn State, I was able to say that regardless of all of the challenges and struggles and obstacles that you have faced, you are at Penn State getting your college degree and you have overcome these challenges. Is it fair? No. Is it right? No. But you are a strong person and you are hear kicking ass and taking names. Unfortunately the lesson plan for the class was very minimal and did not really teach me how to have that conversation with a student in front of the whole class, but that Is, I guess where common sense and improvisation come in handy.

But could you imagine if we taught teachers how to have these conversations? I know I always feel uncomfortable talking about race with a student for fear that I am going to say something ridiculous and insensitive. That uncomfortable nature should never be a reason for not having the conversation...but if we expect our teachers to have these conversation and discussions, it would only make sense we give them all the tools to do so...

Eye of the Storm. (1970). Peter Williams, starring Jane Elliott, ABC, 1970, Youtube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gi2T0ZdKVc.

A Class Divided. (1985). William Peters, starring Jane Elliott, PBS, 1985, Frontline, PBS, https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/class-divided/.

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Thread:	Relevant	**Posted Date:**	June 26, 2021 12:04 PM
Post:	RE: Relevant	**Status:**	Published
Author:	Shaun O'malley		

I think that there is so much hope here! In every job, I feel that people get complacent and just start to go with the status quo. I think that even after 5 years you are still worrying about being relevant for the benefit of your students shows your passion to making sure you aren't just going with the flow.

We have to stay relevant. Though our subject matter may not change a whole lot, teaching, technology, and the way we intereact with our students definitely does and can change. I think that this relevance was very present in the article we read for our last class in chapter 1 "What is Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy and Why Does it Matter" by Paris and Alim.

"We are in many ways at the asset-based, critical pedagogical edge. For us, as we hope is clear by now, we are not interested in offering pedagogical quick fixes or "best practices" that teachers can drop into the same old tired curriculum that deadens the souls of vast numbers of children of color in U.S. schools. Nor are we, as we wrote earlier in this chapter, interested in asking questions that fall neatly within the bounds of conventional educational research and practice" (Paris and Alim).

I have never heard of hip hop pedagogies until this article. What are some practices or creative things you do to incorporate into yoru teaching to make it relevant or fun/creative/new/different? I love when people think outside the box to offer new solutions to old problems. That saying, "If it ain't broke, why fix it..." is so antiquated. I always say, just because it ain't broke doesn't mean it can't be improved.

Alim, H., & Paris, D. (2017). *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World*. United States: Teachers College Press.

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Thread:	Collaborate	**Posted Date:**	June 26, 2021 11:45 AM
Post:	RE: Collaborate	**Status:**	Published
Author:	Shaun O'malley		

We Are! I got my Master's Degree from Penn State Unviersity but hated living in Pennsylvania. Way too much snow! You have so much experience and knowledge as a teacher!!! I definitely think that your conversation teachers taking back the reins to reprofessionalize their profession and to reaffirm themselve as experts is extremely important.

Why shouldn't you be considered an expert in your field with all of your experience and knowledge in teaching? It only makes sense. I feel that if you conduct action research as a practitioner researcher you will be able to see if your theory holds up and then can implement it on a larger scale as collaborative with other teachers within your district or in other districts. So this way you can immediately make an impact on your individual students and then on the world.

It is funny how we have to provide so much context to prove we our experts in our fields. I see people every single day on news programs talking about this policy or that policy and I always wonder what their credentials are for being able to talk about XWY...

For educator practitioners I feel like we have to work in the field for 20 years, write a 100 page dissertation and publish at least 5 books. I have a nephew who is currently 7 years old and is exhibiting signs of being on the spectrum. He was born without his corpus collosum and therefore they think he will have some neurodiverse tendencies. Since I don't have a background in K-12 education, I'd be interested to hear what specific policies exist that discriminate against neurodiverse students.

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Thread:	Organic	**Posted Date:**	June 26, 2021 5:08 AM
Post:	RE: Organic	**Edited Date:**	June 26, 2021 5:41 AM
Author:	Shaun O'malley	**Status:**	Published

Talk about vulnerabillity!   Your commentary, "That said, I am extremely cognizant of the fact that I am working with folks who are vulnerable, and who have been betrayed by systems in the past; the refugee groups I work with, the indigenous students I support, all need these systems to do better for them. My main fear is that I will not conduct my research properly and I will bring more harm to them than good; I am very worried that bad research can lead to bad programming and bad policy, so I hope to get the tools to do this right" shook me to my core.

The work that we do can truly have a huge impact on the students we work with, both positively and negatively. We are always so passionate to make a difference in the lives of our students and make things better for them because we are engaged in the work we do to ensure our student's success...but what happens when we do not. I think that could be a major drawback to being so passionately engaged that we bring our own biases to the work.

This also resonated with an article that we read last class about the connections we make with our students. I was working with a student that was involved in one the clubs/organizations that I advised. The student had been a resident in the building I oversaw a year earlier and was struggling with some serious mental health related issues. I worked closely, behind the scenes, with people connected to the student to get the student some resources. I suspected that the student was struggling also with their sexuality and that was creating a mental and physical barrier for the student. I ended up having a one on one conversation with the student and "outed" myself to the student hoping to help the student navigate the precarious situation that the student was in. WORST DECISION EVER MADE!!! "Consequently, teachers should be mindfulof how their actions can contribute to or stifle the development of a healthy identity and snese of self among students" (Howard, 126). "One of

the mistakes that can be made by teachers of color is assuming that being a member of the same racial or ethnic group as one's students automatically gives one a unique ability to connect to or effectively teach students of color. The ways in which race, ethniciity, culture, language, and social class are manifested in young people's lives is constantly in flux. Therefore, it is important to recognize that while there may be experiences that allow teachers of color to relate to certain realities of their students, this is not necessarily a given, and it is therefore highly advisable for teacher sof color also to encage in the process of critical reflection" (Howard, 128). I wish I would have read this article 10 years ago, because, I'd imagine it goes the same for any social group that you identify with in relation to your student.

It reminded me a lot about an article I read about peer mentorship programs and the negativity that can arise from them (Vargas). You have a white professor who was assigned a low income or POC as a mentee and that teacher tries to connect to, engage with, and mentor them...but they use their lens, their viewpoint of the world to mentor this student. I bet when mentorship programs started to become super popular, someone gave themselves a pat on the back. and was like..."Good Job."   But what if our viewpoint comes from a deficiet ideology and has a negative impact on a student? I think to be cognizant of this shows how passionate and aware you are of your surroundings and of the work that you do on a daily basis.

Howard, Tyrone C. Why Race and Culture Matter in Schools : Closing the Achievement Gap in America's Classrooms. New York :Teachers College Press, 2010.

Vargas, J.H., Saetermoe, C.L. & Chavira, G. Using critical race theory to reframe mentor training: theoretical considerations regarding the ecological systems of mentorship. *High Educ* 81, 1043–1062 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-020-00598-z

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Thread:	Empowering	Posted Date:	June 26, 2021 4:55 AM
Post:	RE: Empowering	Status:	Published
Author:	Shaun O'malley		

Everyone seems so passionate about making changes for their students and being a great resource for their students. I have little background when it comes to being a teacher for a K-12 population and because of that my frame of reference for the challenges that K-12 teachers struggle with is a bit lacking.

How much involvement do you, as a teacher, have in the creation of a curriiulum or in the presentation of the material? Is that done on a district level? Is that done by individual school? Is there a committee that creates it? Are teachers handed a curriculum and told how to present the material or are teachers allowed to present the material in any manner which they see fit?

Having served in Higher Education for the past 15-years, I feel that having "tough" one on one conversations with students about race, gender, orientation, poverty, etc are all things that I did just in the natural flow of the day, especially when meeting with studnets in conduct cases or in professional development with my student-staff, etc. I feel like having these conversations with students in a k-12 setting can be a little more nuanced, especially because they are minors and you have to be way more careful about what you say because you have to worry about parental involvement.

I feel that doing action research on minor students would also be far more complicated than on college-aged students, especially in collecting qualitative data from students. I hope that in the course of this class, we cover the boundaries of data collection, what can and cannot be done in collecting data, what questions can or cannot be asked, etc? I feel like there have to be parameters on data collection.

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Thread:	Cyclical
Post:	RE: Cyclical
Author:	Shaun O'malley

Posted Date:	June 26, 2021 4:24 AM
Edited Date:	June 26, 2021 4:31 AM
Status:	Published

You know it is very interesting becasue it seems like most students in this program focus on K-12 schooling and talk about creating a curriculum that promotes and values a multieducational experience.

Reflecting on my past experiences as a student in higher education, both for my undergraduate degree and Master's degree, none of my classes really focused on a multicultural lense in educaiton either (with the exception of 1 class). It has been a long time since I was in a K-12 classroom, so it is interesting to see so much dialogue about the diversity that exists in K-12 classrooms (from when I was a student).

I also have not really taken teacer-educator classes. When going to school to become a teacher, do classes focus on how to deal with minority, underrepresented or low-income families? Or do you find that most of the work that you do is "learning from experience?" I could see that if a teacher never had any classes specifically related to working with underserved populations, and then are thrown into a classroom where they are having to address code-switching, cultural education and awareness, etc, it might be a huge challenge for them, especially to feel comfortable having the types of conversations with your students that you need to have.

As for researcher bias, I think positionality plays a role in this and I think that we definitely learn more about positionality later in this class. However, I think that is the difference between traditional research vs. action research. Traditional research oftentimes is done by outsiders whereas action research is conducted by people seeking to make change from within...who better to make that change than the people who see it every day and know the ins and outs of the problem they are trying to change...I think that was definitely front and center in the readings in module one for this class.

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Thread:	Activism
Post:	RE: Activism
Author:	Shaun O'malley

Posted Date:	June 26, 2021 4:08 AM
Status:	Published

Has your institution started a "Curricular approach" in the career development wing of student affairs? If so, have any of your learning outcomes or learning strategies involved look at overcoming injustice or creating equity?

Also, I know that a lot of career service groups focus on creating mentorship groups for low income or minority students? There has been some research out there about how these mentorship programs a detrimental to low-income and students of color. Do you have specific thoughts on how mentor/mentee groups are detrimnetal to students?

"As the US populace becomes more diverse, and as universities struggle to diversify faculty pools, culturally mismatched mentor–protégé relationships are likely to remain the norm for future students of color" (see Weinberg 2008) as quoated by Vargas, Saetermoe, and Chavira.

Vargas, J.H., Saetermoe, C.L. & Chavira, G. Using critical race theory to reframe mentor training: theoretical considerations regarding the ecological systems of mentorship. *High Educ* **81,** 1043–1062 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-020-00598-z

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Thread: Voice	**Posted Date:** June 25, 2021 10:00 PM
Post: RE: Voice	**Edited Date:** June 25, 2021 10:02 PM
Author: Shaun O'malley	**Status:** Published

Zelexis,

I think that it is inspiring that you are truly wanting to take on the system to dismantle systemic racism in schools. I literally had someone tell me the other day that systemic racism does not exist in America and that the notion of systemic racism is a "left-wing" liberal concoction to try to make people feel guilty for slavery. It blows my mind today when people think that racism, slavery and discrimination has no bearing on people today.

You cannot erase years/decades of systemic oppression and holding back a people and think that it would not have a detrimental affect on people toay becasue of it. So conducting action research will give you a voice in the system, but have you found any good ways to combat those people who adamantly feel that systemic racism is a product of left-wing liberal fantasies? There will always be two sides to every coin/arguement, but it seems like some people just don't want to see reality.

I guess, as we saw, from the readings in the last class we had, dismantling power dynamics are hard. People that are part of an "on top" power bloc will do whatever they need to in order to remain on top...even if that means creating a faux-reality to explain it.

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Thread: Disrupt	**Posted Date:** June 25, 2021 3:28 AM
Post: RE: Disrupt	**Status:** Published
Author: Shaun O'malley	

If you click on the link, does it not open a voicethread in blackboard? When I click on the link, it just pops up a voice thread...

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Thread: Aspire	**Posted Date:** June 23, 2021 2:16 AM
Post: RE: Aspire	**Edited Date:** June 23, 2021 2:37 AM
Author: Shaun O'malley	**Status:** Published

Amanda, I think you hit the nail on the head...Education is more than just academics. When you think about it, you probably spend more time with your students than they spend with most other people in their lives and if you are having a challenge connecting to the curriculum, I'd imagine that your students are also having a similar challenge. Students can sense when, we as educators are not connected to the material. I think self reflection here is extremely important to figure out why you are not connecting to the material (Howard; Gay & Kirkland). It is funny, because a lot of times as educators we are asked to talk to our students about topics, for instance, race. We go through years of credentialing to get

advanced degrees but those degrees teach us how to manage a classroom, conduct assessment, conduct research, etc but never teach us how to actually have a conversation about race with our students. And if students can tell we are uncomfortable, they will vibe with that sentiment. So I guess, what parts of the curriculum make you uncomfortable? Where does that discomfort come from?

You cannot create a curriculum for each individual student, but curriculums must be flexible enough to meet all of your students where they are at.   There has been a lot of studies conducted around programs like Kahn Academy where students go in and take initial tests and the program generates a learning plan of where each student needs to focus their attention and time (areas where they have mastery of skills and areas where they do not have mastery of skills and need to focus) There is a huge benefit to pre and post assessment on subject matter. In a classroom with 15 to 20 students it is hard to focus on each indivudal students learning and comprehension of the material.

However, I think you are right on with your thoughts about needing to connect more with the students to gain a better understanding of who they are and what they need to be successful. One size does not fit all when it comes to education. As we saw in the previous class in Bryan Brown's Science in the City, "Students bring a wealth of knowledge with them as they enter learning environments, but our understanding of the relative value of their language resources is critical to how we will serve them...when we switch from a lens that views the culture of...students as deficient and lacking nuance to the one that values cognitive resources embedded in students' modes of communicating, we may not longer e suprised by what our students have to offer" (Brown, 57-58).

Furthermore in Tyrone Howard's, Why Race and Culture Matter in Schools, "Teachers should be careful not to allow racial classifications of students to be used as rigid and reductive cultural characteristics...Not all African American students work well in groups, not all Latino students are second language learners, and not all Asian American students are high achievers..." (Howard, 127).

"Instead, teachers should develop individual profiles of students based on the students' own thoughts and behaviors" (Howard, 127).

As for effecting change...if you can make a difference in the life of just one student, you have done more than most people do. If you can effect change in 1/2 of your students every year over the course of your entire career, you know that you have done wnat you need to do, effecing change outside of your classroom and beyond is icing on the cake. Action research You definitely seem passionate about making connections and being the teacher your students need so I think they are lucky to have you for sure. It is funny, I have a story I like to tell about my education. When I was younger (in 3rd grade), I had a teacher who saw that I was struggling in my education. She purchased a Jurassic Park Calendar for me and told me if I could get my grades up she would give me that calendar...I stayed after class to study with her and I ended up getting that calendar. As a thank you I made a box for her that said, "Yo Adrian" on the front of it because that was her first name. I saw her the other day and she told me she still has that box and she puts her keys into it every night when she gets home. I told her that I was getting my Ed.D and what I would like to do with it. The impact she had on me 27 years ago in still present in my thrist for knowledge and my excitement about education to this day. I owe a lot of that to her...

- **Brown, Bryan, A. (2019). Science in the City: Culturally Relevant STEM Education, Harvard Education, 2019.**
- **Gay, Geneva & Kipchoge Kirkland (2003) Developing Cultural Critical Consciousness and Self-Reflection in Preservice Teacher Education, Theory Into Practice, 42:3, 181-187, DOI: 10.1207/s15430421tip4203_3**
- **Howard, Tyrone C. Why Race and Culture Matter in Schools : Closing the Achievement Gap in America's Classrooms. New York :Teachers College Press, 2010.**

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