

ABSTRACT

GREINER, JEFFREY ALLEN. Using the C3 Inquiry Arc to Teach Critical Issues in a Social Studies Classroom. (Under the direction of Dr. Meghan M. Manfra).

This case study found that using the C3 inquiry arc in a secondary social studies course in order to address critical issues (topics focused on equity and justice) led a teacher to embrace a more critical stance towards their practice. However, it was also found that his critical practice fell short of the standard set by critical pedagogy. This study involved two inquiry-based units, designed and taught by a teacher who had significant experience using the *C3 Framework* to organize and develop his units of instruction. The study paid particular to attention towards how a teacher using the *C3 Framework* taught about critical issues of equity and justice. Data was collected through interviews, observations, journals, and documents and was analyzed through a continuous coding procedure. Findings involved four major themes: inquiry presented dilemmas with critical pedagogy, implementing inquiry encouraged the teacher to embrace elements of critical pedagogy; the teacher used specific pedagogies that increased the overlap between of inquiry and critical pedagogy, and that obstacles existed in the form of a lack of experience using critical consciousness, a lack of time to develop critical curriculum, difficulty finding alterative perspective resources, and the struggle to craft a compelling question that served both the inquiry and the examination of a critical issue.

Keywords: *C3 Framework*, inquiry-based social studies, critical pedagogy.

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Using the C3 Inquiry Arc to Teach Critical Issues in a Social Studies Classroom

by
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to everyone in my life who helped to put me on, and keep me on, this path. To my parents, Frank and Jodi, for instilling in me a love of learning and a value for education. To my wife, Meghan, for encouraging me to start along this journey and supporting me through the entire process. To my children, Owyn and Emrys, for giving me all the more reason to want to do my best every day. To the teachers I worked with at Westside Middle School and Martin Middle School who taught me, in so many ways, what it means to be a teacher and what it means to teach social studies. To my middle school students who inspired me every single day for 14 years and showed me first-hand the power of education and social studies as well as what it means to care about each other and the world. To the late Mr. Hoffmeyer for helping me to develop a more complex understanding and love of history. To my late grandfather and grandmother, Jake and Kitty, who took me to see the world and taught me that history is not stories, but people's lives. To all the family who have not otherwise been mentioned, for the inspiration, encouragement, and support through my life and through this process, especially Momo, DaJoe, Laura, Kim, Bill and Mary. To Dr. Sondel who put me on the path to examine education critically. To Dr. Manfra and Dr. Lee who always saw the potential in me to finish this journey and gave me the encouragement, support, and opportunities needed to fulfill my dreams. To all of the people amongst my friends and colleagues who encouraged me and gave me the energy to keep moving forward even when it was difficult.

BIOGRAPHY

Jeffrey was born in Atlantic, Iowa with all the advantages afforded to him in life by growing up in a small, but nurturing and supportive community. With parents who were known features in town, his father a banker in a local independent bank and his mother a private music instructor and leader in a local church. Through this community he developed a sense of the importance and value in people who take care of and support each other. Jeff attended Atlantic Community Schools where he was active in many programs including music and debate. He went to Iowa State University to major in History and get his license to teach social studies.

After graduation he married the love of his life and moved to Fremont, Nebraska where he worked as a substitute teacher, particularly in the Valley and the Cedar Bluffs School Districts. After two years he moved to Omaha, Nebraska and began teaching social studies at Westside Middle School. He was there for four foundational years in terms of teaching him what it meant to be a teacher and laid the groundwork for his future success. After that he moved to Raleigh, North Carolina and began a 10-year teaching career at Martin GT Magnet Middle School, where he honed his teaching and became a trusted veteran teacher. Over the course of that time two sons were born, one in Omaha and the second in Raleigh.

While teaching in Omaha, Jeff began to pursue his first graduate degree, earning a Master's in Curriculum and Instruction (Instructional Technology) from Peru State College. A few years later he decided to pursue his PhD from North Carolina State University. Jeff has been a teacher for 14 years and has spent the majority of that time also in graduate school in one form or another. He is looking forward to focusing his attentions on teaching future teachers and continuing to examine inquiry in social studies classrooms as well as education for justice.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Inequities and injustices in the world that impact people in marginalized, subordinated, or oppressed groups are well documented and accepted, and schools often serve to exacerbate or reproduce that inequity (Anyon, 2014; McLaren, 2016; Slavin, 1997; Zion, Allen, & Jean, 2015). There are historic and systemic roots to these inequities, and thus solutions are not simple nor straightforward (Berliner, 2013). Given that schools can impact this issue negatively it can also be assumed that schools have the power to have a positive impact as well. A key element of such positive impact needs to be the explicit investigation into issues of inequity in schools (Parkhouse, 2017) but teachers are often hesitant to do so through a standard method of addressing such issues, critical pedagogy, which faces obstacles towards implementation (Martin & Jaramillo, 2005; McLaren, 2016). This study examined the use of inquiry in social studies as a method of addressing critical issues of inequity and injustice, to determine if, or how, that pedagogy might be used by teachers to address such issues, and compare that practice to critical pedagogy, the standard for such work that this study will utilize.

Why Social Studies

One of the ways that society tries to address deeply rooted social issues is through education. Schools prepare young people to live in, and contribute to, society, hence it is generally agreed that schools can help instill in young people ideals and skills that will lead to social progress. If you can address an issue in schools you can start to change future generations, and they may work to make change towards progress. Scholars have noted that schools can either serve to reinforce and support the status quo, or they can work to disrupt and change society (Anyon, 2014; McLaren, 2016; Slavin, 1997; Zion, et al., 2015). While this is generally true of education systems, it seems to be uniquely true of social studies as a field. The purpose of social

studies is to prepare students for democratic citizenship (Evans, 2004; Fallace, 2009; Hawley, Hostetler, & Mooney, 2017; Nelson, 2001; Ross, 2001). This purpose situates social studies to be a subject that has particular potential to work towards reinforcing, or disrupting, injustice in society.

Critical Pedagogy as a Standard

The purpose of critical pedagogy, as developed by Paulo Freire (2000), is to educate people towards emancipation and realizing their power to end their oppression in the world. Critical pedagogy describes methods that educators can use to reduce inequity and injustice in the world by empowering their students. Such efforts have existed within the halls of our education system for decades. For example, problem-based learning has been part of discussions about social studies curriculum since the field of social studies was created (Evans, 2004). Harold Rugg's textbook helped spark exposure to, and interest in, critical concepts in the 1940s (Boesenberg & Poland, 2001; Evans, 2004; Thornton, 2017; Winter, 1967). There have been more recent efforts, such as Rethinking Schools, which provides curricular materials and advice to help teachers move towards teaching for social justice (Rethinking Schools, 2017). Even though it has experienced numerous periods of piqued interest, critical pedagogy, it may have the best chance of addressing social inequity through education, and thus should be widely embraced as a standard for such progress towards justice-oriented practice in education.

The Potential of Inquiry

Inquiry, of some form, is a pedagogy that has been part of social studies virtually since the inception of the field (Saye, 2017), and is also a pedagogy nested within critical pedagogy (Freire, 2000). As such, one can find significant overlap between inquiry-based pedagogy and critical pedagogy. Inquiry-based practice has become increasingly popular (Newmann, King, &

Carmichael, 2007; Saye, & Brush, 2005; VanSledright, 2011). Given the philosophical connections to critical pedagogy, such inquiry-based practices may be well positioned to provide teachers with the tools for addressing critical issues in their classrooms.

Background

It is worth examining the background of issues of equity and education to better understand the problem being examined. Further, by looking at the role of social studies in the examination of such issues as well as the potential for critical pedagogy to examine them, the problem can be further contextualized in a way that justifies the need for this study.

Inequity

Social inequity is a known issue. It does not seem reasonable in our society to take a position that all people are equal and that all things are fair for everyone. Not only is society rife with injustice and inequity, schools are also places where such inequity is common (Zion, et al., 2015). Schools tend to not only serve as a microcosm for the communities that they serve (Berliner, 2013), but they also reflect and reproduce the inequity in those communities (Anyon, 2014; McLaren, 2016; Slavin, 1997; Zion, et al., 2015). Slavin (1997) points out several ways that students who grow up in poverty are facing disadvantages in academic and cognitive development at home. Such disadvantages are multiplied when they get to school and are often not presented with equal opportunities and resources. The difference, Slavin (1997) noted, between the wealthy school districts and poor school districts in the United States, in terms of per pupil spending, is a minimum of 2:1 and it can be much greater. As Berliner (2013) puts it, “Most children born into the lower social classes will not make it out of that class, even when exposed to heroic educators” (p.2). Ladson-Billings (1998) describes how this inequity most frequently impacts students of color. Additional groups also face such inequity, such as religious

minorities (Limage, 2010), women (Buchmann, DiPrete, & McDaniel, 2008), and those of non-conforming sexuality (Abbott, Ellis, & Abbot, 2015), and others.

Role of education in perpetuating inequity

It is undeniable that social inequity exists and that such inequity makes academic success difficult for poor students (Apple, 2017; Au, 2012; Slavin, 1997). This, in turn, makes it harder for students to meet their potential, and makes it difficult for many students to achieve the success that they otherwise could have achieved (Berliner, 2013). Thus, the cycle of oppression and marginalization continues. Social reproduction theory explains that systems of education often serve to maintain the status quo, reinforcing inequities (Anyon, 2014; Apple, 2017, Chander & Hawley, 2017) rather than serving as an equalizing factor in society (Berliner, 2013).

The good news is that since schools have a role to play in reinforcing and maintaining social inequity then they can also serve to disrupt that inequity (Anyon, 2014). Berliner (2013), however, is quick to point out that addressing such educational changes is unlikely to address all issues of an unequal society. This is not a reason to lose hope or give up. The world can always be better, and schools can play a role in helping it be better. Even if schools do not provide a total solution they can help make progress. Thus, efforts to do so are inherently worthwhile (Berliner, 2013).

Potential of social studies to address inequity

Not only do education systems have a potential role in disrupting social injustice, the field of social studies is uniquely positioned to take on such efforts (Hawley, et al., 2016). Social studies, since its inception as a field, has focused on education for democratic citizenship as a purpose (Evans, 2004; Nelson, 2001; Ross, 2001). As such, more than any other subject, the social studies field has sought to teach students about the responsibilities and obligations of

being a citizen. If such effort is made to instill in young people the idea of their belonging to a community of which they are a citizen, social studies, it would follow, is well positioned to help students examine how they might improve that community through their citizenship. Chandler & Hawley (2017) explicitly demonstrate how this is possible through the use of social studies to address issues of race, but social studies is positioned to address a myriad of other issues of inequity and power as well.

The nature of social studies inherently involves issues of equity and justice (Brickmore, 2008). In social studies classrooms, students have space to examine issues of economics, history, and society that are particularly important towards understanding historic or systemic levels of oppression and marginalization. Examination of such topics are essential to engaging in critical analysis of society in order to achieve social progress (Giroux, 2010). Since social studies is a field that involves the examination of history and systems of society, social studies instruction is in a position to focus on content that encourages analysis from, and empowerment of, students that can serve to instill a desire to work toward social progress regarding issues of justice.

Goals of critical pedagogy

Critical pedagogy calls on teachers and students to engage in a process that empowers members of oppressed groups to lessen or end that oppression (Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Ellsworth, 1989; Freire, 2000). This process includes ideas such as: honoring student knowledge, encouraging student curiosity, asking/answering hard questions about the world around them, authentic problem-posing/problem-based/inquiry-based learning, dialogue, a liberatory/democratic conception of education, explicit examination of power/oppression, analyzing hidden curriculum, engaging in the social construction of knowledge, challenging official sources of knowledge, dissent, and having teachers be explicit that their goals are

connected to a desire to increase social justice. Further, important to all of these, is the development of critical consciousness (Apple, 2004; Au, 2012; Ellsworth, 1989; Freire, 2000; Giroux, 2003b, 2004a, 2004b, 2010; Godfrey & Wolf, 2016; McLaren, 2009; Montero, 2009; O’Laughlin, 1995).

These elements are derived from a study of scholars, starting with Freire, and moving through researchers and scholars who have examined Freire’s ideas in other contexts, clarifying and adding to them, much as Freire envisioned (1997). By integrating these elements of critical pedagogy teachers and students engage in an educational process that leaves those students prepared to act in the world. Such action is what Freire called *praxis* (2000), a process by which learning and action inform each other and occur in conjunction. In a general way, teachers using critical pedagogy teach students to recognize, call out, and act against injustices (Ellsworth, 1989).

Through the process of learning to recognize, name, and act in the face of injustice, students develop a critical consciousness (Freire, 2000). They come to a state of mind that leads to seeking out a complex and nuanced understanding of society, based on in-depth historicizing and recognition of pervasive cultural and systemic issues that create oppression (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016). What is more, critical pedagogy literature calls not only for teachers to engage students in a journey to the development of a critical consciousness, but also that the teachers be on such a journey as well. Enacting elements of critical pedagogy without a sense of critical consciousness means that the pedagogy lacks intentionality and direction, making it pedagogy without being critical.

Inquiry in social studies

Inquiry scholarship in social studies describes a pedagogy that is focused, at a minimum, on the examination of important questions to drive an investigation into disciplinary topics, and then having students communicate their findings. It is sometimes likened to problem-based learning (Hmelo-Silver, Duncan, & Chinn, 2007) and has recently been energized (Newmann, et al., 2007; Saye, & Brush, 2005; VanSledright, 2011) by the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards (NCSS, 2013)*. The *C3 Framework* offers a specific implementation of inquiry through its inquiry arc, while staying true to the basics. The major additions the C3 inquiry arc makes to social studies methods of inquiry is to include that students explicitly use disciplinary tools (the tools of history, economics, geography, sociology, etc.) to examine sources, that students come to their own conclusions about the answers to the questions they are answering, and that they communicate their findings in the form of well supported arguments. The C3 inquiry arc also includes an element called “taking informed action” that has students taking what they have learned through the process and applying it to the world in which they live.

Inquiry and critical pedagogy

Inquiry and critical pedagogy overlap in several conceptual ways, which makes sense given that inquiry is an embedded part of critical pedagogy. But this becomes particularly true when the *C3 Framework* is used as a basis for inquiry, as it adds specific elements that align well with critical pedagogy. If students are genuinely engaged in using disciplinary tools to conduct analysis of sources then they are engaging in a process that should honor the knowledge that they are generating (Grant, Lee & Swan, 2015). If students are being asked to construct arguments and support them with evidence then they are being asked to construct meaning in a way that can

challenge official sources of knowledge, particularly if there are multiple perspectives represented in the sources that are being examined. If learning is centered around important disciplinary questions about society, that looks similar to Freire's ideas (2000) about focusing learning on questions about the world around us. Lastly, if the goal of an inquiry-using teacher, as detailed in the C3 inquiry arc, is to have students practice taking informed action then it aligns well with teaching students to act in the world to create greater justice through *praxis*.

Statement of the Problem

It is crucially important that students be able to examine and analyze critical issues in society. Critical pedagogy is the theory that, arguably, has the best chance to teach students to challenge contemporary problems in society, particularly those issues that are centered around class, including the ways that it intersects with race and gender (Martin & Jaramillo, 2005). The field of social studies is a subject area uniquely qualified to address these critical issues of justice and equity. However, the most common form of instruction in social studies is focused on traditional methods, rooted in the teacher-focused presentation of facts that that instructor has decided is important. This often involves a presentation of the world that reinforces the status quo (Loewen, 1995, VanSledright, 2011). Such teacher-focused methods are particularly anti-critical in nature because they do not empower students to create knowledge. Reliance on these teacher-focused narratives of society also fails to provide students with meaningful opportunities to practice the use of their power. Such traditional pedagogy lacks intentionality towards improving society and addressing issues of oppression and power. Inquiry in social studies appears that it could be in a position to see widespread adoption and benefits from academic and organizational support (Newmann, et al., 2007; Saye, & Brush, 2005; VanSledright, 2011) and so understanding the way that it might address issues of equity and justice is important. As is

illustrated in Figure 1, there is a need for teaching critical issues, but the standard provided by critical pedagogy is problematic, so we look to inquiry as a means to solve the problem.

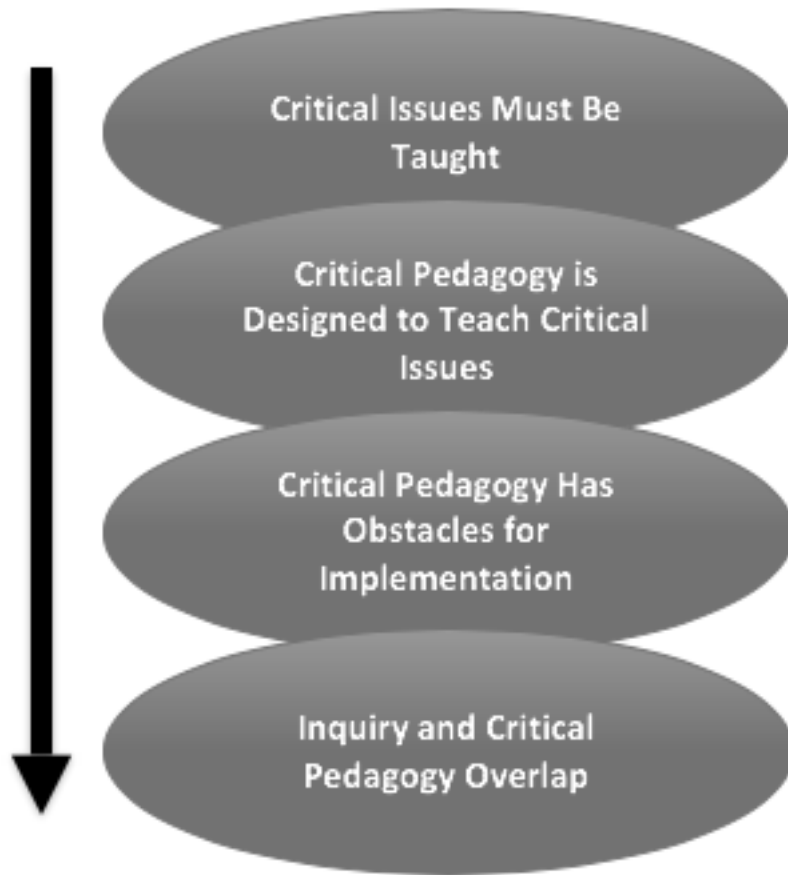


Figure 1. Illustration of the need to address critical issues and potential of inquiry to function in that way.

Why not critical pedagogy

Traditional teaching methods have dominated in social studies for a century and more, despite efforts to instill more impactful pedagogy into classrooms (VanSledright, 2011). What is more, Martin & Jaramillo (2005) point out that critical pedagogy, across disciplines, has had difficulty gaining traction in American schools. Teachers may want to make an impact on the

world, critical pedagogy may be a way to make that impact, but the obstacles tend to be too great for teachers to embrace implementation.

Obstacles that get in the way of wider implementation of critical pedagogy seems to range through several facets. One of them is the perceived political stigma of associating with a theory that embraces philosophers like Karl Marx (Martin & Jaramillo, 2005) and calls into question basic assumptions of society, such as advocacy of a free market capitalist system (Martin & Jaramillo, 2005; McLaren, 2016). McLaren (2016) goes so far as to argue that capitalist competition has so engrained itself into our society that it has created a manufactured antagonism in the United States that makes people assume that such a system is in their best interest, even when it is used to oppress them. The recent dominance of the accountability culture in American education also presents itself as a perceived obstacle towards the use of critical pedagogy (Martin & Jaramillo, 2005). The accountability movement has led to a significant emphasis on testing and meeting standards, which discourages alternative perspectives of society to be examined because alternatives are, by definition, less likely to be supported by standards and high-stakes testing.

McLaren (2016) argues that many who discuss a lack of educational opportunity see it as a problem of a culture of poverty. He explains that people who do not want to engage in educational reform, such as that presented by critical pedagogy, think that students do not need a new type of curriculum or pedagogy to help them overcome the oppression that they are facing, because it is an oppression of their own making due to the culture that they have chosen. This is the reality that critical scholars try expose but often struggle in their efforts to convince teachers to address. As McLaren (2016) puts it “There exists no *Critical Pedagogy for Idiots*” (p.33). It may be that fostering an authentic critical consciousness is too complex of an effort to mass

produce. Critical consciousness, at a definitional level, rejects simplification. Not teaching with critical pedagogy in mind is simply easier for people to wrap their heads around, and thus it is easier to implement.

Inquiry on the rise

Inquiry-based pedagogy, on the other hand, has seen a resurgence and could be poised for more widespread implementation (Newmann, et al., 2007; Saye, & Brush, 2005; VanSledright, 2011). Recent efforts towards inquiry-based instruction have gained strength, and there is a growing body of literature that demonstrates that some of those obstacles may be more perception-based reality-based. For example, teachers may have similar concerns about inquiry-based instruction regarding high stakes testing as they do with critical pedagogy, but there is evidence that suggests that students who engage in inquiry-based instruction are likely to score at least as well as those taught with traditional methods. The learning in inquiry-based classrooms appear to be deeper and more meaningful (Parker, et al., 2013).

Not only has inquiry been shown to be an effective pedagogy for teaching students to engage in deeper disciplinary thinking (Parker, et al., 2013), there are other factors that make the embrace of inquiry easier than critical pedagogy. First, while critical pedagogy has been around for several decades (Freire, 2000), it is still a relative newcomer in the educational field. Inquiry in social studies, on the other hand, has been a part of educational discourse for at least a century (Saye, 2017). In that time, it has been an enduring thread through curriculum and pedagogical discourse since social studies unified various disciplines to become one field (Evans, 2004). As such, the idea of inquiry in social studies has been a common and generally-accepted topic within academic discourse, while the newer critical pedagogy faces resistance because of its

tendency towards revolutionary questioning/rejecting of many social norms (Martin & Jaramillo, 2005).

Teachers using inquiry in social studies have even managed to turn current trends towards accountability into somewhat of an asset (Saye, 2017). In 2013 the preeminent professional organization for social studies education, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), published a document called the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards* (2013). This was the NCSS response to the growing trend of states adopting the Common Core State Standards (Au, 2013). The *C3 Framework* was designed as a way for NCSS to inject themselves into the conversation about the growing trend of states adopting the Common Core standards. It was also created to try to ensure that social studies would get proper attention during that effort in the accountability movement and to ensure that it was done in a way that encouraged the implementation of meaningful practice, rather than an emphasis on memorization of facts that make easy standardized tests.

While enthusiasm for the Common Core may have diminished, the *C3 Framework* was published anyway, as a document to guide states who are looking for assistance in the development of social studies standards. The accountability movement had not come to its end, and the *C3 Framework* lived on as a document that was guiding not only state standards, but academic research (with hundreds of articles easily found through an online search of academic journals), and teacher preparation programs. One of the major components of the *C3 Framework* is the inquiry arc, a pedagogy, through four dimensions, that leads students through an inquiry process that concludes with taking informed action.

The organizational, institutional, and governmental support that inquiry has, in part through the *C3 Framework*, along with its long history in the field and its lack of critique of

basic assumptions of modern society make inquiry easier to embrace than critical pedagogy. This is all the truer when inquiry's potential success to achieve deeper educational outcomes is considered. As such, this study sought to examine how an inquiry-using teacher addressed a critical issue, rather than examine how a critical pedagogy-using teacher conducted an inquiry.

Inquiry for critical pedagogy

Inquiry is a nested part of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy requires that students engage in some form of inquiry, even if not all inquiries are part of critical pedagogy. Given the overlaps between the two pedagogies in areas like having students engage in authentic analysis, having their perspectives and experiences regarded as legitimate, encouraging students to examine multiple perspectives including alternative ones, and giving students an opportunity to practice using their power in the world, there is reason to believe that if an inquiry-using teacher is presented with a critical issue or question to address, their practice may move towards elements of critical pedagogy, and that, as such, the use of inquiry may enable a more meaningful approach to addressing such a topic. The very act of engaging in an inquiry-based analysis of society means that alternative perspectives should be considered, assumptions should be questioned (albeit, perhaps not at the level that critical pedagogy would prefer), and student understanding of history should be problematized (NCSS, 2013). These are the very shifts that can contribute to the development of critical consciousness in both teachers and students (Freire, 2000).

The development of critical inquiry, as a pedagogy, demonstrates the potential for the two to come together. Critical inquiry (Allen, 2013; Chandler & Hawley, 2017; Manfra, 2009) is evidence that both inquiry and critical pedagogy can come together in meaningful and impactful ways. What is not clear is how such critical inquiry pedagogy develops in teachers. In this study

it was examined how an inquiry-using teacher addressed a critical issue in their planning, instruction, and curriculum, which additionally, provided insight into such a process of developing a critical inquiry approach to instruction.

Research Questions

To address the topic of how an inquiry-using teacher approaches teaching a critical issue I sought answers to the following research question and two sub-questions:

- How does a social studies teacher using the C3 inquiry arc address teaching a critical issue?
 - What challenges, if any, does a teacher using the C3 inquiry arc have in addressing a critical issue through an inquiry-based pedagogy?
 - What methods and strategies, if any, does the C3 inquiry arc provide a teacher who is addressing a critical issue?

This research question focuses on the idea of using the C3 inquiry arc to address a critical issue through course content. The sub-questions help determine how well using the C3 inquiry arc equipped the teacher with tools needed to address a critical issue and what obstacles such a teacher needed to overcome. This helps those who would like to find ways for teachers to address critical issues understand where the challenges might be when doing so via inquiry, so that they can better prepare for them. The first sub-question focused explicitly on the challenges that existed for the inquiry-using teacher when addressing a critical issue. The second dug into the way that the C3 inquiry arc provided the teacher with tools that assisted them in addressing a critical issue.

Theoretical Framework

Critical pedagogy served as a standard to which the use of inquiry to address a critical issue was compared. To define critical pedagogy, I have examined scholars such as Freire,(2000), McLaren (2009), Apple (2004), Au (2012), Ellsworth (1989), Allen and Rossatto (2009), Allen (2013), Godfrey and Wolf (2016), Montero (2009), Giroux (2004a), O’Laughlin (1995), and Zion, Allen, and Jean (2015). From these scholars I have synthesized essential elements of critical pedagogy. Effort was made to ensure that the participant was well-versed in inquiry, and to make it easier to define what inquiry meant, given that it has been described in a variety of ways, the participant used the C3 model for inquiry. Choosing the right participant in this study was crucial, as the implementation of inquiry was not the primary focus of the study. Rather, the focus was on how an inquiry-using teacher approached a critical issue in their instruction. By selecting a participant who was well along in their efforts towards implementing inquiry the collection and analysis of data was able to focus on the elements of critical pedagogy that existed within the implementation of inquiry and the challenges and supports that the *C3 Framework* provided them in addressing a critical issue. Critical pedagogy was used as the framework that guided all elements of the study, and the lens through which everything was examined. Given that critical pedagogy is the foundational theory of engaging in critical work in an educational setting (Giroux, 2010; Jennings & Lynn, 2005) it is a meaningful way of examining the broad impact that using inquiry-based instruction has on a teacher towards engaging in critical work. By juxtaposing the use of the C3 inquiry arc to address a critical issue and critical pedagogy, a widely examined standard for addressing such issues, the similarities and differences can be revealed and analyzed.

Scope of the Study

This study examined the way that a teacher who was already using the C3 inquiry arc as a basis for instruction in a social studies classroom addressed a critical issue in the form of a case study. The study determined what challenges were faced and how inquiry assisted the participant in their effort to address a critical issue. The study compared the way one teacher used inquiry to address critical issues to critical pedagogy, but did not seek to make generalized assessments about the relationship between the two pedagogies amongst all educators. This study also focused on critical pedagogy rather than the various other critical pedagogies that evolved from it, such as feminist pedagogy, red pedagogy, critical race pedagogy, and others. They are all worthy of examination, but as critical pedagogy is foundational it was the lens through which this examination looked at a teacher's efforts towards critical work. Critical pedagogy is open to the oppression targeted by these other theories, and thus is valuable as a starting point, leaving all of the other pedagogies outside the scope of what this study accomplishes. This study was focused on this potential through a deep investigation of one, inquiry-using teacher's practice as they addressed a critical issue. A critical issue was considered an issue that addressed inequity and injustice. This study did not attempt to make any arguments about the experiences of teachers that use inquiry-based instruction in subject areas other than social studies to address critical issues. Due to the unique positioning of social studies to address issues in society the findings in this study may not have a strong bearing on any other subject matter and did not seek to examine the relevancy of its findings outside of the social studies education field.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Social inequity is a clear issue in modern America: the gap between the wealthy and the poor appears to be growing, historically and systemically oppressed groups continue to face inequity, and education continues to serve the purpose of maintaining that inequity, rather than serving as an equalizer (McLaren, 2016; Slavin, 1997; Zion, et al., 2015). Such inequity is a critical issue that students should be able to examine and make judgements about. As Ellsworth (1989) states “...the goal is to give students the analytical skills they need to make them as free, rational, and objective as teachers supposedly are to choose positions on their objective merits” (p.306). Critical pedagogy is a pedagogy focused on how to address such critical issues with students (Freire, 2000). However, critical pedagogy faces obstacles towards implementation that have kept it out of the mainstream in American education, despite a growing call for more social justice in education (Allen & Rossatto, 2009).

Inquiry, however, is a pedagogical approach that is enjoying recent growth in support in the social studies field (Newmann, et al., 2007; Saye, & Brush, 2005; VanSledright, 2011), which may demonstrate a meaningful set of teaching methods to help teachers and students address critical issues. Inquiry and critical pedagogy seem to enjoy some overlap within their essential elements, and in some cases, inquiry exists as a nested concept within critical pedagogy.

Through the course of this literature review I have examined the ways in which teaching about inequity is a problem that needs to be addressed in American education. I do this by examining the role that education plays in creating inequity and the impact that of that inequity in schools. I have noted that it is important that educators seek to not to reinforce such inequity, which I propose be done through a more effective effort to examine critical issues in classrooms.

I have then synthesized a conception of critical pedagogy, as a significant standard for addressing the problem that is grounded in the idea of several critical scholars. I have also discussed obstacles that stop the widespread implementation of the approach. I have noted the unique role that the social studies field is in to address critical issues, and finally, I have defined inquiry, as described in the C3 inquiry arc, and the potential it has to address critical issues, based on the overlap that exists between inquiry and critical pedagogy.

Education and Inequity

“Schools are deeply involved not ‘just’ in the contested reproduction of class relations, but in race and gender reproduction as well” (Apple, 2017, p. 21). The good news is that while socio-economic inequity is as bad in recent decades as it has been in a long time (McLaren, 2016; Slavin, 1997; Zion, et al., 2015), and schools help maintain that inequity (Apple, 2017), that means that schools are an ideal place to teach about that inequity (Freire, 2000). Inequity functions as a form of oppression, where socio-economic status affects the opportunities for economic attainment (McLaren, 2016; Slavin, 1997) as well as health (Au, 2012). If systems exist to create and maintain such inequity then those systems create oppression for members of certain groups.

With the prevalence of such inequity in modern society it should be a topic of high priority for schools to teach. Inequity not only impacts society outside of the walls of the schools, it also plays out within education systems (Apple, 2017). Students who come from oppressed groups are less likely to be academically successful (Slavin, 1997), in part because they face food insecurity and less access to healthcare (Au, 2012). Students who are born to a social class are much more likely to stay in that social class despite any efforts a teacher might make to assist them (Berliner, 2013). If those teachers are better equipped to address issues of inequity in their

instruction, however, students may better understand what they are facing and be better prepared to address it as active citizens of the country.

Social inequity manifests in American schooling in ways that help perpetuate inequity. According to Slavin (1997) wealthy school districts have a per pupil spending record that is at least twice that of poor districts, despite the fact that the financial needs are greater in the poorer districts (Berliner, 2013). This spending correlates to students of racial minorities and lower social classes performing worse on national assessment measures and having higher dropout rates (Slavin, 1997). Such inequity impacting academic success then serves to perpetuate the cycle that creates the inequity anew, generation after generation (Apple, 2017; Slavin, 1997). Anderson (2001) even notes that when minority students do perform well in school, officials are prone to rejecting the results and examining the assessment for being faulty, revealing a deep form of deficit thinking towards students from marginalized groups. A young person grows up facing inequity, as a result they do not have the same opportunities in school, and because of that they do not have as many opportunities after they leave the school system, reinforcing the injustice in their lives and passing them on to their own children. Not only is such injustice reinforced in the education system, it is actively recreated there, through the process of social reproduction (Apple, 2017; O'Loughlin, 1995).

Socio-economic inequity clearly disadvantages some students, but it also directly impacts teachers by making them a part of a process that creates oppression. As social reproduction works to shape society in a way that keeps the powerful in their position through the oppression of others it also means that teachers are called upon to serve as tools of that oppression. This is done by having teachers engage in a form of education that reinforces the status quo through the presentation of dominant narratives and reinforcing social inequity. The skills of the teacher are

devalued and instead they become reskilled through the values that create and perpetuate this oppression (Apple, 2017). Teachers should find such social reproduction abhorrent not only because it asks them to serve as a means of oppression, but also that it de-professionalizes and devalues them as it turns them into trainers who follow instructions and priorities from those who do not have in mind the best interests of teachers nor of the students they teach.

As discussed, the education system often serves to recreate social inequity through social reproduction (Apple, 2017). Social reproduction means that the education system tends to serve the purpose of maintaining the status quo (Apple, 2017). If, however, it can generally be acknowledged that such a status quo is rife with injustice, then it seems there is an ethical duty for schools to do a better job of teaching about that injustice. That is what this study is examining, the way one pedagogy might be used to address the critical issues that impact our society in systemic and historic ways. Also, to further our understanding of the role of inquiry as a pedagogy and how it might function to teach about inequity so that students come to a more nuanced understanding of that inequity.

Critical Pedagogy

I used critical pedagogy as a lens to research the practice of an 8th grade social studies teacher in a southern charter school regarding the way he used inquiry to teach about critical issues. As such it is worth examining the conception of critical pedagogy that was in use. Critical pedagogy is a theory of education, rooted in critical theory (Giroux, 2010), and significantly grounded in the work of philosopher/educator Paulo Freire (Giroux, 2010; Jennings & Lynn, 2005). It is a theory of education intended to call into question many concepts of the social status quo in order to emancipate people. It has primarily focused on empowering people to emancipate themselves from class and economic forms of oppression (Freire, 2000), but the concepts that it

involves go beyond that, into other forms of oppression. Amongst the concepts critical pedagogy equips educators and students to call into question are: capitalism, imperialism, racism, and sexism (McLaren, 2016). “The political project of critical pedagogy is a redefinition of education and literacy as a means for political unification among the oppressed, with the ultimate goal being social transformation...” (Allen & Rossatto, 2009, p.169).

Freirean legacy

Freire is credited with developing his ideas around critical pedagogy in Brazil in the 1960s while working with largely illiterate farmers (Freire, 1997; Giroux, 2010; Jennings & Lynn, 2005). He called for people to take his ideas and reimagine them, revise them, and otherwise contextualize them for different settings (1997). According to Giroux (2010) “[f]or Freire, pedagogy is not a method of an *a priori* technique to be imposed on all students but a political and moral practice that provides the knowledge, skills, and social relations that enable students to explore the possibilities what it means to be critical citizens...” (p. 716). To understand the theoretical framework of this study I have examined not only the Freirean legacy of critical pedagogy, but the ways that it has been reimagined by scholars in a contemporary American context.

Critical pedagogy and multiple forms of oppression

Critical pedagogy has been critiqued for being overly focused on class to the detriment of examining other forms of oppression, such as that based on gender, race, or sexuality. It is worth addressing the way critical pedagogy interacts with other forms of oppression in order to consider if critical pedagogy was the best fit for the theoretical framework of this study. Critical pedagogy scholarship, however, does not seek to invalidate other forms of oppression; instead it seeks to address all forms of oppression (Freire, 2000). McLaren (2016) notes that critical

pedagogy can also address all of those other forms of oppression. Further, Apple (1982) describes that the problem of social reproduction in schools impacts people based on “racial and sexual oppression” (p. 6) but that those forms of oppression are intersectional and “dynamically interconnected with the relations of economic domination and exploitation that exist” (p. 6). Additionally, Hawley, et al. (2016), in discussing inequity in education, described the way that economics underpins other forms of oppression. Given this, critical pedagogy seems a worthy lens through which to examine the data in this study, although it may be worthwhile for future studies to conduct similar investigations through other critical lenses in order to determine where the results may be similar or different.

Implementation Through Four Goals

By examining the literature on critical pedagogy, from its roots with Freire, to its re-imagining in modern American contexts, I have synthesized four categories that have nested within them fundamental elements of critical pedagogy. These four categories provide educators with a framework to teach in a way that addresses critical issues, based on what was suggested by critical scholars as being fundamental elements of the pedagogical approach. Those categories are: treating students as worthy of respect and legitimacy, questioning the world, recognizing the nature of knowledge, and developing a critical consciousness that is transparently displayed. These categories, and the specific methods within them (which are summarized in Table 1) guided this study in significant ways, as they provided specific actions that could be examined to determine how the practice of using inquiry to teach a critical issue compared to the standard of critical pedagogy.

Table 1

Summary of Four Goals of Critical Pedagogy.

Students Worthy of Respect/ Legitimacy	Questioning the World	Nature of Knowledge	Critical Consciousness/ Transparency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honor Student Creation of Knowledge • Respect Student Experiences • Encourage Student Curiosity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hidden Curriculum • Multiple Perspectives • Examine Power/Oppression • Question Sources of Knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Construction of Knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Consciousness Creation • Explicit Critical Pedagogy

Treating students as worthy of respect and legitimacy

Proponents of critical pedagogy emphasize that a teacher should have a sincere belief that students are worthy of respect. That their disposition should be that students can engage in meaningful analysis and their thinking about the world is just as legitimate as that of others. This does not mean that we ignore the fact that students might have fewer experiences to base their analysis on, but it means honestly believing in their assessment as important and meaningful (Allen & Rossatto, 2009). Students should not be dismissed and should not be thought of as lesser as a result of their status as students (Zion, et al., 2015). Their experiences must make an impact on the curriculum for it to critically engage students both socially and academically (Au, 2012). Connecting the curriculum to the realities of students acknowledges that students have power and that their realities are meaningful. What is more, it recognizes the fact that no curriculum, pedagogy, or philosophy in education is neutral to the complex reality in which it exists (Au, 2012; Giroux, 2004a). The literature on critical pedagogy often discusses elements around this theme by discussing the honoring of student creation of knowledge, the recognition

of student experience being meaningful, and the legitimation and encouraging of student curiosity.

Students must be able to become co-learners and co-creators of knowledge with the teacher, and further, students have to know that their experiences are meaningful and just as important as anyone else's when it comes to making meaning of the world in which they live (Apple & Buras, 2006; Freire, 1997; Giroux, 2004b). As Freire (2000) explained, the students should teach, and the teachers should learn. If anything, the teacher should be learning about the students' life experiences and experiences with oppression (Allen & Rossatto, 2009). Teachers should recognize the socially constructed nature of their own authority (Ellsworth, 1989). If a student comes to a different conclusion than the teacher, but is told that their analysis is wrong or not as good as the teacher's analysis, then that has the simultaneous effect of teaching that student that there is no point in engaging in the mental activity of analysis unless they can do it at the same level as the teacher. Furthermore, it sends the message that they have a lesser role in society to create understanding, and thus, they may conclude, a lesser role in society as a whole, with less responsibility to make manifest their power over the world.

If students are going to learn to act in such a way as to create greater justice, or otherwise positively change society, they need to learn to recognize the humanity of all people and work to ensure that that humanity is honored. Teaching students in a way that dehumanizes them, by instilling in them the idea that they are lesser, that their experiences do not count as much, that the knowledge that they create, and the analysis they engage in, are inferior, is teaching them the values of dehumanization. This is the opposite of the goal of critical education advocates. If people are treated in a dehumanizing way, they are likely to perpetuate a cycle of dehumanization (Berliner, 2013; O'Loughlin, 1995). In order to increase justice in the world

such a cycle must eventually be broken. Rather the opposite of such a cycle of dehumanization is called for by scholars of critical pedagogy.

Students should have their experiences considered to be meaningful and legitimate (Ellsworth, 1989; Freire, 2000). What is more, if a student considers their experiences to be legitimate then perhaps they may be more inclined to recognize when others have different or more experiences. With that understanding they may demonstrate greater respect or empathy towards the analysis of others. When students conduct an analysis and find that it is respected and treated as legitimate, it creates a sense of their power towards the creation of knowledge and encourages them to engage in work that is socially impactful (O'Loughlin, 1995). Lastly, students should be allowed to ask questions, to have those questions treated as being serious, and have their curiosity recognized as both legitimate and valuable. Doing so serves to empower students to continue asking questions, and that curiosity opens them up to starting to question the world in which they live (Giroux, 2004b).

Questioning the World

Paulo Freire stated that students need to be able to “read the world” (2000, p. 26). He explained that they should be able to look at society, examine it critically and complexly, and determine problems in the world that need to be addressed. As I examined the literature from scholars of critical pedagogy I came to prefer the phrase “questioning the world”. In order to question the world students must be able to read it in the sense that Freire discussed, but also challenge, complicate, and question the things that they discover. Towards these ends Freire (2000) believed in what he called problem-posing learning. Students must engage in authentic examination of problems in the world and that that examination of problems should drive the methods, content, and curriculum. This is similar, in some ways, to what modern educational

scholars refer to as problem-based learning, which is focused on students engaging in learning in a way that is centered around a problem that the teacher has presented (Hmelo-Silver, et al, 2005). The primary difference between problem-based learning and Freire's problem-posing approach is that Freire requires that the problem being addressed is one that is relevant to the lives of the students. Such a problem focused/questioning approach to education is the backbone of critical pedagogy (Allen, 2013; Giroux, 2004a).

In many descriptions of critical pedagogy there is an element that involves asking hard questions centered around oppression and that students struggle to answer those hard questions (Giroux, 2003b; O'Loughlin, 1995; Ross, 2001), albeit leaving room to recognize when it is appropriate to ask such questions and what sort of questions may be too personal for some students. Simply because a question is uncomfortable or calls into question basic assumptions of society does not mean that the question should be avoided if it is meaningfully addressing social problems (Allen, 2013). For example, class lessons around racism or sexism can be uncomfortable (perhaps taboo in some contexts); however, but if those things are essential to addressing modern problems, then they should be explored.

Critical pedagogy theorists often argue that students should address questions that examine three ideas: that the creation of knowledge should be challenged, that hidden curriculum of school and society should be explored, and that power and oppression should be examined explicitly. A critical examination of the world fundamentally involves asking questions about who has power, how they got that power, who does that power benefit, and how the power dynamic can be changed. Examination of power in society should be an explicit content and curricular element of instruction if education is to seek greater social justice (Parkhouse, 2017).

Further, there are lessons in society and in schools that are not part of the obvious curriculum. They are demonstrated in the rules, policies, and treatment of people. If education is to help students question the world, then it must also help them examine the hidden curriculum that they encounter (Manfra, 2009; Zion, et al., 2015). The hidden curriculum includes all the lessons that are taught implicitly. Such hidden curriculum can involve a wide range of instances. For example, if a school has a gender-specific dress code, it reinforces that it is acceptable to treat people differently based on gender. Likewise, when a person of African descent is punished more harshly for the same crime that a White person committed it demonstrates the difference in the value that society places on people based on race. Engaging in practice to learn to recognize such hidden curriculum is an important part of learning to both read and question the world (Zion, et al., 2015). Doing so allows students to recognize the complexities and challenges that people face and the way that those serve to lessen the humanity of some while elevating others.

Lastly, questioning the world means challenging the construction of knowledge itself. If someone accepts all information they receive, and does not question it, they have paved the way for oppression. Those in power are always positioned to have the most say in what counts and what does not count as officially-recognized knowledge (Apple, 2004). This is crucially important in an educational setting because such knowledge can be calcified in tests, standards, curriculum materials, professional development, textbooks, and more. Questions that should be raised include: Who is making the decisions about what knowledge students should learn? What perspectives should be examined and which are not examined? Why is a White male point of view more valuable than all other points of view, as evidenced by the domination of that perspective in American education (Allen & Rossatto, 2009)? Instead of continuing to accept the knowledge that is handed to schools from those in power, knowledge that will almost certainly

serve to maintain that power, critical pedagogy demands that such sources of knowledge be problematized and questioned (Apple, 2004). That is not to say that the traditional White male perspective does not belong in the curriculum, but it must be recognized for what it is: one point of view amongst a multitude. Critical pedagogy scholars usually argue that knowledge is constructed more meaningfully when many perspectives are examined. Different and opposing interpretations are examined. Voices that have been marginalized (women, people of color, LGBTQ+, etc.) are raised up as equal sources of information and equally strong perspectives and interpretations of the world (Manfra, 2009). It is by the examination of such perspectives that people question the information they have been given and decide on its credibility. It is through such a determination and examination that students can engage in the analysis and construction of knowledge discussed in the previous category.

Questioning the world complicates our understanding of our society. It demands that we ask questions that are sometimes difficult to ask and that we do not shy away simply because they are difficult. Questioning the world means asking hard questions. Doing so means focusing curriculum on relevant problems in students' lives. Questioning the world also means that we see the hidden curriculum that reveals the values of society that are implicit. Further, it means that we recognize that knowledge is constructed and that we should seek to question where our knowledge comes from and complicate it with alternative perspectives (Allen & Rossatto, 2009). If people are questioning the world then they are starting along a path towards being able to recognize the injustices in the world. Only by seeing such injustices can they be addressed. Through such a critical questioning of the world, students can be spurred to action that seeks to rectify injustices, in a process of knowing and doing, what Freire called *praxis* (2000) and McLaren (2016) noted is the entire focus of critical pedagogy.

Recognizing the social nature of knowledge

Critical pedagogy theorists directly engage with the idea that knowledge is socially constructed (McLaren, 2009). They believe that the commonly shared set of ideas that we hold as true is, by its nature, decided on by society. They also subscribe to the concept that there is no singular authority that gets to decide what does and does not count as knowledge. While students are engaged in the process of challenging the official sources of knowledge they can also engage in a social process that will help them participate in the very real construction of knowledge in the world. If students have their interpretations and analysis of information respected and treated as legitimate, then it is not too much of a stretch to ask them to also engage with the idea that other people's interpretations and analyses are also something that should be respected and treated as legitimate. Freire (2000) says that students should engage in a process of dialogue to further their interpretation of information. Through dialogue, which is more than simply a discussion, students can approach other perspectives, be open to them, and work with them in a constructive way for the benefit of all parties. Within critical pedagogy many scholars have embraced the idea that knowledge is socially constructed and that, as respected people in society, students should practice the skills of contributing to that construction (Freire, 2000). Through a process of working with other students to analyze, share ideas, and come to consensus people can learn to productively contribute to what society counts as knowledge (Ellsworth, 1989).

Such social construction of knowledge can also serve the democratic goals described in critical pedagogy scholarship. By engaging in the process of examination and knowledge creation, students learn the way that discourse develops the rules that govern us and the information that we deem to be important (McLaren, 2009), and beyond that, it they can practice participating in such a process. Further, engaging in the social construction of knowledge,

through argumentation, discussion, and dialogue, emphasizes the importance of community and public engagement (Giroux, 2004a; McLaren, 2009).

Development of a critical consciousness and transparency

Fundamental to the implementation of critical pedagogy is the development of critical consciousness and being transparent toward the efforts a teacher is making in using the pedagogy. Paulo Freire used the term “conscientização” (2000), which has largely been translated as conscientization, or critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is about the way that people go through a process of becoming aware of, and begin to regularly perceive, the injustices in the world, how they are historically and systemically rooted, and how those injustices are valid even if they do not impact a person personally and/or negatively (Allen & Rossatto, 2009). “Critical consciousness is the mode when teachers call into question the ways in which knowledge is constructed, and/or how their fields of knowledge and work are governed” (Rodriguez, 2016, p. 84). Without the development of critical consciousness, enacting elements of critical pedagogy lacks the intentionality and focus that is likely to make it impactful, particularly in the long term (Rodriguez, 2016). The development of critical consciousness is essential to critical pedagogy theory. The process of developing a critical consciousness is, in many ways, a reflective process that occurs as people develop a way of examining the world and building a philosophy around that examination. McLaren (2016) believes that the development of critical consciousness comes from action. He explains that it is not simply that acting to make the world more just comes as a result of critical consciousness. Rather, that acting in the world helps one perceive injustice and reflect on it meaningfully.

Part of what helps the development of a critical consciousness is taking a historicized and nuanced approach to examining modern society and its systems (Giroux, 2010). To accomplish

this, it is necessary that students engage with perspectives with which they may not otherwise be familiar. Content should be presented from multiple perspectives, and emphasize the points of view of the oppressed (Crowley & King, 2018; Manfra, 2009; McLaren, 2009). By engaging with such alternative narratives, the stranglehold of dominant narratives can be challenged and students can make meaning of the world with a more-nuanced understanding of context.

Teachers must challenge common sense (Crowley & King, 2018), because common sense is rooted in dominant narratives from oppressors. Critical consciousness involves understanding that there is no such thing as a neutral narrative or apolitical knowledge (Boutte, Kelly-Jackson & Johnson, 2010; Crowley & King, 2018). Everything serves to either reinforce the status quo or challenge it (Freire, 2000).

Along with the reflective development of a critical consciousness is the need for educators to be explicit in their efforts towards justice and critical pedagogy. Teachers should be explicit in their goals to educate towards social justice (Fishman & McLaren, 2005) and do so by building community, challenging policy, and seeking an alternative perspective in relation to the course content (McLaren, 2016). By being explicit in this aim the critical educator makes it clear to students that this is the priority. It also focuses students on the intended lessons within and beyond the content (Giroux, 2003a). Teachers should have a clear intention of educating for social justice. Teachers should implement, and be explicit about, a democratic approach to education (Freire, 2000; Giroux, 2003a). A democratic approach to education is liberatory; it teaches students to participate and helps them exercise their own power in an educational space that can then be transferred to non-educational settings (Freire, 2000). Such emancipatory exercise of power by students is, by in large, the entire purpose of critical pedagogy (Freire,

2000) and approaching that idea explicitly with students can serve to make the process more powerful (Giroux, 2003a).

Difficulty in Implementation of Critical Pedagogy

Martin and Jaramillo (2005) argue that critical pedagogy is the best pedagogy available to address critical issues in classrooms. However, many teachers struggle to implement critical pedagogy even though they desire to teach such critical issues (Allen, 2013). Instead of engaging in the established work of critical pedagogy, social studies teachers tend to engage in traditional methods (Loewen, 1995, VanSledright, 2011) that primarily serve anti-critical goals of establishing knowledge that is received by students rather than created, surface level thinking, and an acceptance of a presented, often-dominant, narratives. Students are not asked to regularly formulate original or critical perspectives and arguments through such methods.

There are several reasons scholars have identified that explain why teachers who claim critical goals do not engage with critical methods when they teach. First, teachers are unsure how to handle student curiosity and are not used to legitimizing student perspectives and analysis. It is simply not something they have regularly seen in their experience as students, nor learned about as pre-service teachers (Allen, 2013). The idea that what the teacher teaches is correct, for the purposes of an individual class, seems prevalent (Cuban, 1991; Grant, 2003) and is often difficult to overcome, even for those educators who desire to take a more critical approach (Allen, 2013; Ellsworth, 1989).

Teachers also have a difficult time rejecting the dominant narrative that has been prevalent in their lives, which is, in part, due to the perceived needs for preparing students for high-stakes accountability measures (Allen, 2013; Martin & Jaramillo, 2005). Such high-stakes measures, often in the form of standardized tests, tend to focus on dominant narratives and, by

their very nature, reject alternative perspectives, because such alternatives inherently resist standardization. The multiple-choice test question can have only one correct answer, and there is no room to provide evidence that supports other narratives. Critical pedagogy literature, by comparison, asks teachers to call into question, and have their students call into question, the role of some basic social assumptions such as the role of authorities and the value of free market capitalism (Martin & Jaramillo, 2005; McLaren, 2016).

There is also a prevalent social understanding that the problems of inequity cannot be solved through pedagogy and curriculum (McLaren, 2016). The argument goes that the problems of injustice are rather simple, and often, self-inflicted by the marginalized communities. Simplified conceptions of such issues are appealing in their simplicity, especially for those who enjoy a measure of privilege in the status quo. Critical pedagogy is, by definition, resistant to simplicity. It insists that teachers engage in making the world more complex and, for those in positions of power, uncomfortable (McLaren, 2016). Traditional pedagogy is, simply put, easier to implement. It meets the expectations of parents, students, administrators, and co-workers. It is the path of least resistance, and so it remains the norm, despite educator desires to use their classroom to address social injustice. If, however, there were a pedagogy that could be used to address critical issues that conceptually overlapped with critical pedagogy, there might be value added to that pedagogy. I propose that inquiry has that potential, without the same obstacles for implementation, and thus is worthy of examination.

Social Studies and Critical Education

Social studies, as a field, is uniquely positioned to examine critical issues due to its focus on democratic citizenship, a complex and multi-disciplinary concept of society, and an explicit examination of history (Au, 2009; Hawley, et al., 2017). As such, it was appropriate for this

study to focus on social studies as a content area. Democratic citizenship in social studies has been a much-discussed issue (Evans, 2004). At its core social studies, as a subject, involves being knowledgeable about the world and knowing how to act in such a way as to bring about changes in society to achieve progress (Parker, 2008). Parkhouse (2017) notes that democratic citizenship should embrace not only the understanding of how power works in society, but also should help students come to understand how they can use that power to either maintain or transform the conditions within society.

Parkhouse (2017) describes a conception of democratic citizenship in social studies she calls “power literacy”. She develops two elements of such a democratic citizenship education in social studies that align well with the elements of critical pedagogy. Social studies instruction should explicitly critique the sources of power inequalities, and it should have students act in such a way that they develop political efficacy towards making social change. This parallels Hawley, et al.’s (2016) contention that the social studies field tends to discuss ideas of democracy as if we lived in a democracy that functions for everyone. A more critical examination of the status quo would make clear that this is not the case, and that, as such, democratic citizenship education should instead focus on how to improve democracy. “[T]each *for* democracy in favor of teaching *about* democracy” (emphasis in original, p. 5). This conception of democratic education creates significant overlap between both critical pedagogy and social studies. Further, critical pedagogy scholars call for the examination of modern oppression to be done through the examination of the history of systems of oppression (Apple, 2017). This innately ties critical efforts to an examination of history, which is the bread and butter of social studies.

Social studies as a field is well suited for examining society in a complex and nuanced way because it adds a sense of history to the world providing context for modern issues. Through the examination of society with an eye towards multiple disciplines, as is the nature of social studies (Evans, 2004), society can be understood in a more complex way. Such complexity functions counter to the ideas of a dominant narrative in much the way that critical education requires (Au, 2009; Hawley, et al., 2017). Further, critical efforts often require that one understands the historical nature of systems of oppression (Freire, 2000) and social studies definitionally involves the examination of history (Evans, 2004). It can easily be imagined that if historicizing society is essential to critical efforts, doing so through a class that is already seeking to examine history is ideal.

Even in the face of the accountability movement and the rise of high-stakes testing, the social studies field remains uniquely qualified to take on issues of inequity. The accountability movement, perhaps, even positions social studies to address issues of inequity even more. Other core subjects tend to be more-severely impacted by testing, making it all the more important that social studies instruction address critical issues, as it is the subject most capable of doing that work (Au, 2009). Doing so is all the more difficult in a heavily tested subject. By examining the connections shared by social studies inquiry and critical pedagogy, a new understanding of how justice can be increased through education might be possible. If critical education is all about emancipation, enlightenment, and democratic society (Manfra, 2009), then it follows that the subject whose purpose lies in democratic citizenship would have potential towards critical ends.

Inquiry and the C3 Framework

Inquiry is a model that “places...the learner as the central constructor of new knowledge” (Saye, 2017, p.336). While a more traditional approach involving methods like memorization of

presented facts, dates, places, and events has been dominant throughout the history of the field, there has been advocacy for a more-open inquiry since at least the early 20th century (Evans, 2004). It enjoyed a resurgence in the 1960s (Cuban, 1991; Fenton, 1966), although has never achieved mainstream popularity. Today, a major source of advocacy for this pedagogy lives through the work of the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards* (Saye, 2017), which includes, as one of its components, a pedagogical approach called the inquiry arc (NCSS, 2013). The C3 inquiry arc is built on a history of theory and research into inquiry and the effective teaching of social studies (Au, 2013; Grant, et al., 2015; NCSS, 2013). The advocacy for inquiry by the *C3 Framework* seems to coincide with a growing interest in inquiry in social studies (Newmann, et al., 2007; Saye, & Brush, 2005; VanSledright, 2011). While there are obstacles towards implementation to critical pedagogy, inquiry seems to be primed for wider implementation, and thus becomes an ideal pedagogy to be examined more deeply for its potential to engage in the teaching of critical issues.

Hmelo-Silver, et al. (2007) explain what is meant by inquiry, describing it as a pedagogy that involves having students engage in investigations that may be scaffolded and guided by the teacher, but without pointing them towards forgone conclusions. They further describe that not only do students conduct research to answer questions, but they are able to explain their thinking, and describe how they have conducted the inquiry and what methods of investigation were effective. Saye (2017) agrees with some of these ideas and explains that “inquiry involves students in deeper, more active exploration of questions and topics” (p. 336) as they seek to create their own meaning of what they explore. When applying inquiry, specifically, to the study of history, Sipress and Voelker (2009) point out that history is not a collection of facts, but rather is something that is done, and done towards the goals of both citizenship and knowledge. They

say, “[t]he mere consumption of authorized historical knowledge...is unlikely to cultivate the habits of mind associated with active citizenship and learning” (p.20).

The C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards

Inquiry is a broad pedagogical strategy, but the *C3 Framework* provides specific steps towards implementing it in social studies classrooms. Combined with its prominence in social studies discourse, the C3 inquiry arc became the ideal form of inquiry to examine for this study. The *C3 Framework* specifically describes inquiry as being done through an inquiry arc following a process with four dimensions (NCSS, 2013, p.17). Dimension 1 is “developing questions and planning inquiries”. Dimension 2 is “applying disciplinary tools and concepts”. Dimension 3 is “evaluating sources and using evidence”. Finally, Dimension 4 is “communicating conclusions and taking informed action”. It is also worth noting that the entire arc centers around specific types of questions developed during Dimension 1, supporting questions and a compelling question.

The compelling question

The compelling question is an overarching question that is of high interest, is rigorous, and is relevant to the students’ lives (Lee, Swan, Grant, Rothstein, & Santana, 2015; Swan, Lee, & Grant, 2018), allowing for divergent thinking (Grant et al., 2015; Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017). It is worth noting, that while relevancy is called for in the *C3 Framework*, as noted here, it does not, generally, use a conception of relevancy that is quite the same as that used by critical pedagogy (NCSS, 2013). The *C3 Framework* tends to address relevancy in terms of ensuring that the compelling question is relevant to the learning outcomes desired, not necessarily based on an ability to connect the learning to problems that exist in the lives of students. By contrast, supporting questions are more specific questions, closer tied to the specific content being

examined, more based around convergent thinking (Grant, et al., 2015; Grant, et al., 2017), but which help students support an answer to the compelling question, using the content under study, as evidence. Through this process the *C3 Framework* says that students should “become more prepared for the challenges of college and career...united with a third critical element: preparation for civic life” (NCSS, 2013, p.5). The *C3 Framework*, while providing guidance for conducting an inquiry through a specific arc, calls for students to practice the skills that will make them good citizens.

A compelling question, developed as part of Dimension 1, is the heart of the C3 inquiry arc. The compelling question guides all other parts of the inquiry (Grant, et al., 2015; Grant, et al., 2017). It is a question that is of high interest to students that is big enough to encompass a significant amount of evidence, analysis, and effort, while also being open-ended enough to not have an assumed answer (Grant, et al., 2017; Parker, 2012). Students should find the question important and interesting, be able to examine a lot of content to address it, and be free to construct a unique argument to answer the question. Students should also be able to apply the lessons learned from answering the question to the world that they live in today (NCSS, 2013).

Many scholars and educators, over the last century and more, have pointed to the fact that education, social studies education in particular, needs to be relevant and connected to students’ lives in order for it to be impactful (e.g., Dewey, 1902; Evans, 2004; Grant, et al., 2015; Grant, et al., 2017, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lee, et al., 2015; O’Laughlin, 1995). Often students complain that they are bored by social studies class (Grant, 2013) and that it lacks relevance to their lives. Social studies education has often tried to achieve relevance through approaches to the field that focused on teaching life skills that would prepare students for their lives as workers

and citizens (Evans, 2004; Fallace, 2009). Alternatively, there have been problem-focused efforts in social studies since its inception in an effort to make it relevant to student lives by having them address real world problems (Evans, 2004). Relevancy has been discussed as a way of making learning more impactful and motivating students to learn. Such relevancy can also serve to expose students to some risk. If the relevancy hits too close to home, or if it hinders reasoned analysis as students become too empathetic to the people they are studying, it creates some potential risk (Saye, 2017).

The *C3 Framework* has the potential to address the goal of relevancy, in part, through the development of compelling questions (Grant, 2013; Grant, et al., 2017). It does not explicitly suggest how to make a compelling question compelling, nor in what ways it should be relevant, and so leaves some room for interpretation. Such room for interpretation is purposeful, as the *C3 Framework* seeks to be flexible enough to trust in the professional judgement of the educators who know the community and the students where they are working (NCSS, 2013).

By making the compelling question large enough to drive instruction, it is meant that the question should be something that can be addressed for a meaningful period of time and cover a significant amount of content (Grant, et al., 2015). The goal is that this one question can drive students into analysis of multiple sub-topics (to be examined as supporting questions), examining multiple sources per sub-topic, completing multiple performance tasks related to those sub-topics, and all the while, directed by a larger goal of being able to answer the compelling question (NCSS, 2013). If a compelling question is too specific it may lack the needed sources and fail to hold student interest long enough to engage them in the entire process. Likewise, if it is too large, then the task and threaten to considerably reduce student motivation (Bruning, Schraw, & Norby, 2011).

Lastly, by being open-ended, a compelling question makes student investigation meaningful and authentic, which can give students a needed sense of agency (Saye, 2017). If the compelling question is created in such a way that there is a clear correct answer (e.g., “Who won World War 2?”) or can be answered with a simple answer or a list (e.g., “Why did the Americans say they dropped the atomic bombs on Japan?”) then the students will lack agency. They are not crafting *their* answer to the question; rather, they are searching for *the* answer to the question. Giving students a sense of agency and control in their learning is a strategy that is documented to increase student engagement and motivation, as well as increase their content learning (Bruning, et al, 2011). Giving the students an authentic opportunity to craft their own answer to the question, and actually honoring their answer as being valuable and real, mirrors methods that are known to work towards helping students learn (Saye, 2017). It also resembles many critical theories about how to empower students in the classroom for when they are seeking to act outside of the classroom (Anyon, 1981; McLaren, 2009; Shrewsbury, 1997). An open-ended question where students can give an authentic answer (e.g., “Should the US have dropped the second atomic bomb on Japan?” or “When should a country use atomic weapons?”) is an essential part of what makes inquiry relevant and meaningful.

Supporting questions

Supporting questions, also developed during Dimension 1 of the inquiry arc, are the questions that guide students to examine the content of the inquiry (Grant, 2013). They are much more specific than the compelling question, and while they may not be as inherently engaging as the compelling question, they should help students come to a position on how they will answer the compelling question as part of Dimension 4. Deeply understanding content and having a

strong background knowledge of the content surrounding the inquiry are essential to having the students engage in authentic and meaningful knowledge creation (Saye, 2017).

While supporting questions may not be inherently as engaging, they borrow engagement from the compelling question, further emphasizing the role of the compelling question as both a driving force of the inquiry and improving student learning by creating greater interest in the content. Supporting questions point students to investigate answers grounded in content that is less open-ended and more focused on understanding the content being studied (Grant, 2013). If a compelling question might be “Has the French Revolution given us more rights?” then a supporting question might be, “Why was the king of France overthrown?” There may be clear right and wrong answers to a supporting question, but there is still room for unique analysis by students about the meaning and importance of the things that they examine as they develop and support their answers.

Taking informed action

The final component of the inquiry arc, coupled with constructing and communicating arguments in Dimension 4, is taking informed action, wherein students are asked to take what they have learned from the social studies content, and apply it to contemporary life, in order to do something meaningful. This is more than just measuring what a student has learned, although it can do that as well (Grant, et al., 2015). This is a task that asks students to directly practice being effective and contributing citizens in a democracy, which is what social studies is all about (Evans, 2004; Nelson, 2001; Ross, 2001). This is a process that requires students to understand the content they have learned, assess how that content is relevant to contemporary life, and act in a way to practice exerting their power in the world to bring about change.

Understanding the content is, of course, necessary for students to take informed action. It is the “informed” part of the phrase and is needed to reach a level of democratic enlightenment, as Ross (2001) described the concept. Teaching students that they should, and how they can, act in a democratic society is irresponsible if it is not done following understanding of evidence and context (Parker, 2012). Acting without understanding is at best misguided and at worst dangerous and harmful (Justice & Stanley, 2016; Neumann, 2013; Ross, 2001). By the time a student has completed the formative tasks, they will have engaged with the inquiry in such a way that they are likely to be at least as well informed about the content as students who have gone through more traditional instruction, but are more prepared to think deeply about the content (Hmelo-Silver, et al., 2007; Parker, et al., 2013).

If students are able to make deep content connections as a result of inquiry, then they should be prepared to assess how that content is meaningful in other contexts. Being able to connect learning to their own lives is a goal that social studies scholars have long sought (Evans, 2004; Saye, 2017). Being able to make those connections in a way that encourages a meaningful evaluation of modern systems of power and oppression is essential to empower people to make the world better, according to critical scholars (Apple & Buras, 2006; Ellsworth, 1989; Giroux, 2004a; Jennings & Lynn, 2005; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001). What is more, this is the part of the inquiry arc that helps demonstrate to students that learning social studies is meaningful in their lives. If they are being asked to directly connect what they have learned to the life they are living perhaps they will become less likely to ask the question, “why do we have to learn this?”.

Lastly, students engage in the taking informed action step by completing a task that allows them to practice democratic action (see Parker, 2008; Parkhouse, 2017; Ross, 2001). Students learn and practice the skills that are essential to a healthy democracy (Parkhouse, 2017).

They engage in activities that help them understand the power that they have, methods of exercising that power, which actions are impactful in which situations, and how to behave in such a way as to make the world a better place. What is more, it can start to instill in students the idea that they should take such action. It seeks to teach students that they should be active citizens who seek to improve their world as part of their duty in a democratic society.

Summary of the C3 inquiry arc

In summary, inquiry is a structured, and teacher supported process, wherein students use content knowledge to examine meaningful questions (Saye, 2017). The C3 inquiry arc, specifically, structures this around the use of sources, often primary sources, whereby students analyze information, come to conclusions, and use evidence from these sources to construct and support arguments (NCSS, 2013; Parker, 2012). Finally, the *C3 Framework* calls for students to use what they have learned to take informed action, applying their understanding of the content towards addressing modern societal issues (NCSS, 2013). Engaging in this pedagogy is not easy, and the modern accountability movement presents challenges to its implementation. However, a well-disciplined use of inquiry can take advantage of the challenges of accountability (Saye, 2017). Engaging in inquiry also has challenges in terms of teacher adoption, because it inherently takes a constructivist approach to knowledge that not all teachers embrace, and uses teaching methods that social studies teachers may be unfamiliar with (Saye, 2017). Even with those challenges, however, there are opportunities that inquiry presents, and the obstacles are not insurmountable.

The Potential for Inquiry Towards Critical Pedagogy

The C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy are aligned in many ways. Freire (2000) makes it clear that liberatory education should be a major component enabling oppressed groups to end

their own oppression. School can also be a place where students could be empowered to disrupt the status quo in order to end oppression and make the world more just (Ellsworth, 1989; Freire, 2000). Critical pedagogy literature suggests several ways that classroom instruction can help empower students through the examination and study of critical issues.

Scholarship about inquiry presents a similar pedagogy of enabling students to inquire about their world and draw meaningful, but well supported, conclusions leading to action. Inquiry and critical pedagogy do not just overlap; in some arrangements inquiry exists as a pedagogy nested within critical pedagogy (Parker, 2012). To make clear just how compatible critical work and inquiry can be one need look no further than the study of critical inquiry as a pedagogy (Allen, 2013; Manfra, 2009). According to the extant literature about inquiry in social studies includes the following elements: students should be creating and recreating knowledge in a way that is honored and legitimate (Freire, 2000; Giroux, 2004; Saye, 2017), the focus of instruction should be relevant to student's lives (Freire, 2000; Lee, et al, 2015; Swan, et al, 2018), students should be examining multiple perspectives (Avila & Moore, 2012; Crowley & King, 2018; Ellsworth, 1989; Jennings & Lynn, 2005; McLaren, 2009; NCSS, 2013; North, 2006; Ross, 2001; Wineburg, 2001), and students should be explicitly taught how to act in the world by disrupting systems of power and oppression (Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Crowley & King, 2018; Freire, 2000; McLaren, 2016; Parker, 2008; Parkhouse, 2017; Ross, 2001). Figure 2 illustrates areas where the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy theoretically overlap and differ, and serves as a summary before going into deeper examination of the overlapping or supporting elements.

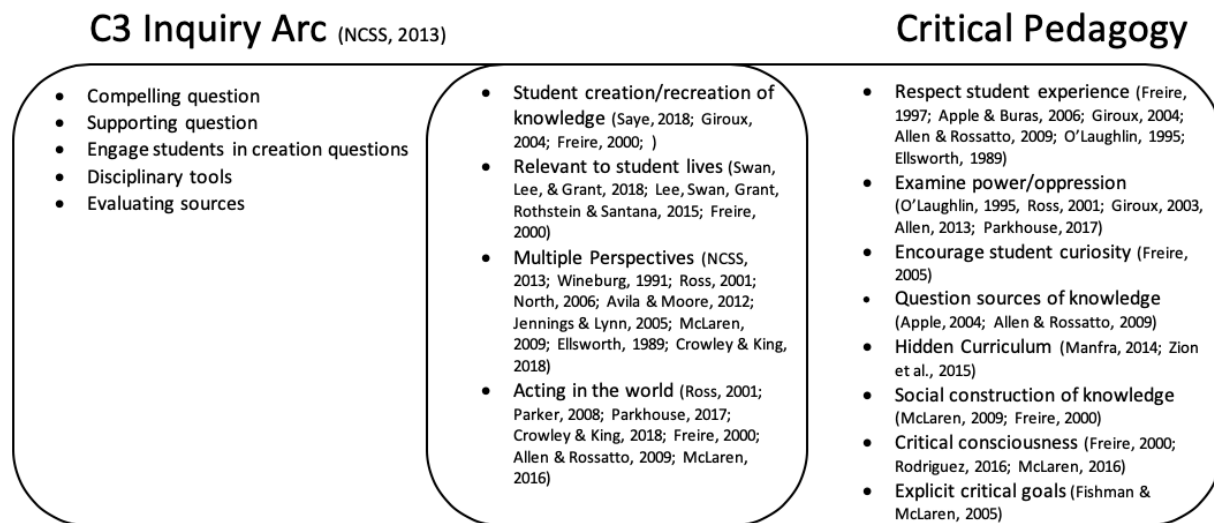


Figure 2. Theoretical overlap between the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy.

The connection between inquiry and critical pedagogy runs so deep as to be definitional. While not all inquiry is conducted as part of the implementation of critical pedagogy, it could be said that critical pedagogy requires the use of some form of inquiry (Parker, 2012). In other words, not all instances of inquiry use critical pedagogy, but all instances of critical pedagogy use a form of inquiry.

Students creating/recreating knowledge

The inquiry arc from the *C3 Framework* (NCSS, 2013) calls for teachers to ask many questions of students, providing them with resources, and helping the students use the resources to come to conclusions about the question(s) being asked. This means that there are a multitude of acceptable answers as each student may reach different, but acceptable, conclusions. Giroux (2004b) states, while examining critical pedagogy, that "...teaching in classrooms...should not only simply honor the experiences students bring to such sites, but should also connect their experiences to specific problems that emanate from the material context of their everyday lives" (p.500). By honoring student experiences, you honor the lens with which they analyze evidence

and thus their ability to create knowledge. It is especially crucial that educators honor the experiences of oppression that students have experienced (Allen & Rossatto, 2009).

An inquiry-based method of teaching social studies requires students to conduct investigations into disciplinary topics and to conduct their own analysis of those topics (Saye, 2017). By having their analysis honored, students are creating knowledge (Saye, 2017). They are applying the lens of their lived experiences to examine content and create an interpretation of history and its importance that is every bit as meaningful as someone else who has examined the same materials and drawn their own, different, conclusions. Freire explained that critical pedagogy should involve students having their interpretations of the world validated (2000), that their curiosity and creativity should be encouraged (2005), and that they should be encouraged to see the value in taking risks (2015). These ideas seem to be supported by the *C3 Framework's* conception of inquiry that honors the lens through which students analyze the world and encourages them to ask questions. Further, inquiry often involves students engaging in a dialogue with each other and with the teacher, and allows them to co-construct knowledge together, a foundational concept in critical pedagogy (Freire, 2000).

Both inquiry and critical pedagogy, in this regard, align with a conception of knowledge wherein the world is not made up of facts with universal meaning, but that meaning is constructed and can be different between people. The idea that history is more than just a collection of events, dates, and people, but rather a meaning making process inherently lends itself to this philosophy. Inquiry is a process by which students engage in the creation of knowledge around social studies content based on sources and supported by teacher scaffolds (Saye, 2017). Critical pedagogy is a process by which students engage in the creation of

knowledge, around content that is relevant to their lives, based around sources and teacher scaffolds (Freire, 2000; Giroux, 2004a).

The ability of students to engage in critical work is all the more likely when an inquiry is focused on critical questions. This is particularly true when the inquiry uses questions that explicitly call into question systems of power (Crowley & King, 2018). It asks them to not simply answer a question that is relevant to their lives and the history being studied, but frames the questions in a way that gives students permission to call into question basic social assumptions. Such questions would make it okay to question capitalist dominance, imperialism, racism, sexism, and other areas that are part of the hegemony of modern society but serve to create oppression.

Relevant to student lives

Both critical pedagogy scholarship and inquiry-based instruction, as outlined by the *C3 Framework*, make calls that the instruction be relevant to the lives of the students. Freire (2000) sought to ground his instruction in the lives and problems of the Brazilian farmers he was educating, so that he would be explicitly teaching them about the reality in which they lived. Hence he exposed the means of exerting power over that reality. He tended to refer to this as problem-posing, in as much as he was centering instruction on not only the examination and solving of modern problems, but in addressing modern problems in the context of the students' lives. Likewise, the *C3 Framework's* inquiry arc is driven by a compelling question that guides everything else that is done through the learning process. That compelling question should also seek to be relevant to student's lives (Lee, et al., 2015). This is implied by the way compelling questions are described and the method by which they create engagement. By grounding instruction in the lives of students, not only do both pedagogies contain concepts around

engagement of students, but they also both seek to make the learning important to the students. If they are learning things that are clearly aimed at helping them understand their world, and teaching them how they can influence that world, then those students may be engaged in the inquiry arc and, simultaneously, an important element of critical pedagogy.

Multiple perspectives

As students examine compelling and supporting questions in an inquiry it is explicitly encouraged by the *C3 Framework* (NCSS, 2013) that they should be exposed to multiple sources with different points of view. The *C3 Framework* does tend to underplay the importance of the different points of view element, and certainly it can be imagined that multiple sources could present similar points of view in a more traditionally-grounded class, but at the very least it can be assumed that someone engaging in the C3 inquiry arc will be using multiple sources, utilizing multiple points of view if they have examined the framework carefully. Learning to examine multiple perspectives is a crucial concept in critical pedagogy literature (Avila & Moore, 2012; Jennings & Lynn, 2005; McLaren, 2009; North, 2006). The examination of multiple perspectives teaches students to recognize the value in understanding one point of view while not accepting it as the only point of view (Crowley & King, 2018; Ellsworth, 1989; McLaren, 2009). It is the only way to escape the oppressive narratives of global capitalism and neoliberalism (McLaren, 2016). At the same time, in historical inquiry, it is equally important to understand that one source of information does not provide a complete vision of events and their meanings (Wineburg, 1991). In recognizing that one person cannot construct knowledge alone, the inquiry arc approaches the social construction of knowledge that critical pedagogy seeks (Crowley & King, 2018; McLaren, 2009). Both critical pedagogy literature and social studies literature around the democratic goals of the field are skeptical of authored knowledge and seek to use

alternative perspectives to encourage students to challenge the basic assumptions that come from such authorship (Ross, 2001).

Acting in the world

Freire (2000) clearly stated that “thought has meaning only when generated by action upon the world”, meaning that all the learning in the world does not matter, unless that learning is used to act in the world, which in turn makes the learning meaningful, in a continual cycle. North (2006) further explained that students need to have an idea of what they feel is right and that the purpose of education is to teach them to act upon the world to bring it about. Parker (2003) even listed the actions that students should be explicitly taught to engage in, including “voting or contacting public officials...campaigning, engaging in civil disobedience, boycotts, strikes, rebellion, and other forms of direction action” (p. 33). The *C3 Framework* (NCSS, 2013), within its inquiry arc, conclude the process with students taking informed action, where they are using the things that they learned in their investigation of the content to take action in the world. This is connected to Parkhouse’s (2017) conception of social studies education for democratic citizenship and critical pedagogy. Crowley and King (2018) suggest that a critical form of inquiry should involve students taking action in a way that specifically targets social injustices that have been identified in the inquiry.

Such action in both inquiry and critical pedagogy are often thought of as being grounded in the building and maintenance of social movements. While that is a worthwhile form of action, it is also worth noting that other forms of action are meaningful as well (Allen & Rossatto, 2009), which can include formal political action (i.e. voting or running for office) as well as more revolutionary actions, as appropriate. Allen & Rossatto (2009) and McLaren (2016) point out that oppressors often prefer that the oppressed engage in peaceful social movements. While it

may not be the role of educators to encourage revolutionary action, it may also be worth considering the validity of such action, before they condemn it, and that, perhaps, they are not considering the perspective of the oppressed. Allen and Rossatto (2009) also discuss that action can also be much more conceptual, building mental concepts about critical issues, which conforms well with the idea of critical consciousness (Freire, 2000). The point of having student take such action being, that the way students learn to do so in order to make it more just can take many forms, and all of them are worthy of careful consideration.

Critical pedagogy literature reveals a push for explicit examination of power and inequity, and calls for action through *praxis* (Freire, 2000) which embraces a position of hope. After all, why teach students to examine and act to solve problems if there is no hope that the world can be better? Similarly, the inquiry arc of the *C3 Framework* calls on students be involved in taking informed action, based on evidence and knowledge, to have a positive impact in the world (NCSS, 2013). This is similarly a position of hope. A position that meaningful progress and change can be made to improve society. This is an area where I would argue that critical pedagogy and inquiry may not be perfectly in sync, as the conception of hope described in literature about inquiry is not necessarily founded on a critical perspective and examination of power. They may not be approaching an ideology of hope in exactly the same way, towards the same explicit changes, however, there is significant overlap to the point that there is reason to think that a teacher who embraces one conception of hope may also embrace the other.

Conclusion

Critical pedagogy and the C3 inquiry arc are not the same approaches to teaching, although critical pedagogy necessarily engages in the use of some form of inquiry. But in some key areas they have either overlapping methods or overlapping goals. Both pedagogies seek to engage

students in authentic work that is considered legitimate by educators. Both pedagogies want students to gain new perspectives through the investigation of multiple points of view. Both involves a belief that learning is most powerful when it leads to action, whether the purpose of that action is to teach students to be active citizens in a democracy, or to seek social justice in the world (and I am not convinced there is not significant overlap between the two). Both are grounded in a conception of hope. Even in areas where the two pedagogies do not overlap they never significantly contradict each other. Inquiry in social studies and critical pedagogy are, at least, two pedagogies that can be used simultaneously and have the potential to actively support each other in many key regards. Examining whether that potential to support each other actually appears in practice, and how that plays out when an inquiry-using teacher addresses a critical issue without specific intentionality towards critical pedagogy, is the purpose of this study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study took a deep look at the way that a teacher implemented inquiry-based instruction using the Inquiry Design Model (IDM) of the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards* (NCSS, 2013), in a secondary social studies classroom, while focusing instruction on a critical issue. Guiding the research was the theoretical framework of critical pedagogy (Fishman & McLaren, 2005; Freire, 2000, 2015; Giroux, 2004a; Jennings & Lynn, 2005; Martin & Jaramillo, 2005; McLaren, 2009, 2016) and the following research questions:

- How does a social studies teacher using the C3 inquiry arc address teaching a critical issue?
 - What challenges, if any, does a teacher using the C3 inquiry arc have in addressing a critical issue through an inquiry-based pedagogy?
 - What methods and strategies, if any, does the C3 inquiry arc provide a teacher who is addressing a critical issue?

These research questions have served to focus the methods of this study on how the use of inquiry can be used to address a critical issue. They also addressed the strengths and weaknesses inquiry presented towards addressing critical issues.

For the purpose of this study the phrase “critical issue” was used to mean that the content and/or instruction was designed in such a way that it explicitly addressed an issue of discrimination. It is an issue that focused on inequity or injustice. This inequity could have been in the form of discrimination or unequal treatment of people based on their membership or identification of a specific group, such as race, class, sexuality, gender, or religion. In the C3 teaching modules studied here the participant focused on issues of class and socioeconomic

status. The teacher primarily focused on the differences in the way the Industrial Revolution was experienced by people based on whether they were wealthy or poor, or as the participant occasionally referred to it outside of class, their socio-economic status.

There were many possibilities for the sort of critical issue that could have been examined, and it was important that the study examine inquiry-based instruction that met the requirements of the research questions, so a specific process had to be followed to make such assurances while not tainting the data. The participant and I worked together to develop a format for the study that would present meaningful data but also minimized interference in the instruction. I examined two inquiry-based units of instruction, one with no interference at all, and the second which specifically was designed to focus on a critical issue. Developing the topic for the second inquiry was done as a cooperative process between the researcher and the participant, as recommended by Kincheloe (2003), but was done in such a way that only the general unit topic and compelling question were addressed, while the supporting questions, sources, lessons, activities, assessments, and other considerations were left entirely up to the participant to design, find, or modify as well as implement. This ensured that the second inquiry being studied engaged in an issue that is considered critical, for the purposes of this study, but that the practice being observed was not otherwise influenced by the research.

Research Perspective

This was a qualitative, instrumental, case study (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Stake, 2006). Case studies focus on a single, bounded system. In this case the practice of a single teacher was studied to deeply understand his experience (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Kincheloe, 2003; Stake, 2006) using the C3 inquiry arc to address a critical issue. To understand, deeply, ways in which using inquiry impacted the experiences of a teacher addressing critical issues, it was

useful to have a rich and thorough understanding of that teacher's experience. Such deep examination of experiences is the sort of thing ideally examined through a case study (Flyvbjerg, 2011). Not only was case study an ideal methodology as it involved gaining a deep understanding of the lived experiences of the participant (Yin, 2018), it was also capable of going below the surface, to dig into issues, such as socially just teaching practices (Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008). "The main strength of the case study is depth – detail, richness, completeness, and within-case variance" (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p.314) which is precisely what this study examined as the teacher used inquiry to address a critical issue. A focus on the perceptions and experiences of participants is crucial in qualitative studies and for examining and understanding human and social situations (Kincheloe, 2003). This study focused on deeply understanding the perceptions and experiences of a single teacher in order to better understand their complex situation.

Instrumental case studies seek to produce findings that are useful beyond understanding the individual case, in order to inform other situations (Stake, 2006). They seek to examine an "aspect, concern or issue of the case" (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013, p.12). In this study, I explored and described how a teacher used inquiry when addressing a critical issue. This led to a process of searching for themes that were explanatory of the process so that findings and implications towards engaging in such efforts could be better understood in a way that may inform other, similar, situations.

Case studies are an ideal way to examine the experiences of participants, and the localized situations that influence the case (Stake, 2006). This case study was able to understand the role that inquiry played in addressing a critical issue in a localized way that focused on the experiences of the participant in the context in which the study was conducted. Case studies explicitly seek to understand real situations, full of context and nuance, rather than carefully

constructed scenarios (Stake, 2006; Yin, 2018). This case study was able to respond to the research questions as they pertained to the participant's lived experiences by conducting regular interviews, classroom observations, and examining teacher journals and documents.

Case studies are often times much more important and impactful than more generalized studies, Flyvbjerg (2011) explains. While generalized studies, like those often conducted through quantitative research, provide important rules-based information, that only provides people a starting place for the creation of knowledge. By comparison, pragmatic, context-dependent knowledge created through case studies provides the insight needed to build a learner's knowledge to an expert level. In other words, someone can learn the basics of something through generalized rules about the content, but only through iteration after iteration of many individual examples does the person develop a deep enough understanding of a thing to become an expert in it. This sort of development of expertise in the use of inquiry towards critical content was the goal of this study.

Context and Participant

This study was conducted in February, March, and April of 2019, in the central North Carolina region of the United States of America. The participant was well-versed in the use of the C3 inquiry arc towards instruction and curriculum design, and had used it regularly for three and a half years. Through the study I sought to determine how the participant addressed a critical issue through integration into the *C3 Framework*. In order to find this participant, I used resources and connections in my university/college institution to contact graduate students in the social studies education program. These were educators who were highly likely to either be, or know, teachers who were utilizing inquiry-based instruction in their classrooms, as the program included the study of inquiry in the social studies education programs.

I was seeking to observe elements of critical pedagogy through the course of this qualitative case study, such as seeking alternative perspectives and validating the oppression and experiences of students (Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Ross, 2001). As such, it was meaningful to include a participant who taught classes that had diverse representation amongst the students in the classroom. Due to the need for a secondary social studies teacher who was well versed in the use of the C3 inquiry arc that was geographically near, and had some diversity represented by the students in their classes, this study needed to employ a purposeful sampling method. In this way the procedures of the study maximized the opportunity to focus on the way inquiry was used to address a critical issue, while acknowledging that this did not imply a statistical sampling procedure, as recommended by Yin (2018).

Upon identification, potential participants were approached via email to gauge interest and willingness to participate in the study, making it clear to them what was involved in the study. Further, it was noted that approval would be sought from administration in the school where the potential participant taught. Potential participants were also asked about their willingness to, as part of the study, modify their instruction to address a critical issue. A final participant was selected based on his experience using inquiry and willingness to engage in the process of the study.

Participant

The participant that was found through this process was a 33-year-old white man who had been teaching for 9 years. For the purposes of the study, he will be referred to by the pseudonym Mr. Finch. He was working at a suburban central North Carolina charter school, teaching American History to 8th graders. Mr. Finch started his teaching career in another state as a substitute teacher in an urban setting. He then moved to central North Carolina after a few

years and taught middle school social studies in a private school setting and a public-school setting. He then moved to the charter school where he taught during the study. Mr. Finch explained that he was drawn to the opportunity to be involved in opening a new middle school. Because he was the first middle school social studies teacher in the school he started with 6th grade and followed the students up the grades as the school grew to incorporate those. He had been at the school for 7 years when the study took place, working through 6th grade and 7th grade for a year or two each, but has spent most of his time teaching 8th grade. The nature of his teaching assignment has been such that he has also been responsible for teaching elective classes. These have included speech and debate as well C3 inquiry arc-based classes, where students engaged in inquiries. In these classes, students had the opportunity to design and engage in inquiries designed by them as well as those created by Mr. Finch. At the time of this study Mr. Finch no longer taught any electives, instead serving as an instructional coach/support for other teachers in the school while still teaching 8th grade social studies.

Mr. Finch has used the C3 inquiry arc to teach his social studies classes for three and a half years. He first learned about it from attending a social studies conference and working with a co-worker who was attending graduate school at a local institution. They both started using the *C3 Framework*/Inquiry Design Model (IDM) and then Mr. Finch also began attending graduate school where he studied inquiry and the *C3 Framework* further. Three and a half years prior to this study, Mr. Finch began incorporating occasional inquiry modules into his instruction in 8th grade social studies, and a year after that he modified his instructional units to be organized around the C3 inquiry arc model. During this time, he also created the inquiry-based elective that is still taught at the school. While the study was being conducted Mr. Finch was finishing his graduate degree. Just as the study was concluding, he was learning about critical pedagogy in his

coursework and reflecting more meaningfully on how the ideas presented to him through that work might impact his instruction.

Setting

The classes examined in this study were taught in a large modular building that included 8-10 classrooms, full restroom facilities, a teacher workroom, and security doors that required a key card or a numeric code to open. Mr. Finch had decorated the room with maps of the world, country, and state, historic newspaper articles, a large American flag, and a banner over the front white board (that was often used to project images from a multimedia projector) that read “What is America?” Desks were arranged in clusters of 3 desks, with the exception of a table that held up to 6 students in the back-center part of the room. There were white boards at the front of the room and the back of the room, the teacher’s desk was in the back corner, and a book shelf and filing cabinet were along the opposite wall. On the front board the teacher listed the compelling and supporting questions for the current unit, as well as having sections for the date, homework, and objective for the day. The compelling and supporting questions were also listed on the back white board during most of the study. The clusters of desks were not located in the room in a recognizable pattern and there was a computer cart that normally sat between the teacher’s desk and the door, when it was not being used by another teacher.

The school where the study took place was a charter school that had a student population that included 727 students in 6th through 12th grades. It first opened in 1999 and was growing, with plans to expand the infrastructure to accommodate larger numbers of students. The school was located in a suburban setting, at the edges of a metropolitan area, and drew its student population through a lottery process. The school included around 200 students with individualized education plans (IEPs). These numbers had increased in recent years as parents

discovered the option that the school provided, in terms of smaller class sizes than local public schools tended to offer. Also, Mr. Finch reported that parents appeared to be attracted to a prevalence of policy and pedagogy that they saw as beneficial for their children.

The participant reported that the school had a more diverse population at the time of the study than it had had in previous years. However, he speculated that because there was no participation in a free and reduced lunch program and there was no transportation provided by the school, diversity in the school still needed to improve. The school reported that there were 103 students in the 8th grade, with the following reported ethnicities: 1 Asian, 8 Black or African American, 8 Hispanic, 0 American Indian/Alaskan Native, 8 Two or More, 0 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 78 White. Students at the school had a dress code that appeared to include khaki pants or a skirt, and school-based shirts (collared shirts or sweatshirts, most commonly, with the school logo on them). The school had no bells that rang to dismiss or begin classes, rather teachers tracked the time independently and released the students at a scheduled time. Teachers regularly communicated through online tools on laptops and phones throughout the school day.

Mr. Finch also reported that the school, being a charter school, had a less stringent set of requirements, in terms of content, than public peers. For example, while he described that he often felt pressure due to state standards regarding content requirements, he also described that he was not as worried about the pacing of his course. The fact that he would not have time to address all of the content detailed in state standards before the end of the year was of little concern to him, although he continually kept an eye towards those state standards, as well as the local school district's curriculum guidelines, which he mentioned several times. The pressure he described appeared to be more focused on what content should be included in each unit, but the

setting made him comfortable with the idea that not all units detailed in the standards would be taught.

Instrumentation

This study drew inspiration from two other studies that addressed critical issues through case study design. Namely “Hidden in History: Examining Asian American Elementary Teachers’ Enactment of Asian American History” by Noreen Nassem Rodríguez (2017) and “Reading, Interpreting, and Teaching African American History: Examining How African American History Influences the Curricular and Pedagogical Decisions of Preservice Teachers” by LaGarrett J. King (2012).

Rodríguez (2017) conducted a single case study wherein she conducted three semi-structured interviews. The first focused on the participants’ background, the second explored issues of teaching after observations had begun, and the third, at the end of the data collection, as a means of reflective discussion. Interviews were paired with observations, after which she sometimes conducted informal discussions to clarify what was observed. Lastly, she examined artifacts, or teacher documents, from the period of data collection. She ensured the trustworthiness of the study by employing triangulation of the data, conducting member checks, and utilizing peer reviewing. She used pilot studies to ensure the validity of the instruments and analysis methods.

King (2012), meanwhile, used interviews, participant reflections, and observations as primary data sources. Interviews occurred in the first of the three phases of the study, focusing on background information and teaching philosophy. The second phase involved the collection of participant reflections. The third phase focused on classroom observations, but also involved interviews used primarily to clarify observations. Trustworthiness was approached in this study

in similar ways, involving triangulation of data, investigator triangulation, member checking, and being clear about the researcher's positionality.

From these two studies, and examination of research methods literature, I synthesized the methods that I used for this study. In doing so I sought to incorporate their methods into my study, while modifying them to the unique study I conducted, in order to achieve results that were as strong as possible. For my study I collected data from three interviews. The first focused on the background of the teacher. The second clarified observations and sought better understanding of the participant's teaching philosophy. The third clarified emerging themes and observations further, examined the participant's thoughts on elements of the research questions, and asked the participant to reflect on themes that were emerging from the data. I used extensive field notes from observations and teacher documents as sources of data regarding the pedagogy that Mr. Finch used in his practice. While I largely followed the model of Rodríguez (2017), like King (2012), I added a component of participant reflection in the form of a teacher journal. Likewise, I used the methods employed in both studies in order to achieve trustworthiness, specifically: triangulation of data, member checking, and peer reviewing.

Data sources

Data for this study came from interviews, observations, participant journals, and teacher documents (such as lesson materials and lesson plans) as defined by Yin (2018) and Kincheloe (2003) who, while having very different approaches, define these data sources in similar ways. Interviews were conducted three times through the data collection process and were in a location and time preferred by Mr. Finch. Specifically, interviews were conducted in his classroom and either after school or, in one instance, before his classes began in the morning. Observations were conducted over the course of a month observing two teacher-created C3 inquiries, one on

Reconstruction and the other on the Industrial Revolution. The teacher completed journal entries based on prompts provided by the researcher throughout the data collection (see Appendix). Teacher documents, such as lesson plans, handouts, and presentations, were provided by the teacher to the researcher both through Google Drive and physically. The general organization of collection from the various data sources can be seen through the visualization available in Figure 3.

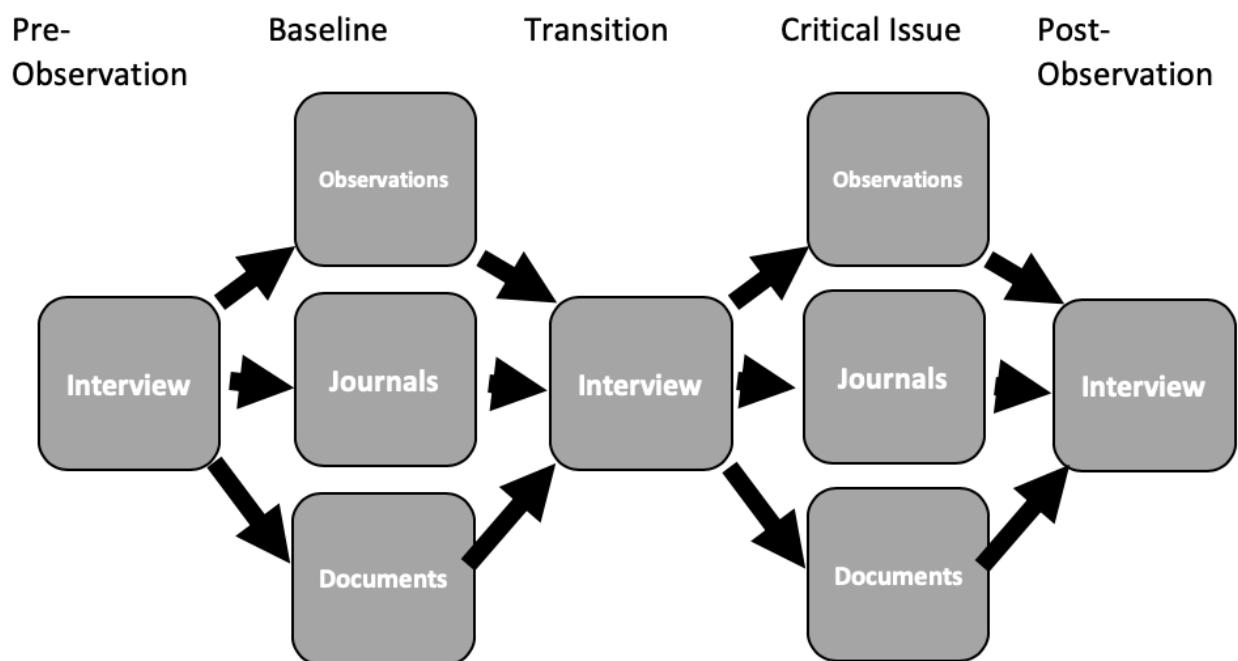


Figure 3. Data sources and collection sequence.

Interview data

While collecting this data, particularly during the interviews, I engaged in emergent listening (Davies, 2016), wherein I focused on the participant and not on the direction I wanted to take the interview next. This allowed for more natural data collection that revealed important and unexpected data. Likewise, follow-up questions that emerged from observation and coding were pre-written before the interviews for similar reasons. Such emergent listening also helped me identify areas where clarification might be needed during the interviews. Interviews took the

form of a pre-observation interview that gathered data from the participant about his experiences implementing inquiry, how they understood the pedagogy, and the way inquiry interacted with content. This was also an opportunity to gather demographic information about the participant's experience, background, positionality, teaching philosophy, previous use of inquiry, and setting details, as well as further historicizing the study, as suggested by Kincheloe (2003). There was a second interview mid-way through the data collection to clarify, confirm, or otherwise address observations and analysis from the observations and teacher documents. There was, finally, a concluding interview at the end of the data collection, to similarly address data and analysis, this time specifically targeting the observations and teacher documents from when the teacher was using inquiry to address a critical issue.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed by myself within a few days of being collected and provided some of the richest data. The interviews were semi-structured, taking advantage of preparation focused on research questions, but being open to clarifying or follow-up questions (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2018). Such a semi-structured method allowed for probing questions that helped explain the choices that the participant made in their instruction (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This was similar to the way Castro (2013) used semi-structured interviews to better understand the choices participants made in an activity, providing a more nuanced insight into the thinking of the participant. Interview questions, when possible, “allow[ed] the participants to reconstruct their experiences and build upon and explore their responses” (Woodson & Pabon, 2016, p.63).

These interviews were used to give insight into the thinking, purpose, and intentionality of the participant (Salinas & Castro, 2010; Yin, 2018) regarding their practice and other forms of data being collected. They helped to “gain subjective understandings of the participants’

experiences” (Woodson & Pabon, 2016, p. 62). Such subjective understanding is part and parcel in conducting qualitative research and understanding human experience, which does not reduce the value of the research so much as inform it (Kincheloe, 2003). Effort was made to ensure that interviews involved the sort of “how” and “why” questions that tend to lead to explanatory findings in the relativist narrative of the participant (Yin, 2013, 2018), which also situated the case study work to engage in critical research (Smith-Maddox & Solórzano, 2002). Further, the interviews avoided the sorts of questions Merriam & Tisdell (2016) recommend avoiding, namely: multiple questions, leading questions, and yes-no questions (and when such narrow questions were used it was followed up by prompting for more information).

Glesne (2015) discussed important considerations for interviews, including the development of analytic questions, patiently probing, and being aware of any power differential between the interviewer and the interviewee. Additionally, Charmaz (2016) calls out the importance of building rapport between researcher and participant towards the success of data collection, particularly regarding interviews. Towards that goal I sought to approach my participant in a friendly manner, and with sincere interest in the information they wished to share. I kept the interviews light and cordial, sharing information about myself as appropriate, and probing for information while not pushing back on, or challenging, the information that was shared.

Transcribing the interviews helped me be more familiar with the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). It also allowed me to complete the task and begin coding quickly so as to allow follow-up questions in future interviews. Engaging in my own transcription also allowed me to engage in more efficient member checking, which could be done while the memory of the events and the interview were not as far in the past for the participant.

Observation data

Observations of the teacher took place throughout his implementation of two different C3 inquiries. Observations took place in two intervals, each including six days of observation. Each day of observation involved observing at least two class periods, and in some instances three, so that data did not simply reflect the unique dynamics of one class. This also allowed me to observe different elements of instruction during a lesson that may have been missed had the lesson only been observed once. A total of twenty-five class periods were observed over the course of a month in this study. Each class period was typically around 45 minutes long. When combined with observations between and before classes, as well as during lunch, this amounted to close to 20 hours of observation data. Specifically, observations took place during periods four through seven, ranging in time from 10:42 AM to 2:35 PM. The first six days of observation took place to establish a baseline understanding of the inquiry-based practice of the participant. The second six days of observation took place when the teacher was using inquiry to address a critical issue. In this way the data reflected how the instruction was different when addressing a critical issue compared to when it was not specifically seeking to do so. The comparison between the first C3 inquiry (that was not changed for the research) and second C3 inquiry (that focused on a critical issue) were confounded because the first C3 inquiry inherently focused on a critical issue without interference from the researcher. This is because the first inquiry discussed Reconstruction, which discussed racial inequity in significant ways. More is discussed about this in the next chapter.

During observations I served as a non-participant observer (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). This sort of data was meaningful, as the data it was the data most capable of providing insight into the struggles of the teacher who was engaging with a new concept, specifically

adding a focus on a critical issue, and the challenges that were faced in doing so (Yin, 2018). Observations were structured to focus on the issue relevant to the research questions and theoretical framework, as Merriam & Tisdell (2016) suggested. They also included the elements that Merriam & Tisdell (2016) outlined, including: setting, participants, activities/interactions, conversation, subtle factors, and the teacher's behavior. Field notes were reviewed and typed within a few days of collecting them, and prior to discussing them with anyone, in order to ensure their reliability (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Participant journals

The participant was asked to reflect on his experiences with engaging in the inquiry-based instruction and specifically about the unit of instruction when inquiry was being used to address a critical issue (see protocols in Appendix). Such journals provided insight into the point of view of the teacher regarding their practice (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Journals were regularly updated by the participant and were regularly analyzed in the continual coding process. The interviews sought to clarify themes from the reflections. Journal entries were completed by Mr. Finch for every lesson of the two inquiry-based units, providing meaningful and rich data about the individual lessons. Journals provided insight into the thinking and perspective of the participant, and while they presented some ethical considerations regarding exposing the inner thoughts and reflections of the participant (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013), these were alleviated by making clear to the participant how they would be used.

Documentary data

Lastly, the data included teacher documents, which included lesson materials/resources and other objects/documents that were used as part of the teacher's practice or provided evidence of that practice, as well as researcher created photographs of samples of student work that were

on display in the classroom as well as in the hallway. These documents were not reliant on a researchers or participants flawed perceptions and potential biases. They represented unchanging, uninfluenced evidence of practice and intention. The documents further provided meaningful insight into the observation data. As Mr. Finch taught his lessons he would often refer to information or questions in the documents. Having access to these documents proved to be crucial to understanding the pedagogy and how it was being used.

Data collection timeline

It is important for data collection to be carefully timetabled (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Data collection in this study took place from late February into early April of 2019. The early phase of the research primarily involved an interview and initial observations of the setting before the studied inquiry modules began as well as observations of Mr. Finch's practice, document collection, and teacher journaling during the first inquiry-based unit of instruction. The mid-study interview transitioned the research into its second phase and took place in the latter part of March. In the second phase, data was added in the form of teacher documents, observations, and teacher journals from with the second inquiry, focused on a critical issue. The final phase involved a final interview and the collection of final reflections/documents, as well as final member checking of early analysis, which took place in early May.

The timeline for data collection was as follows:

2/31/19 to 3/19/19 – Pre-Observation interview, begin observation of baseline C3 inquiry, begin collecting teacher documents.

3/31/19 – Mid-study interview.

3/20/19 to 4/4/19 – Observations of second inquiry addressing a critical issue, continue collecting documents.

4/8/19 – Concluding interview.

Halfway through the data collection process, the teacher transitioned to purposefully address a critical issue through a C3-based inquiry. I assisted the participant in making this transition as Castro (2010) did when he led his participants through a reflection on citizenship education. I briefly introduced the concept to the participant of what a critical issue was during the period of data collection. This needed to be done early enough in the time table that Mr. Finch could plan accordingly for the second inquiry, but late enough in the process that it did not impact curriculum in the first inquiry. I determined the best opportunity for this by working with Mr. Finch so it would occur after he had finished planning lessons for the first inquiry but before he had starting planning for the second. From there, as a researcher, I only served to answer any clarifying questions the participant asked, and carefully avoided discussing any practical methodology that might be employed. After addressing what was meant by the phrase “critical issue”, a topic focused on equity and social justice, I helped him think through a compelling question that could address a critical issue in the unit he was planning. Ultimately, he crafted his own compelling question, not selecting any of my examples. His process included sharing ideas with me and asking for my insight into if it would adequately address a critical issue. He described, in interviews, that the method of “bouncing ideas off someone else” that we engaged in follows his standard model for developing compelling questions.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of case study data “much depends on the researcher’s own style of rigorous empirical thinking” (Yin, 2018, p. 165). There are, however, respected strategies for the

examination of case study data that help make that analysis meaningful and reliable. With some care, these methods need not serve the purpose of maintaining dominant forms of knowledge (Kincheloe, 2003). This study analyzed data as it was collected, generating codes and themes as it progressed. This allowed for the development of emergent codes and themes that were clarified during the mid-study interview and the concluding interview, in a way that gave insight into insider perspectives presented in other data sources (Salinas & Castro, 2010).

Further, the study combined the use of open coding with a set of *a priori* codes that explicitly examined elements of critical pedagogy and the C3 inquiry arc observed in the data. This helped focus the analysis on both the research questions and the theoretical framework while not inhibiting the discovery of unexpected themes. During the coding process I followed the advice of Kincheloe (2003) and paid particular attention to small or off-hand comments, as they are often of deep symbolic significance. For example, while coding the field notes I noticed a moment when a student asked Mr. Finch a question about his weekend as Mr. Finch was on his way out of the room. It could have very easily been missed in this chaotic moment between classes, but I caught that Mr. Finch not only heard the comment but responded to it even as he continued to move into the hall to deal with something else. This was a small moment that could have been easy to miss, that provided symbolic insight into the efforts Mr. Finch made towards respecting his students and building rapport with them.

Coding was done using Atlas.ti software and started from a position of identifying elements of inquiry observed, as well as elements of critical pedagogy, using the *a priori* codes, before engaging in further rounds of open coding that examined emergent themes, as discussed above. The goal during data collection was to avoid strictures that limited the investigation and to capture as much data as possible but then examine that data through the lenses of the C3

inquiry arc and critical pedagogy. Using the Atlas.ti software made it easy to analyze the occurrence of codes through specific sources of data, which facilitated the triangulation of data across data sources. The software also facilitated conducting a co-occurrence analysis, wherein it could be determined how often certain codes occurred alongside each other in the data in order to determine instances where two codes were regularly connected to each other and prompting the analysis to examine those instances closer to determine the nature of the connection.

A priori coding also included an examination of what I determined to be anti-critical elements of instruction that seemed to interfere with the impact of the implementation of elements of critical pedagogy. This was important because if the data showed an increase in either, or both, anti-critical and critical elements or a reduction in one or the other, this provided significant insight into how the participant was implementing inquiry when addressing a critical issue. If, for example, the teacher implemented lessons where instances of respecting student experience increased that would lead to a conclusion that instruction embraced elements of critical pedagogy. If, however, the data also demonstrated that there was an increase in instances where the teacher actively disrespected or dismissed student experiences that would directly impact the conclusions that could be drawn. It is worth noting that not all codes developed for critical pedagogy had an anti-critical counterpart, as their absence is the anti-critical act, serving as a sort of null curriculum regarding critical education. For example, the examination of hidden curriculum does not have an opposite counterpart beyond there simply not being an examination of hidden curriculum. I would be hard pressed to code the absence. However, other critical codes have direct opposites. For example, respecting student experience may be observed as the teacher made efforts towards making student experiences a meaningful part of the course and

student analysis. Likewise, disrespecting student experiences by dismissing student's lives as being too limited to be worthy was equally observable.

Having coded the data, the codes were organized and collapsed into themes that helped explain the case. Regularly engaging in analysis during the data collection process allowed emergent and rival themes to be tested in order to improve the validity of the findings (Yin, 2013). In order to reveal themes, the data was examined in multiple ways, reorganized, compared in different avenues (data source to data source, theme to theme, day to day, etc.), organized visually, and put in a purposeful sequence (Yin, 2018) in order to help reveal themes.

I further subjected theories that were developed from these themes to the series of consideration that Madison (1998) suggests:

- Comprehensiveness – Does the interpretation provides a cohesive understanding of phenomenon?
- Penetration – Does the interpretation address the intention of the participants?
- Thoroughness – Does the interpretation address all of the questions associated with the phenomenon?
- Appropriateness – Do the questions the researcher is addressing align with the questions the phenomenon raises?
- Contextuality – Does the interpretation account for the historical/cultural context where the study took place?
- Agreement – Does the interpretation account for previous interpretations of similar situations?
- Suggestiveness – Does the interpretation raise new questions and demand new research?

- Potential – Does the interpretation of the data help generate new insights that are useful to future research?

The process of data analysis incorporated into this study has been illustrated through Figure 4 which serves to lay out the overall analytical scheme.

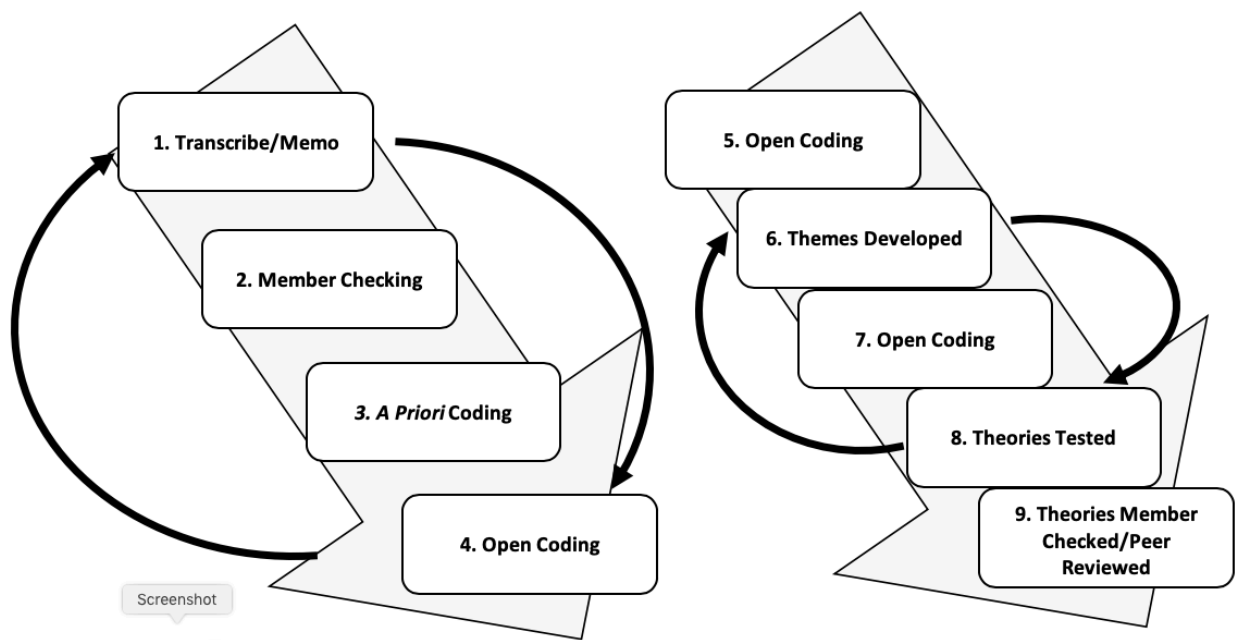


Figure 4. Visualization of analysis and verification methods.

Verification

Several methods were used to verify the data and analysis, to ensure that the findings of the study were considered accurate and reliable. Kincheloe (2003) makes it clear that using the term “validity” for such things might imply a sense of quantitative/statistical methodology, and that effort should be made in a study to explain what is meant by validity. As he further points out, classrooms are complex to a point that reproduction is impossible, and so validity is not intended to imply reproducibility. No other setting has the same context to study, and so each case study of this sort can begin to add to the understanding of reality. That said, validity in this situation involved the methods that the study employed to determine that the meaning derived

from the data was well justified, to a point that others were likely to reach the same conclusions from the same data.

Specific strategies were suggested to ensure that the findings of this case study could be trusted. Chief among these methods were data source triangulation, member checking, and peer reviewing. These methods also included taking efforts to reduce the impact of the researcher on the findings. Purposeful sampling was done to ensure that the study was examining appropriate situations. Also, bracketing, where appropriate, helped ensure that analysis was reliable and well justified. Further, while engaging in well-established methods of case study research and verification, efforts were made to improve the implementation of data collection and analysis by engaging in elements of critical research methods. For example, Kincheloe, McLaren, Steinberg, and Monzó (2018) as well as Kincheloe (2003) describe the value of including the participant as a partner in the research, and the value of having both an insider perspective as well as that of an outsider. Kincheloe, et al. (2005) note that teachers have significantly more understanding of what is happening in a classroom than researchers will ever develop, and so should be engaged as experts as much as possible. Much of this was accomplished with the approach taken during data collection, particularly regarding interviews and journals, as well as through the use of member checking. In addition to that, in each interview there were questions designed to discover if the participant felt that the interview questions missed any key information. This functioned in alignment with the call in Kincheloe, et al. (2005) to engage participants to help with meaning making in research. It also aligned with Kincheloe (2003) where he explicitly calls on having participants provide feedback on questions being used for data collection.

Data was triangulated by collecting multiple sources of data, namely interviews, observations, journals, and teacher documents (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Yin, 2018;

Shenton, 2004; Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002) to increase validity using the Atlas.ti software. When a theme emerged through interviews, it was checked against the other data sources for either confirmation or to reveal that the finding did not stand up to scrutiny. According to Yin (2018) interviews alone are subject to “bias, poor recall, and poor or inaccurate articulation” (p. 121). No findings were considered strong unless it could be found across multiple data sources, and not be contradicted in other data. This was made clear as such findings were demonstrated in a documentational table as recommended by Anfara, et al. (2002) as part of the analysis. In this way the findings in the data were verified comparing what the researcher observed, what the teacher perceived (as revealed in interviews and journals), and how the teacher made manifest his intentions through documents. This allowed for alternative/rival plausible explanations of data to be developed and tested in a way that strengthened the findings (Yin, 2013, 2018). Kincheloe (2003) also pointed out that interviews alone do not suffice because participants might feel reprisal from superiors as a result of their answers, and so more sources of information about a case must be obtained.

Further, the data underwent member checking (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013) to ensure that the observations, transcriptions, and interpretations were correct. What the researcher believed was happening may not be what was actually happening, based on their perception (Creswell & Miller, 2010). By asking the participant to examine the field notes and transcription data they were able to give insight into the accuracy of the information. When I misheard/miswrote something Mr. Finch provided insight into what occurred from their perspective. Likewise, when I engaged in analysis of data I could have misinterpreted a situation (Creswell & Miller, 2010). By giving the participant the opportunity to comment on the analysis clarity was provided. For example, I might have interpreted an exchange between a teacher and a

student as being anti-critical and code it as such. However, with member checking Mr. Finch could explain that there were background conditions with that student that required that exchange to occur in a different way than he would have otherwise done. This may or may not have changed the analysis, but it could provide more insight and help verify that the findings were valid and that the data was being appropriately analyzed (Creswell & Miller, 2010). It also served to highlight important insights that revealed challenges being asked about in the research questions. Member checking took place in multiple forms. I provided opportunities to the participant to check transcriptions, field notes, and findings (in the form of a draft of chapter 4), further, because of the process of continuous coding, analysis was conducted throughout the data collection process, and the researcher checked with the participant in informal discussions and formal interviews for the accuracy of what was derived from the data (Creswell & Miller, 2010).

The last major effort towards the verification of the study was the use of peer review allowing for investigator triangulation (Yin, 2013, 2018). I called on other experienced researchers amongst my peers and colleagues to examine selections of the data using the same codebook. With three such colleagues coding different selections of excerpts of data from across all data sources, I was able to verify other researchers found similar results (Yin, 2018). While the analysis also increased validity through the examination of rival/alternative explanations, some of which is evident in the next chapter, adding additional researchers to this part of the process helped reveal additional evidence for or against various explanations (Yin, 2013, 2018).

Beyond that, Kincheloe (2005) described that the complexity of life means that qualitative researchers must equip themselves well for the rigor needed to address such complexity. In those regards he provided a list of aspects of the lived experiences being studied

that should be considered to fully appreciate the complexity and verify that needed perspectives were considered. That list includes:

- Examination of deeper order of systems/society.
- Questioning the universality of findings.
- Recognition that first interpretations of data need to be re-examined.
- Recognition of the processes that impact the participants life.
- Noting the intersecting contexts of the study.
- Different data sources are related and connected to each other.
- Examination of the way that issues of power interact with the research.
- Remembering that all knowledge is interpretive.
- Being aware of the cultural assumptions around research methods.

By being sure to consider the items on this list I was able to examine my own practice as a researcher in order to add rigor to the work that I did. As such I examined my analysis against this list of considerations periodically throughout the analysis processes.

Ethical Considerations

The study participant was well aware of the entirety of the study and what was expected of him. Agreements were reached, and informed consent given, as described by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2013). The primary ethical considerations were the time commitment of the participant, researcher interference in the classroom setting, and risk of exposure to the participant. These risks were minimal and/or manageable.

The participant was impacted by the time it took to engage in formal interviews, the opportunities to engage in member checking of the data, and the time needed to complete the journaling. Through the course of the study it was expected that 3-6 hours of time would be

taken by the participant to engage in interviews, along with for member checking and journaling, as determined by the participant. This was not an insignificant commitment, even if it was spread over a month, and so it was made very clear to the participant what was expected of him in this regard, so that it did not overly burden them. This consideration was mitigated, to some degree, due to the opportunity for growth presented to the participant as a result of this reflective process (Kincheloe, 2003). Through the interview process, member checking, and journaling the participant gained a chance for self-reflection and an outsider's insight into their teaching practice that is shown to have the potential to be very meaningful and helpful (Kincheloe, 2003).

The second ethical consideration was the impact of the researcher and the study on the classroom environment. Any time a researcher enters a classroom and makes observations there is a risk that their presence will impact the students (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), which is itself a potential harm and may skew the data. Some of this was mitigated by situating myself in an unobtrusive location (the back corner of the classroom), making my purpose clear to the students (through a letter shared with the students/parents in advance), and through time to become accustomed to my presence. By having the students know why I was there, recognition that the research is not focused on them, and locating myself in an out of the way place in the classroom I was less obtrusive and less likely to make students uncomfortable. By engaging in extended observations, my presence became less impactful and the students seemed like they returned to a state more akin to normal conditions (Creswell & Miller, 2010). This increased comfort level became clear as, in the last few weeks of data collection, some students started to greet me before class.

This study has the added risk to the students because I asked the participant to engage in a different sort of instruction, that being, one that addressed a critical issue. By asking the teacher

to engage in this change the students had a different educational experience than they would have had if the study had not been conducted. The participant, however, was an experienced teacher, minimizing that impact. As a veteran in the classroom he was able to navigate the change in curriculum without allowing it to negatively impact the education of the students. Critical scholars would add that engaging in the examination of a critical issue in class actually provides a benefit to the students, as it provides them with the opportunity to gain insight into their society and empower them to have a more meaningful impact within it (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

It is also worth recognizing the risk to the teacher of being exposed. This is particularly true regarding the teacher's classroom practice and his inner thoughts, as revealed through journals and interviews (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Efforts were made to protect the participant in this regard. Pseudonyms or vague, general descriptions have been used in place of all proper names (location, school, participant name, etc.) and the participant has not been directly connected to me in any way that would make them easy to identify based on the association. It is possible that the participant could be identified by their colleagues, administration, or students who knew that the research was being conducted, and that risk had been made clear to the participant so that they were aware that they were opting into such risk. It was important for me to be aware of the risk that might come from such research and "mindful of the relationship between teachers', students', and administrators' consciousness and the socio-historical contexts in which they operate" (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 57).

Chapter 4: Findings

In the investigation of the single case of a teacher who addressed a critical issue, through the use of the *C3 Framework*, four themes emerged from the data analysis. The first finding discussed that there were elements of the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy that proved to be incompatible for Mr. Finch and pedagogical compromises were made to accommodate the theories. Second, integrating the C3 inquiry arc seemed to encourage critical pedagogy since there were instances in Mr. Finch's teaching where the pedagogical practices he embraced as part of his use of inquiry coincided with key elements of critical pedagogy. The third theme that was found involved the discovery of pedagogies that overlapped between inquiry and critical pedagogy. It illustrated how Mr. Finch's instruction, that was not specifically rooted in the use of the C3 inquiry arc nor based in critical pedagogy, helped create greater overlap between the two theories. Finally, there were notable obstacles that impeded critical implementation for Mr. Finch. These included situations that made implementation of inquiry for the goal of teaching about a critical issue more difficult. These four themes, and the specific findings associated with each of them, are laid out in Table 2 (for example, under the theme of "Dilemmas Existed Between Inquiry and Critical Pedagogy" one of the dilemmas that was found was that the presentation of background knowledge led to an anti-critical approach in Mr. Finch's practice).

Table 2

Summary of Findings.

Theme 1: Dilemmas Existed Between Inquiry and Critical Pedagogy	Theme 2: Inquiry Encouraged Critical Pedagogy	Theme 3: Pedagogies Overlapped Between Inquiry and Critical Pedagogy	Theme 4: Obstacles Impeded Critical Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Knowledge and an Anti-Critical Approach • Honoring Student Analysis Discourages Being Explicit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiry Leads to Critical Creation of Knowledge and Curiosity • Multiple Sources Made Multiple Perspectives Possible • Source Analysis Supported Questioning Sources of Knowledge • Inquiry and a Critical Approach Built on Each Other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevancy and Rapport • Community • Discussion and Collaboration • Appeal to Empathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Critical Consciousness • Time • Compelling Questions • Alternative Perspectives

Theme 1: Dilemmas Existed Between Inquiry and Critical Pedagogy

The first major finding was that dilemmas existed between inquiry and critical pedagogy. These dilemmas occurred because Mr. Finch had to find a balance between the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy. In the examination of the two pedagogical approaches there were areas where the two were expected to support each other, areas where the theories contained elements which conceptually complemented each other, and areas where they did not complement each other, but it was not expected to find areas where they would oppose or contradict each other. However, the dilemmas discovered in this study suggested that there were, in fact, instances where the use of inquiry by Mr. Finch involved some give and take with elements of critical pedagogy.

Dilemmas, in this regard, are not the same as obstacles, in as much as obstacles were things that hindered implementation but could be overcome. Rather, dilemmas represented areas where the teacher had to decide where they stood and what best practice would be in their classroom with their students. There were three types of dilemmas that were revealed in this study. First was the dilemma between background knowledge and anti-critical positions such as the tendency towards the use of an authored construction of knowledge approach. The second dilemma found was regarding having students engaged in valid/honored analysis of evidence, and the teacher being explicit about their critical goals. The third dilemma also stemmed from the way that Mr. Finch sought to honor student analysis, but in this instance it led to a dilemma with being explicit about the examination of issues of power and oppression in their curriculum and instruction.

Dilemma 1: Background knowledge and an anti-critical approach

The C3 inquiry arc indicates a need for teachers to present students with background context so that they can make meaning out of the analysis in which they will engage (Hmelo-Silver, et al., 2007; Saye, 2017). The idea is that such information assists students in the examination of primary source documents. This is related to Dimension 3 of the C3 inquiry arc, where students are supposed to evaluate sources by determining the purpose of the author, and make meaning from the evidence (NCSS, 2013). Such source analysis provides, and is based on, background information that, in this case, the teacher felt the need to present as a function of his use of inquiry. Mr. Finch, believed that for students to understand primary source documents he needed to provide background about events that they referenced.

However, within the framework of critical pedagogy, students are given opportunities to create their own background knowledge. Further, it is also by critical pedagogy scholars

recognized that knowledge is socially constructed. Such a social element being involved in the creation of knowledge serves to help students understand the context in which their personal meaning-making contributed to a larger discourse at a societal level. In this way critical pedagogy scholars discuss pedagogy towards a goal of empowering students to act in the world. To make meaning of the world in a way that was historically reserved primarily for those in positions of power. As was discussed in the previous chapter, anti-critical practice can give insight into the practice of a teacher's instruction.

Purpose behind background information

The evidence from this study indicated that Mr. Finch felt a need to present background information about content in order to assist students in analyzing and making meaning. That process, at some point, encouraged an authored construction of knowledge in the classroom. He explained that he felt that his students needed to “know what Reconstruction is...background knowledge” and that certain activities provided a “good base of Reconstruction knowledge”. He described certain lessons as giving “context and background” about the subject and that he wanted to do so in order to improve students’ analysis later. He reported that he gave background information, especially early in a unit, because he knew it “will be a struggle for them to grasp what I want them to have that background knowledge”. Throughout the data there is evidence of his belief that: “I found it better to give a little background...”

Frequency of the dilemma

Authored construction of knowledge was the anti-critical teaching approach that occurred most often throughout the case. It appeared in every data source, although it was less prevalent in the second inquiry where the topic was expressly focused on equity/justice. An analysis of co-occurrence in the data showed that authored construction of knowledge and the presentation of

background knowledge co-occurred more often than any other element observed. Examples included instances when Mr. Finch presented information at the start of a unit or a class period to provide context for the analysis the students were going to engage in that day. Other times it appeared in the form of him responding to student questions from a position of authority. He presented the students with the meaning that he had made about the content, including events of history, meaning of words, or others.

Finding the line between honoring analysis and background

When asked about the line between providing background information to students and honoring their analysis Mr. Finch said, “I try to not explain, as much as possible, my opinion and thoughts, and more just stick to this is what is happening and how it is impacting the general public” and “I think of background information as just the basic facts”. These statements indicate that he thinks it is possible to provide students with background information that is neutral without providing them information about what that information means or how it is significant. Further he stated, “That background information is not going to influence them, it is just there so then when they get into the reading they have perspective about what they are reading about” and, “I try to give them as much context as I can to come up with their conclusion”. In these statements he is discussing the idea that he believes that neutral information can be presented to the students in a way that can inform their analysis of evidence without biasing them in that analysis.

When Mr. Finch said, “I wanted to give them some background at the beginning and for this unit, it is more vocabulary”, this was a presentation of background knowledge that was grounded in the idea of simple meaning making of language, but Apple (2004) and McLaren (2009) point out that such meaning making of language is an expression of power. As such, even

the presentation of vocabulary is not a neutral process and involved, in this case, the teacher presenting what others have constructed as the importance and meanings of certain of words. What is more, the idea that background information does not influence student analysis is counter to the very concept of background information, which Mr. Finch noted when he explained, “If they’re looking at the Frick argument they note his background from the video and the timeline, take that into account when you’re looking at it.” If students are taking this background information into account when they look at it then the background information absolutely influences their analysis, as was Mr. Finch’s intent. The entire purpose of providing background information is to contextualize the analysis, this is not accidental, but it is a notable dilemma between the practice and certain essential elements of critical pedagogy.

Methods of presenting authored knowledge as background information

The practice of providing background information absolutely involved presenting an authored construction of knowledge, as it consistently involved referring to authorities to make meaning of the world and presenting that meaning to students with an expectation of acceptance. Many times, throughout the study, Mr. Finch used video clips, often from sources such as the History Channel, to present background information. These video clips consistently presented information from a position of authority, including historians and experts and universally presented information in a way where they interpreted history and presented what their experts thought it meant. For example, one video made clear judgements about the value of strikers in labor movements in the early 1900s, the commentators described what they saw as the faults of presidents. In another video the experts explained what it meant when the Freedmen’s Bureau worked in the South during Reconstruction. The use of such videos was common in the practice of Mr. Finch, and were used to provide background information to students, at least several times

per week. It was observed that these videos almost always presented a dominant narrative of what the historical events meant and consistently utilized white men as their experts and authorities. They also depicted historical visions that marginalized anyone who was not a white man, and did not seek to complicate stereotypes or contextualize the past through the experiences of marginalized groups. These last few issues are not directly related to the role that background information had in creating dilemmas with student and social construction of knowledge, but definitely demonstrated dilemmas that such background information presented towards an effort to embrace a critical stance in this classroom.

Mr. Finch also provided background information to the students by presenting students with slides in a multimedia presentation that he had created. He presented the information to them through the slides either through Google Drive or he used the slides as part of a short lecture, often taking 10 minutes or less. For example, see Figure 5, a sample slide from a presentation wherein the students examined three federal plans for Reconstruction. This slide was part of a presentation Mr. Finch had created in previous years before he started using an inquiry-based model for organizing his units. He felt the need to lecture less often but expressed a desire to make use of previously created materials. Rather than use these slides as a lecture, instead, he provided them to the students to examine on their own and use them to complete a note-taking guide. These slides were specifically about the beginnings of the Reconstruction time period after the American Civil War.

President Lincoln's Plan

- 1864 → "Lincoln Governments" formed in LA, TN, AR

- * "loyal assemblies"
- * They were weak and dependent on the Northern army for their survival.

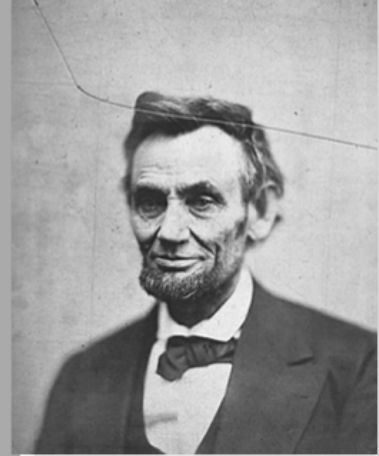


Figure 5. Slide from a self-directed presentation about Reconstruction students examined to gain background information early in the unit.

In this specific slide there are two sorts of authored construction of knowledge occurring. The teacher presented this information from a position of authority in as much students were expected to take this information as given when they conducted inquiry-based analysis later, based on notes they completed as they examined the slides. This slide demonstrated the way Mr. Finch was presenting his meaning-making of the past to the students and expected them to accept it, particularly in the section of the slide where it states "They were weak and dependent on the Northern army for their survival." This is not an inevitable or straight forward assessment of what the "Lincoln Governments" were or what they meant, and so represent a more obvious form of authored construction of knowledge.

Even in including what appeared to be entirely neutral facts, such as the idea that something called “Lincoln Governments” were formed in 1864 in three states, was not a neutral presentation of knowledge. Any presentation of knowledge is subject to bias because the author of that knowledge, in this case Mr. Finch, made decisions about what content to include and which to leave out. There is no presentation of history that can be considered to be complete. There are simply too many details, too many perspectives, and too much complexity for any presentation of the past to be thorough. So even in the presentation of neutral facts, choices had to be made about what to present and what not to present. This sort of decision was made clear when Mr. Finch described other curricular choices, such as when he elected to discuss labor unions and strikes extensively for several days, relegating the experiences of women and children to one, combined day. He acknowledged that he could have done more in terms of having students explore these marginalized perspectives, but he opted instead to focus on the other content instead. While he may not have recognized it as such, these are the same choices Mr. Finch made regarding what to discuss in the background knowledge he provided throughout his lessons.

Mr. Finch also presented background knowledge through direct interaction with students when answering questions or during class discussions. For example, when a student asked about the term “amnesty”, Mr. Finch did not hesitate to describe it as a “get out of jail free card”. When someone asked what “emancipation” was he responded, “It’s freeing the slaves”. When a student asked about the federal government’s role in Jim Crow he responded that “presidents turned a blind eye”. In these instances, Mr. Finch provided his, authored, and simplified, conception of the meaning of these terms and events.

Similarly, and more commonly, Mr. Finch employed an authored construction of knowledge in class discussions. When discussing the biased news coverage of the Pullman Strike, for example, he pointed out that “It’s like modern day Fox News and CNN in a lot of ways.” When students were discussing the question “How can greed be good for America?”, which was part of a one-day lesson, he added, after a few student answers, “...it can make America better as a whole”. In other discussions he added statements like “ideals of Reconstruction extend far past that period”, “being able to mass produce newspapers is new...influencing people”, and “African Americans were slaves for hundreds of years, suddenly they’re free...Had to learn to get food, clothing, housing. They need to figure it out.” When students were examining the history of lynching in their state and were discussing the trends that they saw over time he added to the trends that the students were mentioning, describing that the people perpetrating these lynching events changed over time, from the “KKK to random mob to police is an interesting trend”. Lastly, as an example of this dilemma, when students were discussing the idea of carpetbaggers during Reconstruction, Mr. Finch stated that they “took advantage of the South...bought stuff cheap and sold it expensive”. In each of these examples Mr. Finch was providing his own interpretation of the evidence. Teachers regularly serve as authoritative information sources in their classrooms and so each time he provided what he thought the events of history meant he reduced or discouraged the need for the students to construct their own meaning.

Seeing the true history

Mr. Finch believed that by examining primary sources students could “...see the true history.” This seemed to demonstrate his disposition that such true history existed and could be seen. Statements discussed earlier regarding there being unchanging meanings of historical

events and that background knowledge can be neutral seem rooted in this disposition. I did not get the impression that this was Mr. Finch's only disposition towards instruction, but it was an extant disposition, and it represented the dilemma that pushed background knowledge against critical goals towards knowledge creation. However, Mr. Finch also acknowledged that, "Through inquiry-based learning you want the students to paint their own picture of history through the teacher's lens pulling the sources together." Potential alternative explanations for the prevalence of authored construction of knowledge that occurred in this study could have included that Mr. Finch wished to ensure that students conducted analysis that led them to the same conclusions he had reached. However, other data suggested this explanation was unlikely, such as moments when Mr. Finch described it being okay to him if students came to answers he disagreed with, if they could properly support them with evidence.

Dilemma 2: Honoring student analysis and explicit critical goals

Another dilemmas found in this study came from Mr. Finch's efforts to honor the analysis of his students by treating them as valid and worthy of consideration. This occurred because it led him to make decisions that discouraged him to be explicit about his critical goals. This was particularly surprising because putting an emphasis on treating student analysis as valid and worthy of respect (described in literature about the C3 inquiry arc) was nearly the same thing as honoring student creation of knowledge (as described in literature on critical pedagogy). The evidence, however, demonstrated that by emphasizing student creation of knowledge the teacher also encouraged an anti-critical position of neutrality in the curriculum.

Further, embracing such an honoring of student analysis also discouraged Mr. Finch from being explicit about the critical goals of the curriculum. Such a position of neutrality seemed to encourage an authored construction of knowledge. Mr. Finch felt the need to present ideas to

balance the curriculum while also deciding to not call out the flaws within dominant perspectives. He described the dilemma well when he said, “I never tell them where I want them to go because I don’t want them to be led to that, I want them to get there on their own...”. As such he felt the need to avoid being explicit about issues like power and oppression because “if they heard the word oppression are they going to think it *has* to be oppression.”

It is worth noting that while such positions of neutrality were seen throughout the data, and in both inquiries, it was observed infrequently. What is more, the number of such instances decreased in the second inquiry, which was focused on a critical issue. By comparison, the honoring of student creation of knowledge/student analysis was observed almost more than any other phenomenon in the entire study. This dilemma, then, may not have been a prevalent one, but it was a likely explanation as to why an explicit examination Mr. Finch’s critical goals were never presented to the students. Mr. Finch expressed in interviews that he was not explicit in critical areas because of his desire to honor the conclusions of the students.

While other explanations are possible for these observations, when directly asked about why he was not more explicit about power/oppression, or his critical goals, Mr. Finch made it clear that a position of neutrality, in order to honor his student’s analysis, was his motivation, saying,

If you have any sort of critical issue in our world today you don’t want to tell the students this is what the issue is and this is how you should see it. We want them to say this is what our critical issue is and this is the information behind it, we want you to investigate that and figure out your own opinion.

He explained that in the second inquiry he wanted students to see that, while technological advancement of the Industrial Revolution is often seen as a positive, it actually impacted the poor negatively. Yet he never explicitly stated this goal to his students, explaining,

I never tell them where I want them to go because I don't want them to be led to that, I want them to get there on their own....Then I just say that's what we'll do and here's the first bit of background information on it.

In his effort to center the students' ability to conduct meaningful analysis of the content and honor the meaning that they make of that analysis in his curriculum, even if it disagrees with his beliefs, Mr. Finch had taken up positions of neutrality that made the examination of critical concepts implicit at best.

The position of neutrality occurred in instances where he spoke about specific topics. For example, when discussing how he might have presented the experiences of women and children in the Industrial Revolution without marginalizing them, he discussed that doing so would mean that he would need to bring in perspectives of wealthy women and wealthy children because otherwise the experiences of women and children would be seen as portraying life during the Industrial Revolution as overly negative. His effort to allow students to engage in meaningful analysis led him to believe that doing so meant that he needed to present a balanced dichotomy. He explained in an interview,

The women and children, it really focused on the poor. I could have gone out and found a perspective of rich women and children and really spent more time and showed both aspects. But when I think about this time period I think about the breaker boys and newsies and the triangle shirtwaist factories and laborers and

immigrants and whatnot, it's typically bad. So, I would have spent a lot more time talking about bad stuff instead of trying to tie in equity....

Mr. Finch seemed to believe that only by examining both the powerful and the oppressed of particular groups could students independently create meaning of the evidence. He explained that he and the students “tried to find as much equity as possible in this time period. It is kind of hard to find equity in the Industrial Revolution in some cases...”. In other words, finding examples of a positive trait like equity was important to the student's ability to engage in analysis.

Mr. Finch explained that one way he was able to make his critical goals explicit was through supporting questions he used in the second inquiry. These supporting questions were: “How does technological advancement impact the rich?” and to “How does technological advancement impact the poor?” While such questions help bring to light the inequity in experiences and outcomes for the rich and the poor during the time period being studied, only one begins to offer an explicit explanation of Mr. Finch's critical goal of wanting students to notice the negative impact that technological advancement had on poor people.

Dilemma 3: Honoring student analysis and examination of power and oppression

Similar to the way Mr. Finch's critical goals were not made explicit, issues of power and oppression were also not examined explicitly. With exception being made for ways accepted by dominant perspectives of history. For example, he referenced slavery as being a form of oppression. While he implicitly discussed issues of power and oppression, such as discussing the many things named for rich people in the South, or the way Jim Crow laws impacted the ability of people to vote, and connecting it to current issues in voting rights, there was no specific explanation that these things were a result of the role that power and oppression played in these scenarios. Critical pedagogy scholars might, for example, suggest that Mr. Finch should have

called out the power built by those people whose names are on local buildings and recognized the racial oppression that granted them the ability to be in a position to have things named for them, but no such discussion occurred.

Mr. Finch, however, makes it clear that, like a position of neutrality, this pedagogical choice was made in order to honor student analysis and creation of knowledge. He said, "...I don't want to lead them...if they heard the word oppression are they going to think it *has* to be oppression." In order to leave room for the students to conduct meaningful analysis of evidence he sought to avoid language that explicitly addressed critical goals or explicitly called out issues of power and oppression when they occurred in the content. While he wanted his students to note the negative consequences that technological advancement had towards poor people he never told them that that was something he wanted them to learn. Likewise, while he did address issues of power and oppression implicitly in his lessons he rarely named things as being connected to the concepts of power and oppression. While students may have learned lessons about power and oppression from such an implicit examination of these issues critical pedagogy theorists call for examinations of power and oppression being done explicitly. He did, however, go out of his way to ask students to explicitly examine issues of justice and equity in the second inquiry, which helped support the implicit examination of power and oppression. There was also a clear theme of power and oppression within the curriculum in both inquiries. The way in which Mr. Finch's practice fell short of critical pedagogy was in the way he incorporated these themes but was not explicit about them.

The neutrality of dilemmas 2 and 3

To some degree this tendency towards neutrality, towards both his critical goals and the examination of power and oppression, came from his efforts to honor the analysis of his students.

This also led to acceptance and support, on occasion, of dominant perspectives in the curriculum. He expressed concern, for example, that he “painted a negative picture” of Reconstruction for his students, and that he wished he had been able to find more success stories from African Americans to share, so as to balance out the negatives. This was clearly an urge he felt towards neutrality because the content demonstrated that despite the end of slavery, for the vast majority of African Americans, racial oppression was still a reality of existence, and he felt a desire to balance that perception. Similarly, in the second inquiry, Mr. Finch described why he did not do more to avoid marginalizing the experiences of women and children in the curriculum. He described that to do so he would have to get “rid of some of the strikes and labor union stuff”. He would have rather heavily emphasized more of the dominant, largely white male, experience of the labor movement instead of the narratives of women and children.

Mr. Finch embraced positions of neutrality to encourage meaningful, inquiry-based, student analysis. Even as he implicitly included the examination of oppression in his lessons he occasionally distanced his instruction from the concept from modern life. For example, he told his students that such instances of oppression were not ongoing issues and that “the time period was different”. Even when they were implicitly examining oppression around racism and economic disparity, forms of oppression that are clearly still relevant in modern America, he took this approach. He discouraged students to dig deeper into issues of oppression when he showed them a resource that made clear that there are modern issues of racial oppression in the form of modern hate groups in their area. While they were examining the resources that showed modern hate groups, he told them that he was not using the resource so that students could research deeper, but rather “just to show that this is still going on”. In doing so he actively discouraged curious students from examining the evidence any deeper and called for them to

recognize the situation, but not think too deeply about it. He also told a student that if they support someone who does something wrong it is okay for them to still support them “100%” so long as they call them out for having done something wrong. This is a form of neutrality that seems to call for the acceptance of oppression from people in power so long as they are otherwise likable. Critical pedagogy literature, and, to some degree the taking informed action component of the C3 inquiry arc, suggested that simply calling out the wrong doing and maintaining support in such an instance was a form of neutrality that helped maintain a status quo of oppression.

Theme 2: Inquiry Encouraged Critical Pedagogy

A theoretical examination of critical pedagogy and the C3 inquiry arc led to a recognition of the ways that the two pedagogical approaches overlapped. However, a theoretical overlap did not necessarily mean that there would be a pragmatic overlap, or that one pedagogy might have encouraged the other. While an examination of literature regarding the two pedagogical concepts made it unsurprising to find that using inquiry did encourage an embrace of instruction that, in some ways, resembled critical pedagogy, having an examination of real-world practice helped to establish that the overlap between inquiry and critical pedagogy was real. There were four specific areas that this study revealed that the use of inquiry encouraged practice that resembled elements of critical pedagogy. This study found that using inquiry led to the critical creation of knowledge and encouraged student curiosity. It was also revealed that using multiple sources due to inquiry-based practice made multiple perspectives possible. Further, it was shown that inquiry-based source analysis supported questioning sources of knowledge, in that it encouraged students to subject sources they were examining to questions of bias and validity. Lastly, it was

found, not only that Mr. Finch believed that his use of inquiry made his integration of a critical issue stronger, but that his focus on a critical issue made his use of inquiry stronger.

Area1: Inquiry led to critical creation of knowledge and curiosity

The evidence demonstrated that the use of the C3 inquiry arc in the classroom involved pedagogical practice that actively encouraged the teacher to embrace critical pedagogy concepts like honoring student creation of knowledge, social construction of knowledge, and encouraging student curiosity. It makes sense that if inquiry would have students engage in analysis of evidence to understand history and answer big questions, then such instruction would also be primed to encourage teachers to honor the analysis of students. It also follows that the teacher would likely encourage students to be curious about the past so as to make their analysis all the more meaningful. Having students justify the meaning they made of the evidence to others speaks to the connection between the C3 inquiry arc and social construction of knowledge. The data supported these logical connections as being pragmatic as well.

Instances of students analyzing evidence as part of the inquiry work, the teacher honoring students' creation of knowledge, opportunities to engage in the social construction of knowledge, constructing arguments from evidence, and encouraging student curiosity all appeared throughout all of the data sources. They appeared strongly in the case of student analysis, honoring student creation of knowledge, social construction of knowledge, arguments from evidence, and moderately in the case of encouraging curiosity. A co-occurrence analysis demonstrated that authentic student analysis and instances of honoring student creation of knowledge occurred more together often in the data than any other coded concepts in the entire study. The co-occurrence between honoring student creation of knowledge/student analysis and social construction of knowledge/encouraging curiosity occurred less frequently, but was

significant in how often the concepts occurred simultaneously. The changes in the data were not consistent between the first and second inquiry, this indicated that the purposeful examination of a critical issue was not clearly meaningful in this case. However, this did not impact general trends regarding the way using inquiry encouraged Mr. Finch to implement elements of critical pedagogy.

Inquiry and honoring student creation of knowledge

The way that inquiry encouraged elements of critical pedagogy was described by Mr. Finch in terms of the ways that a traditional classroom is incapable of honoring student creation of knowledge in a meaningful way,

If you're looking at the social injustice issue, and seeing it as strictly the historical stand and deliver social studies class, the kids are going to get what you want them to get and they won't be able to formulate their own opinion on it.

When he described his approach to inquiry he stated

They can pull out their own story of the history. They're not told here's the reading, here's the questions, answer A and B. There's only one right answer. I like them to have the opportunity to look at something and answer it differently than I do. And then say this is why I believe this and thinking this and this is what the problem is.

In this quote he described an approach that engaged students in valid analysis of evidence, and honored their creation of meaning from that evidence. He is describing an approach to teaching that allows students to engage in analysis towards addressing open ended questions without prescribed conclusions. They are allowed to create their own interpretation and create knowledge in an authentic way.

Inquiry and encouraging curiosity

The data showed that Mr. Finch, in an effort to allow the students to engage in valid analysis of the evidence, actively encouraged their curiosity about the world. When students took classroom discussion into topics that were unexpected Mr. Finch described it as “fine”. For example, when discussing the assembly line and Henry Ford a student asked about the change in the price of a Ford car as a result of the assembly line. Mr. Finch told the student that that was a valid question and that she should use her phone to look it up and share it with the class. He later described to me why he would take the time to incorporate such practice into his classroom, “If it’s relevant to them to know what the price of a Model T...if it’s relevant to one kid it’s relevant to more kids and it’s worth looking at...”. This approach was commonplace in Mr. Finch’s class.

Consistently if students expressed curiosity, in the form of a tangentially related question, if it was even remotely relevant to the topic at hand, he would either answer the question, satiating the student’s curiosity, throw it back to the other students to further the discussion, or prompt the student to research the answer and share it with the rest of the class. In any response to curiosity, however, it was seen that he was actively recognizing it as valid, and encouraging it, by addressing it and/or incorporating it into the lesson that was being taught at the time.

Inquiry and the social construction of knowledge

It can be explicitly seen that by engaging students in analysis that was both considered valid and honored, Mr. Finch also encouraged the social construction of knowledge. Mr. Finch put forth considerable effort to have students communicate arguments they had developed, using evidence that they had analyzed, to other students, a key component of Dimension 4 of the C3 inquiry arc. Regularly Mr. Finch’s asked students to share their arguments with classmates through discussion, and occasionally he would also use class presentations, or posting student

work publicly for the same reason. Repeatedly, in these ways, Mr. Finch was observed encouraging that such social construction of knowledge be rooted in inquiry's evidence-based arguments. When Mr. Finch said, "Understanding that their points are valid they don't have to be the only valid points being discussed. If someone has a different opinion it's just as good if they can back it up with evidence..." he described how he explains to students how to engage in a process where they create meaning of evidence with others. He calls for them to be open to the interpretations of other students. He also described the methods that he used to engage students in social construction of knowledge when he said, "They shared their ideas and provided evidence connecting to it." Further, he asked students to evaluate arguments without telling them which arguments were stronger, as shown when he said, "The students determined who they believed and why." Taken together these statements involve Mr. Finch's stance regarding the social construction of knowledge. The demonstrate how he asked his students to practice participating in the construction of knowledge by having them create and evaluate arguments based on evidence.

Likewise, the data contained evidence that showed that having students engage in analysis that was considered valid also encouraged students to practice participating in the social creation of knowledge. Repeatedly through the data, it was noted that the students engaged in serious, analytical examination of history with other students. They regularly worked together to conduct analysis, drew conclusions, and made meaning of the world/history through that examination of evidence. Often, when a student asked Mr. Finch a question during these times, he directed them to reengage with the social construction of knowledge responding with statements like, "ask your partner that question, I bet they know". Mr. Finch explicitly said during an interview that inquiry "lends itself to group work", which may not necessarily, on its

own, mean that he believes that inquiry lends itself to the social construction of knowledge, but in the context of the evidence such a belief was evident. Such group-based analysis occurred in more than half of the lessons during the two observed inquiries.

Thoughts on inquiry and critical creation of knowledge/curiosity

Mr. Finch used inquiry to engage students in analysis of historical evidence that actively honored their creation of knowledge and encouraged them to be curious. One last example from the data makes this clear, when students were looking at the experiences of children during the Industrial Revolution they looked at pictures of children at work. One student noted that there were no African American children in these pictures. Mr. Finch responded:

I don't want to say, 'well it's sharecropping and all those things'. 'Well, where were African Americans? Let's think about that, we can break down, together, what was going on in America. This is why the African Americans were in the southern farm land and were sharecropping and weren't in rural Pennsylvania coal mines, in these white towns. So, they can kind of come to those conclusions on their own rather than me saying well here's the answer.

In his response to this student he encouraged the student's curiosity by treating it as valid, honored the meaning making the student could make of the evidence, and did it all through the sort of student analysis that he has embraced as part of his inquiry-based practice.

Alternatively, these examples could be justified through an explanation that revolves around the idea that Mr. Finch would have conducted his classroom in such a way regardless of his use of inquiry, as part of the nature of who he was as a teacher. I have rejected this alternative explanation because in our first interview Mr. Finch described a much more traditional, lecture-based approach that he used in his classroom before he began using inquiry. What that looked

like was not something that this study can firmly establish since the data did not include evidence from that time period. However, based on the evidence that the study did contain, it seemed reasonable to think that the use of inquiry in Mr. Finch's classroom led to a meaningful embrace of critical pedagogical concepts like honoring student creation of knowledge and encouraging the curiosity that students have about their world.

Area 2: Multiple sources made multiple perspectives possible

It followed from logic that the aspect of inquiry that sought to have students examine multiple sources would naturally function in a similar way as the element of critical pedagogy that has students examining multiple perspectives. The C3 inquiry arc calls for practice that encourages an examination of multiple sources in order to conduct a meaningful analysis, and to be able to construct arguments based on evidence in response to open-ended questions (NCSS, 2013).

It is worth noting that the examination of multiple sources, on its own, is not the same thing as examining multiple points of view. It is entirely possible to engage in an examination of multiple sources of information, but still only examine a singular, often dominant, perspective. In Mr. Finch's instruction he often had students examine multiple sources, as a function of his focus on inquiry-based instruction, but that did not always coincide with his presentation of multiple points of view. The second inquiry interview and journal data demonstrate that Mr. Finch was more concerned with seeking out opportunities to incorporate more diverse perspectives in his instruction as a result of including a focus on a critical issue. However, observation and documentary data record that despite that desire he did not significantly increase the diversity of perspectives compared to the first inquiry.

Data regarding multiple sources and multiple perspectives in the study both occurred frequently across all sources of data. What is more, an examination of co-occurrence of data makes it equally clear that the two concepts not only pervasively appeared through the data, but that they regularly occurred together wherein the data showed them happening simultaneously. They did not always occur simultaneously, supporting my earlier claim that the theoretical must be tested within reality, and that is it worth examining the role of multiple sources not simply multiple points of view, but they did co-occur about one third to one half of the times that they occurred, which is a meaningful level of co-occurrence. This was found to be particularly true when the individual instances of co-occurrence were examined. The data also showed that the use of multiple sources and multiple perspectives occurred with equivalent frequency in both inquiries examined in this study. This indicated that this was a function of the nature of inquiry generally, rather than specifically inquiry when purposefully being used to address a critical issue.

One of the clearest examples of this from the data involved a lesson about the Pullman Strike, wherein Mr. Finch asked students to examine one of the events of the strike by examining two newspaper articles about the strike from the same day. One of the articles came from the *Chicago Times* and the other from the *Chicago Tribune*. The students then shared out what they had found regarding the depiction of the strike by each paper. Consistently, across the events examined, the students found that one of the papers portrayed the strikers positively and the other portrayed them negatively. The students were presented with two sources of evidence to analyze so that they could make meaning of that day of an historical event, but the two sources had obviously different perspectives on those events.

Similarly, students were presented with multiple sources one day, including political cartoons, text, and graphs, to address the question “How is greed good for America?” They were similarly asked to do the same on another day by examining multiple sources to answer the question “How is greed bad for America?” Mr. Finch explained that doing an investigation into not only multiple sources, but multiple perspectives, allowed students to draw larger conclusions about the impact that greed had on the country. For example, it allowed them not only to see why Andrew Carnegie said that greed was good, but it “allowed for the students to see a response” from those who were advocating for workers at the time period. He went on to describe the impact that this approach had, which is very much aligned to the goals of critical pedagogy, saying “[t]his really brought the discussion full circle and gave the students the ability to see how Carnegie saw more equity and benefits to greed while the working class saw more detriments.”

The practice of incorporating different sources from different perspectives was engrained in the classroom culture to the point that, in one lesson, when students were examining the Homestead Strike, the students noted that they were looking at the perspective of the company owner and the perspective of an activist reflecting on the events from several decades later. The students explicitly stated that in order to better understand the history being analyzed that it would be useful to examine the perspective of the workers who were on strike or the soldiers who were sent in to end the strike.

The data showed that Mr. Finch regularly incorporated both multiple sources and multiple points of view in his curriculum and reflected on how to do so regularly. He noted this several times, for example, explaining that he wished he had more perspectives from African Americans during Reconstruction for the students to examine. Also, in the way he made it a point to examine the experiences of women and children during the Industrial Revolution since

their investigation up to that point had mostly “focused on men.” He even explained the way he changed the lesson about women and children in the Industrial Revolution by seeking out more first-hand accounts of those experiences rather than the second hand or dominant perspective accounts he had used in the past.

It could be explained that the prevalence of multiple perspectives in the curriculum could have been inherent in the nature of Mr. Finch’s teaching rather than based on his use of inquiry. I have rejected this alternative explanation. There were many instances of the teacher engaging in direct, authored instruction throughout the inquiries, and data that its usage had been adapted from previous, non-inquiry-based instruction. These adapted materials contained no instances where such an approach to instruction included the examination of multiple perspectives. This led me to conclude that the use of inquiry, and the presentation of multiple sources involved in that use of inquiry, had a more direct impact on the presentation of multiple perspectives and the embrace of critical pedagogical elements inherent in doing so.

Area 3: Source analysis supported questioning sources of knowledge

Critical pedagogy literature explicitly calls for students to engage in questioning sources of knowledge. To not take a source as an authority, instead to examine it and question its validity and its biases. This was related to the concept of multiple perspectives, in that any source of information could be seen as fallible and biased, because it was always described through the lens of the author. As such, critical pedagogy scholars believe that students should be questioning the sources of knowledge. They should examine the context for the sources, and determine reliability, based on their own judgement and experiences. The *C3 Framework’s* inquiry arc, and inquiry generally, suggest that students should engage in a process of source analysis to question the evidence with which they were confronted. The *C3 Framework*

specifically states that students should examine sources and determine the context in which they were written, in order to have better analyzed their contents.

Engaging in an analysis of sources of the sort that inquiry literature calls for may not necessarily involve students complicating the validity of those sources for critical reasons. Especially as it pertains to questioning the sources around themes of power and oppression. However, when students are engaged in such analysis there was an implication that critical questioning of sources was part of the process particularly when critical themes were obvious. There was no reason such themes could not still be examined, even in such situations where the students had not developed a critical consciousness towards such examination. This study found that, in practical terms, the theoretical connection between analysis of sources and the critical questioning of sources played out in meaningful ways. The data demonstrated that questioning sources of knowledge occurred throughout all of the data sources, and that it co-occurred, meaningfully, with the examination of multiple perspectives, as well as with authentic student analysis. It was also seen that questioning sources of knowledge specifically increased in the second inquiry, which was purposefully designed to address a critical issue, implying that adding that level of intentional critical focus to an inquiry may have increased its occurrence.

Throughout the study students were explicitly shown that it was not only acceptable, but appropriate, to question and complicate the sources of knowledge of which they were presented. Students were asked questions like “Do you trust this source? Why or why not?” They were told, about sources “I’m not saying that’s accurate, but it’s what they thought.” At one time, while discussing the KKK one student noted that they had seen an image of the President of the United States with members of the KKK. To which the teacher responded, “Look at where the picture is from...that’s not a trustworthy source, so this would need greater research...if someone wants to

do that tonight....” By calling out the source as untrustworthy, but encouraging students to continue to conduct analysis of the claim, Mr. Finch demonstrated a process of questioning sources. Rather than dismissing the source, he sought to have students engage in a process of complicating and questioning sources as a function of his inquiry-based approach.

When the students examined the experience of African Americans during Reconstruction the following exchange occurred:

Student: “It says right here they aren’t free.”

Mr. Finch: “That’s one person’s opinion”.

Given the fact that the students were examining the question “Were African Americans free during Reconstruction?” and that one of their sources explicitly stated that they were not, it is interesting that the students did not simply write the answer that was in the source. Rather, they continued to examine all the provided sources. This indicates that students were in a habit of questioning sources instead of accepting information at face value. Unless it had been established throughout the year that sources of knowledge should be questioned, which Mr. Finch explained as being the case.

When students were examining a website about lynching events in their home state, Mr. Finch made it a point to tell them not to simply trust the summaries of the lynching events provided on the website. Rather, he called on them to read the summaries, but then question them and confirm their validity by going to the primary sources about the event. “They [the authors] have their own lens...you can have yours.” He also called on them to question sources in the way he presented them with multiple perspectives on the same topic, such as having students read Carnegie’s explanation of why greed is good, and then having them examine someone else’s response to Carnegie explaining why Carnegie was wrong. Both of these sources

cannot be true, and so students had to engage in a process of questioning the sources, and making their own meaning from them.

Other such examples of this included examining the Pullman Strike from two sources that regularly disagreed with each other about the meaning of the events. They also examined an account about the Homestead Strike and had a class discussion about the source that was written 39 years later by someone who was around, but not part of the events being described, and was a self-proclaimed activist. In none of the cases were the students told to dismiss the sources they were presented with, but they were actively encouraged to question those sources and come to conclusions about where they stood on the believability of what the sources said. For example, he explained that, “It’s okay for them to say that Frick is believable but when they’re saying that they are saying it with the idea that he has this reason to be biased, but can be more believable.”

Mr. Finch described establishing the appropriateness of this questioning of sources saying, “I always have them think about sourcing. At the start of the year we look at bias and talk about it consistently and stress it throughout the year.” He later explained it another way, further explaining why he thought this was an important practice in his inquiry,

Everything we do with sourcing, they should be able to question, and I want them to question. When they go home or on Facebook or Instagram or something I want them to be able to say this is real or not it’s real.

It was feasible to think that encouraging students to question sources may have also been an inherent part of Mr. Finch’s classroom practice. However, in a traditional classroom he would have been a primary, authored source of knowledge, and he described his previous practice as being that sort of practice. Further, he explicitly explained that he felt students were justified in

questioning sources, even he was the source, which seemed to be rooted in his use of inquiry in his classroom, based on his description of the approach.

Area 4: Inquiry and a critical approach built on each other

The last way this study demonstrated that inquiry encouraged critical pedagogy was actually a discovery within the evidence that moved in both directions. It was described by Mr. Finch that he believed that using inquiry not only made him better at addressing critical issues, but, also, that addressing critical issues made his use of inquiry stronger. Unlike the other findings in this study, this finding, being entirely about the beliefs of Mr. Finch, were based on his observations and reflections, as communicated in interviews and journals. Such data could be confirmed by his actions as seen in documents and observations, however, and in this case none of the data from those sources contradicted what he said in the interviews and journals.

Mr. Finch said, for example, that inquiry enables a more meaningful examination of critical issues because of its investigative nature. “The investigative aspect of it allows them to investigate the critical issue.” He goes on to describe that a more traditional approach to social studies would make a weak way for students to engage in the examination of a critical issue,

If you’re looking at the social injustice issue and seeing it as strictly the historical stand and deliver social studies class the kids are going to get what you want them to get and they won’t be able to formulate their own opinion on it.

He also described that engaging students in an inquiry-based analysis of social studies had helped his students recognize the validity of both their analysis and the analysis of others, even if they disagreed, so long as it is rooted in evidence.

The reverse, however, was true as well, according to Mr. Finch. Not only did inquiry make the examination of a critical issue more meaningful, but addressing a critical issue, Mr.

Finch believed, improved the quality of his implementation of inquiry. “[F]ocusing on this critical issue in this time period helped us narrow down where we were looking in our articles and our lessons” and,

Using terms like social injustice and equity consistently throughout the inquiry...by the end students were able to get what equity is and what social injustice is. That adds on other connections. Rather than just focusing on the compelling questions and supporting questions now they’re focusing on these important topics and tying them back into that. Just brought in this other layer for them to look at and build on.

These quotes demonstrate ways that Mr. Finch described how purposefully addressing a critical issue impacted the way he used inquiry and improved the quality of his inquiry-based instruction.

Theme 3: Pedagogies Overlapped Between Inquiry and Critical Pedagogy

One of the more interesting findings of this study was the existence of overlapping pedagogies. “Overlapping pedagogy” is the term I use to describe the practices and methods that Mr. Finch used in his classroom that were not specific elements of either the C3 inquiry arc nor critical pedagogy, or were not a case of one practice encouraging the other. These were areas where the evidence revealed methods that built up both the use of inquiry and critical pedagogy in ways that brought them closer together, increasing the degree to which they overlapped. The data in this study found four specific overlapping pedagogies that served this role in the work of Mr. Finch. First, was that the use of relevancy and rapport brought the two pedagogies together. The second overlapping pedagogy was found in the efforts Mr. Finch made towards establishing or appealing to a sense of community, be it in the way he encouraged students to support each

other or appealing to a sense of duty to a larger community. The third overlapping pedagogy referred to the use of discussion and collaboration as a means of engaging not only the communication of ideas but of a collaborative or social construction of knowledge. Lastly, Mr. Finch made appeals to empathy, be it to other people around them or to people in history or society. Effort was made to encourage students to practice such empathy in ways that both enhanced their analysis of content but also helped build a sense of critical consciousness.

Overlapping pedagogy 1: Relevancy and rapport

The C3 inquiry arc encourages teachers to make curriculum relevant. This is also embedded in, and supported by, elements of critical pedagogy literature, particularly through the Freirean conceptions of problem-posing education (Freire, 2000). This was an area where inquiry and critical pedagogy overlapped. Mr. Finch, however tended to take a broader conception of relevancy into account. The way the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy considered relevancy meant that students would be engaging in an investigation of topics and problems in their world that affect them. To Mr. Finch, any instance where the content was connected to students was relevant. This included problem-posing conceptions, and included content that was connected to the student's lived experiences, their culture(s), and the impact the content had on the world around them. Further it was tied to a concept of building rapport between teachers and students that often occurred together. As such, I have decided to discuss relevancy and rapport as a combined overlapping pedagogy.

Throughout both inquiries Mr. Finch put considerable effort into making his curriculum and instruction relevant to the lives of his students and into building rapport with his students, often, but not always, through relevancy. While relevance and rapport are not the same thing, they were found to be related in this study. This was because one of the ways that Mr. Finch built

rapport with students was to show what appeared to be sincere interest in their lives and the things that impacted them. If curriculum was designed to connect with the lives of students, and the things that impact them, that was what was meant by relevance. Therein lied the connection between relevancy and rapport. Certainly, curriculum was sometimes made relevant in ways that did not specifically build rapport between the students and the teacher, and equally so, it was true that some of the things that were used to build rapport did not serve efforts towards relevance. They overlapped often enough, however, that it is worth discussing these two concepts together as an overlapping pedagogy, in order to illuminate the ways that they sometimes functioned in tandem as one pedagogy. This was not to say that when they worked separately they did not, also, serve as overlap pedagogies, especially in the case of relevancy.

Relevancy was an aspect of Mr. Finch's teaching that appeared strongly across the data. Instances of building rapport occurred less frequently, but were also found in every data source. A co-occurrence analysis showed that efforts towards creating relevancy were strongly related to expression of critical consciousness and respecting student experiences. It was less strongly associated with rapport, student analysis, and honoring student creation of knowledge. It also pointed to an increase in engagement from the students. Meanwhile, rapport, interestingly, most significantly co-occurred with both the critical element of respecting student experiences and the anti-critical element of disrespecting such experiences.

Relevancy as connection to modern life

Mr. Finch built relevancy and rapport into his practice in several ways, such as encouraging student analysis that focused on how the history under examination informed the students about modern life or was still a part of modern life. This sort of creation of relevancy could be seen in the data where he mentioned that he wanted students to connect the history they

were learning to modern life, saying, “[I] urged students to think about connections to current-day during their small discussion.” He also often asked students questions about their lives in order to hook them into the content. For example, he described his introduction to the Industrial Revolution by explaining, “To introduce the new unit, the students engaged in a class discussion about when technology was good and when technology was bad for us.” It was also seen that he often would ask students to make comparisons between the history they were learning and current events of which they are likely to be aware. For example, he described, “We talked about sensitivity in America and we looked at the governor from Virginia and we talked about the pictures of blackface and we looked at UNC’s yearbook pictures from 1979 and we talked about the blackface pictures.”, Another example of this is when he said, “They discussed if we are providing the same freedom ideals from the Reconstruction time period to people who immigrate from Central America.” This was an approach to relevancy that not only connected history to modern life, but also was being done in a way that targeted issues of justice and equity.

Relevancy through content choices

Mr. Finch also built relevancy into his instruction through the choices about content that he presented to the students, either focusing it in such a way as to address topics that were specifically relevant to the interests of the students, their lives, or were local to where they lived. You can see this method of creating relevancy in instances such as when he said,

The new inquiry we’re talking about monopolies and corporations it’s important that they understand that AT&T and Spectrum were just able to merge because the government approved it...they were worked about the monopoly process. And Fox and Disney just merged and there was talk about that. There’s Dow and

another chemical company merging. So, understanding that these things can still happen today, and “That’s why I tried tying it into current events which is why the new unit ties into current events.” He further included relevancy in the curriculum in an analysis of pictures of protests at a Confederate monument that was near where the school was located. He had the students conduct an analysis and examination of maps, on two different occasions, specifically showing North Carolina, in one instance illustrating the location of modern hate groups in the state, and in the other, the location of lynching events that took place from Reconstruction to more modern times.

Relevancy through questions

Lastly, Mr. Finch sought to build relevancy into his instruction with the sorts of questions he asked, especially the compelling questions. When discussing the compelling question for the Reconstruction unit he said, “I like questions with students that they can connect to. So, they can connect to rebuilding something, things falling part”. He continued saying “Reconstruction rebuilding America, we can look at the politics, we can look at the race relations, and then kind of connect it to today to see if there’s any lasting effects.” When discussing how he developed his compelling questions he explained, “the compelling question I want to be as relevant to the students as possible.” Through these statements Mr. Finch described his efforts to build compelling questions that expressly appealed to a sense of relevancy with the students. At the least, he intentionally used language in questions that he thought students would connect with, such as using the word “rebuilding” to discuss Reconstruction. He was not confident that the students would find the concept of reconstructing something to be relevant, but he believed that they could connect with the idea of rebuilding.

Relevancy/rapport and critical consciousness

One of the ways that it was seen that building relevancy into the inquiry overlapped between inquiry and critical pedagogy was the way that it tended to lead to moments of development towards critical consciousness. This could be seen in situations when the students were drawing connections between the Freedmen's Bureau during Reconstruction to homeless shelters and food banks today. They were historicizing modern issues that the students considered to be relevant. Similarly, comparisons were made between the lien system of Reconstruction with people struggling with credit card debt, descriptions of the growing divide between the rich and the poor in the early 1900s that continue in today's socio-economic gaps, Jim Crow voting issues to present day voting rights discussions, the continued existence and relevancy of the KKK, and immigration discussions in the Industrial Revolution to modern discussions of immigration. All of these instances were recorded in the data of this case and all of them involved efforts to connect inequity and injustices of the past to modern inequity and injustices in a way that built or recognized an intentionality of critical consciousness.

Mr. Finch summarized the idea of developing critical consciousness, as it related to relevancy and rapport, in a few important statements. In reference to the first inquiry he said:

The biggest thing is trying to connect this period of Reconstruction to issues we are having today in our society and looking back at things that occurred in the 1800s and early 1900s, how they impacted people, how they would feel about that today.

In this explanation he not only recognized the importance of addressing that the past was relevant, in examining how it impacted people, emphasizing a sort of empathy that helped

students develop a critical consciousness, but there was also an implied historicizing that took place when such connections were made. Further, he also stated, later, about the second inquiry,

Just like a lot of things historically, it's something that you can tie back and look at why things are that way today. So, in that time period it really created a divide between the rich and the poor and that divide trickles down to some of the issues we still have today, racially and socioeconomically in our country.

In this statement he described that his efforts towards relevancy were tied to an effort to historicize modern issues of equity, in the exact way that the development and use of critical consciousness is described in literature about critical pedagogy.

Relevancy/rapport and respecting student experience

Emphasizing relevancy in his inquiry, and building rapport, was also connected to the critical concept of having respect for student experiences. For example, when having students engaged in inquiry-based analysis of sources he described how each student would take their own path in making meaning of the evidence. He described that as a result of having students connect historical events with current events they would come to different results based on their individual experiences. The very nature of engaging students in inquiry-based analysis while respecting their experiences led to an honoring of their creation of knowledge. He also described instances where if, for example, an African American student sought to add to discussions of historic racism by sharing their own experiences this was an opportunity he embraced.

He regularly invited students to share their experiences that connected to the relevancy he had built into the curriculum. For example, he asked students to discuss the idea of re-building friendship after fights they had been in and compared it to Reconstruction after the Civil War. Likewise, he showed a recent news clip about a man who was, in the past, hanged from a local

tree, and still had the scars. When discussing that video with the students he welcomed the opportunity to have students share stories about their experiences around that tree.

Respecting student experiences did not always take the form of heavy topics, sometimes it was also lighter issues that connected to the efforts to build rapport with students. Often this was in the form of connecting history to student interests and recognizing the value of their passions. When one student discussed having experience with a movie called “*The Help*” that they connected to elements of Reconstruction, Mr. Finch recognized the value of this contribution and encouraged the student to speak more about the subject. Similarly, when a student discussed loving the movie/musical “*Newsies*” he built on that student experience and encouraged that student to share what they knew, and incorporated her interest into the curriculum a few days later by having all of the students examine pictures and stories from real newsies in the Industrial Revolution.

In some instances, his efforts to connect student experiences with the learning while focusing on relevancy did not involve students in the room. If he knew of relevant experiences from students who the students in the room knew, he would often discuss those as well. Sometimes this was in the form of sharing stories with later class periods from students who had shared them earlier in the day, such as with stories around the local tree hanging, or sharing a story that a student had discussed about the inventor of radar. But sometimes it did not involve sharing the experiences of students in the class, but students that Mr. Finch knew from previous years in the school, such as a student who currently lived on an old sharecropping farm, or when discussing the idea of the decisions that early 1900 business leaders made and compared it to a former student who built up his own landscaping business while in high school. In some instances, student experiences may not have been understood by everyone, and so he created

experiential activities to create experiences that were then integrated into the learning. Such as when he had the students participate in an assembly line activity for 15 minutes and then spent much of the remainder of the class period discussing with the students what it was like to go through that experience, and how that was relevant to the topic being studied.

Occasionally, respect for student experiences came in the form of using references to the culture or lives of the students in a way that acknowledged value towards the academic work students were doing. For example, when discussing the way companies in the Industrial Revolution would raise prices, he compared it to the modern, popular brand Supreme. When a student asked a question about a metaphor he made between parking cars to block traffic and the Pullman Strike he compared the hypothetical scenario the student described as being like the popular video game series *Grand Theft Auto*. When a student joined a group project after missing a day he told the student that their contribution would be valuable due to his lived experiences, explaining that the group he was joining was creating a restaurant and needed “a farmer’s perspective...you live on a farm.”.

It was also worth noting that these lighter moments of rapport and relevance building were counter-pointed by a few notable moments when he used such a light-hearted approach in a way that disrespected student experience. There were not many, but occasionally he would use humor to build rapport in a way that was sarcastic and/or at the expense of a student. For example, comparing a figure in a political cartoon to one of the students, describing how something in history did not work and how it was similar to what happens when another student did things, or telling a third student that she did not learn after she was leaning out of her desk to pick up a paper off the floor after having just fallen out of her desk doing something similar. These moments did not appear to be intended to be mean or cruel, and the students all seemed to

take them with the humor that was intended. I have no reason to think that any of them felt bad about what happened, but I also did not dive further into how the student's experienced those moments, primarily due to the limitations of the study. Regardless, whether or not the students felt that their experiences were being disrespected, there is no doubt that these moments of humor both built rapport between the teacher and some students, and also disrespected the experience of some students, possibly doing both with the same students.

One last way he specifically worked to build rapport in a way that connected to relevancy, and established himself in the classroom as a contributor, was by sharing personal anecdotes from his lived experiences that were connected to the learning. He shared stories about getting his first credit card, overdrawing on the account, and going into debt. He repeatedly discussed growing up reading a local newspaper and not realizing it was biased until much later in life when he discovered there was another local newspaper that had an opposing bias. He also shared the story about recently discovering that his own great grandfather was an apparent member of the KKK. These moments of sharing stories from his personal life, and connecting it to the learning, established rapport with the students as they got to know their teacher in more intimate ways, but also built relevancy, in as much as Mr. Finch was considered a contributor to the class, not just an authority in it, and these instances illustrated relevancy between the content and his life.

Relevancy/rapport and student analysis and engagement

When student analysis was combined with relevancy and rapport a greater sense of student engagement occurred in Mr. Finch's classroom. As he put it, when all these things come together the students "get much more excited. One thousand times more excited...". What is more, he argued that:

They're going to remember 1000 times over information like that because it's in their backyard. It connects to them. It doesn't have to be North Carolina, if it connects to them in another way...if it's kids...if kids are going through something.

Combining student analysis with relevancy and rapport took the form of the integration of current events and the reflective efforts to historicize current issues.

He also used references that were relevant to the students, that not only built rapport and respect their experiences, as discussed in the last section, but also in a way that increased engagement from the students. For example, when he described a metaphor for the Pullman Strike, Mr. Finch described the class as being workers in his train company. He referred to it by the name Thomas the Train Company, which led to a nostalgic buzz and visible excitement. This was indicative of a high level of engagement from the students, due to the reference to a children's brand that was popular when they were younger.

Not only did engaging in such relevant analysis lead to greater engagement that could be seen in the reactions of the students, it was also true that he thought students engaged in deeper and more meaningful analysis as a result of this combination of relevance, rapport, and analysis. He explained, "I really see those students dive in deep when it comes to current events and they're able to make connections that I'm surprised their pulling these out and relating them to different things." To highlight the sort of deep analysis he saw from the students in this regard he gave the example from the first day of the second inquiry, wherein he asked students to describe positives and negatives to the way technology impacted them. He said "We discussed connectivity to the world, overconsumption of technology, and medical technology just to name a few" and expressed how impressed he was with the depth of the responses, having expected

more superficial answers around things like smartphones and video game systems that the students more regularly interacted with.

Relevancy/rapport and honoring student creation of knowledge

The final way that a focus on relevancy and rapport helped create overlap between inquiry and critical pedagogy was in the way it related to the critical concept of honoring student creation of knowledge. When a student compared the *Chicago Times* and *Chicago Tribune* coverage of the Pullman Strike to modern day “CNN and Fox” (a connection Mr. Finch had made, himself, in the previous class period) Mr. Finch was quick to acknowledge and praise the student for making the connection. When a student asked about the price of the Model T and the way that it changed as a result of the assembly line he did not dismiss it as irrelevant to the point he was trying to explore. He recognized that it was relevant to that student’s interest, and probably the interests of others, and so he encouraged the student to not only research the answer but then share with the class and make meaning of what was learned. When he selected sources for students to analyze he did not simply select them based on what made the point he wanted made, or was easiest to find, he selected sources to which students could make relevant connections while making meaning out of history through their study. He explained the approach to using relevant sources when he said “I’d rather have one [a source] that is going to be more impactful to them, and they can make connections and see how it impacts us, here.”

Overlapping pedagogy 2: Community

Another overlapping pedagogy revealed in this study was that of community building. While building a sense of community is an important part of some pedagogies within the critical field, and is discussed in Freire’s discussion of dialogue (2000), it is not a fundamental part of literature around critical pedagogy. In this overlapping pedagogy the evidence revealed Mr.

Finch's efforts to create a sense of community within the classroom. While not being part of inquiry or critical pedagogy, appeals to community were revealed to be a pedagogy that facilitated both pedagogical approaches, increasing the overlap between them. There were appeals to a classroom community, as well as appeals to other communities that the students identified with, such as school, state, or national communities. The appeal to community did not emerge throughout all of the data sources, it is worth noting, and so while I have identified it as likely having an impact in increasing the overlap between inquiry and critical pedagogy, it is a limited argument by the lack of data source triangulation. Some of this may be explained by the fact that it was an unexpected, emergent theme that came to light later in the study, and so was not included in journal prompts, nor followed up on in two of the three interviews. It did co-occur meaningfully with the social construction of knowledge element that is a fundamental part of critical pedagogy, but due to not meeting the requirements regarding verification I did not consider this finding to be strong.

In terms of a classroom community, Mr. Finch made efforts to instill such a sense of community in his students. For example, he explained to them, at the start of the year, that the classroom belonged to them, not to him. That it is "our classroom" not his classroom, and he reinforced this regularly. For example, he asked students to help clean up the classroom when they had finished their work. He did this after an assembly line activity, when he asked students who had finished writing their reflections about the activity to help clean up the mess, even if they were not part of the group who made the mess.

This sense of community in the classroom brought inquiry and critical pedagogy closer together in as much as it helped facilitate student-centered analysis as called for in literature on inquiry, particularly through collaboration, and built a sense of critical ideas around the social

construction of knowledge, as described in critical pedagogy literature. In interviews Mr. Finch explained that he wanted the classroom community to be such that it encouraged a collaborative environment. That students could hear each other's ideas and not dismiss or attack them, but rather honor them and discuss them, even while they "hold each other accountable". This was, he explained, addressed in his classroom from the very start of the year and reinforced throughout the course. He described presenting three rules to the students at the start of the year, and one of them was "you don't have to believe what others are [saying], but you have to listen". There were other appeals to such a sense of community when he specifically asked an off-task student to "support" their partner, whereas another teacher may have simply told the student to get back to work. Another instance was when the class was engaging in a discussion and a student started sharing an answer without being called on. Mr. Finch addressed this when he said, "Only one person gets to talk at a time...respect people...listen to each other. Did [the student's name] raise their hand?" and "If you've already spoken, it's not that I don't want your opinions...but we need to hear from others." This indicated that the students were welcome to participate and that their contribution was valued, but that someone else needed to be given the respect of being heard as well. In these ways Mr. Finch created a sense of classroom community that facilitated aspects of both inquiry and critical pedagogy despite such a sense of community building not being part of either pedagogies.

The other sort of appeal to community that was revealed in Mr. Finch's practice was an appeal to a larger community. This was seen repeatedly through the data in a way that encouraged the development of critical consciousness while spurring the students to carefully consider, and take ownership of, their analysis. While students were creating their own monopolies as part of the Industrial Revolution unit, Mr. Finch asked several students/groups

“What would you do with your company that makes it better for the world?” Another example of bridging the gap between analysis and critical consciousness through an appeal to community involved when a White student said that they “Understand what racism would look like for an African American and what they would feel”. In response Mr. Finch made an appeal to empathy (which will appear later in this section) and to a sense of community to challenge the student’s analysis. He did this by calling on them to recognize how much they may not understand about the experiences of their peers, while addressing issues of privilege in a way that can help develop a sense of critical consciousness. Even as Mr. Finch sought to incorporate a sense of collaborative creation of knowledge he did so from a sense of a responsibility to a larger community.

If you don’t collaborate on these topics, and you’re not collaborating when you get people to think about different ideas in inquiry, then the students aren’t going to be able to collaborate when it comes to the real world and they’re asked a question about A, B, or C. They’re going to think ‘it’s A, and there’s nothing else, and I don’t want to hear about why you think it’s B’. So civil discourse goes out the window....

Mr. Finch believed in a larger responsibility to a national and societal community to engage in such practice towards civil discourse, and he expressed that in interviews and journals, and demonstrated consistency with the idea in his instruction.

Overlapping pedagogy 3: Discussion and collaboration

Discussion and collaboration made up another significant overlapping pedagogy that Mr. Finch used in ways that built up the use of inquiry and critical pedagogy. Like relevancy and rapport these were, in many respects, two separate things. However, the vision that Mr. Finch

had for discussion was very much ingrained in his ideas about collaboration. As a result, they often functioned together as a single pedagogy in his practice. Discussion and collaboration were not part of any description of essential elements of inquiry in the ways that Mr. Finch used it, nor does it get explicitly tied to critical pedagogy, beyond mentions of dialogue, which is explicitly called out as being different than discussion (Freire, 2000). I describe the role of discussion and collaboration with inquiry purposefully, because the C3 inquiry arc does call for collaboration within Dimension 4 (NCSS, 2013), but Mr. Finch described it more as a function of student analysis than as a form of communication at the end of the process of conducting an inquiry that the *C3 Framework* describes. Despite the fact that not all of Mr. Finch's conceptions of the role of discussion and collaboration appeared in either inquiry nor critical pedagogy, he engaged in using these pedagogies in a way that overlapped between an inquiry-based focus on student analysis and arguments from evidence with critical pedagogy concepts like the incorporation of multiple perspectives, honoring student creation of knowledge, social construction of knowledge, and in some instances, encouraged student curiosity.

It was seen how much discussion and collaboration were intertwined in Mr. Finch's vision of his classroom when the data was examined. He described discussion as an opportunity to "collaborate and hear the opinions of others" and he stated that he liked discussion because it gave students a chance to hear from each other, and that he enjoys such "collaboration, because I feel like they learn more from each other than their going to learn from me". Discussion was a form of collaboration, to Mr. Finch, and by treating it in this way it revealed some of the ways this pedagogical approach created overlap between inquiry and critical pedagogy. Discussion, in this form, was a pervasive element of Mr. Finch's instruction, having appeared throughout all sources of data and through both inquiries repeatedly. A co-occurrence analysis demonstrated

just how much discussion was used in conjunction with critical concepts, like multiple perspectives and social construction of knowledge, as well as inquiry-based concepts such as arguments from evidence and student-centered analysis, and all of those co-occurrences were strong and meaningful.

Discussion as analysis and social construction of knowledge

Mr. Finch regularly used discussion as a means of engaging students in a form of inquiry-based analysis, often in a collaborative analytical process, and in doing so engaged in the use of elements of critical pedagogy, as well. He reported that discussion was important to him because it allowed students to encounter the perspectives of other students, and that they drew conclusions from what they heard. Here he was engaging in student-centered analysis in a way that engaged in a social construction of knowledge. He did this so his students could “learn to hear what other people are thinking”, so they could reflect upon and “debrief” an activity to determine what it meant, and so they could collaboratively determine the ways in which the content was relevant to their lives. He wanted them to engage in an analysis of these discussions as an examination of multiple perspectives, understanding that other “points are valid, they don’t have to be the only valid points being discussed. If someone has a different opinion it’s just as good if they can back it up with evidence”. In this quote he was connecting the practice of collaboration/discussion into an inquiry-based focus on developing arguments that are supported by evidence.

Discussion and arguments from evidence

For Mr. Finch discussion was not just about hearing other people’s perspectives, it was also about communicating ideas based on having engaged in the inquiry process, which is one of the dimensions of the C3 inquiry arc (NCSS, 2013). He liked having them engage in such a

discussion because he liked, “Letting the students get their perspective out in front of the class as much as they want or can.” Adding to that point the discussion from the previous overlapping pedagogy, the appeal to community, Mr. Finch wanted everyone to not only have a chance to speak but to be heard and respected when they do share their ideas. Through this process of engaging in student analysis via discussion, wherein arguments were communicated and supported through evidence, Mr. Finch also brought his practice closer to critical pedagogy. In the data examined in this study, a stance towards providing opportunities for students to engage in the social construction of knowledge was obvious, but so too was the idea of honoring student creation of knowledge. Further, not only did he honor student creation of knowledge, but he expected that the students would also honor each other’s creation of knowledge. It was shown that one of the primary reasons he engaged in this practice was to expose students to multiple perspectives, in a way that a more traditional examination of multiple sources, as discussed in the previous theme, may not. He described his approach saying:

Collaboration is something they’re always going to need, and we’ll always strive for. I think it will make them better citizens. We fight a lot in America, we argue a lot. We don’t listen a lot in America. And when we collaborate it’s collaborating to win rather than collaborating to hear other people’s ideas and find solutions.

According to Mr. Finch, collaboration would make his students better Americans and would address social failings in modern society. One of the primary ways Mr. Finch had students collaborate was through both class-wide and small group discussions. Discussion such as this did not come from the ideas of critical pedagogy, nor did it come from inquiry, but it was probably the overlapping pedagogy that was the most prevalent in Mr. Finch’s classroom.

Overlapping pedagogy 4: Appeal to empathy

The last overlapping pedagogy found was through appeals to empathy. While a second order skill in social studies (Lee, 2005), it is not an element of the C3 inquiry arc. However, when used within an inquiry framework, as was analyzed in this case, it was seen that incorporating such an appeal to empathy brought the use of inquiry closer to critical pedagogy, particularly in the way that it connected to concepts of critical consciousness. There was a degree to which this made sense, since critical consciousness should, logically, entail a development of empathy in order to examine issues of equity and justice, particularly as they apply to others. The appeal to empathy was found throughout all the sources of data and co-occurred most often with the development or use of critical conscious. What is more, in the second inquiry, which was purposefully focused on a critical issue, instances in the data of both appeals to empathy and the use or development of critical consciousness increased, indicating that the purposeful focus of an inquiry on a critical issue corresponded to an increase in instances of Mr. Finch making appeals to empathy.

Much of Mr. Finch's focus in the second inquiry had to do with wanting students to understand not just the events of history, but how those events impacted the people at the time. This was a direct call for empathy. Since the inquiry focused on the divide between the rich and the poor, it was primarily focused on understanding the experiences of people who have largely been marginalized in history, the workers and the poor. Mr. Finch noted things like, "Students did a great job analyzing the industrial growth of the time and inferring how it impacted the different social classes of the time." and, "rather than just looking at the events of creating the assembly line or monopolies, how did monopolies impact these people." He also reported,

I wanted the students to be able to recognize the differences in the ways of life in that time period. To really pull in this is how this group of people lived, this is how this group of people lived...and kind of be able to understand why they were living and why they were impacted that way.

These are a few examples of this, but it was pervasive throughout the data, particularly in the second inquiry. What is more, he described that in the past, students were largely confronted with the perspectives of those in power, but that through this approach students were more focused on building empathy with the marginalized groups in the content.

He made these appeals to empathy in different ways. In some cases, he required empathy by establishing an issue for students to debate, and then required them to take the side that they did not agree with, forcing them to consider the perspectives of those they thought are wrong. Other times he asked them to reflect on their work, such as when they were creating their own monopolies, and he prompted students, repeatedly, to consider how their actions, as owners of a monopoly, might have impacted the workers and the consumers. When he had the conversation with the student about the experiences of African Americans with racism he explicitly called on the student to empathize with experiences of others who were different than themselves. In all of these cases Mr. Finch made his appeal to empathy in a way that simultaneously sought to deepen student analysis, but also complicate that analysis in ways consistent with the development of critical consciousness. The fact that such an appeal to empathy was something Mr. Finch believed was essential to his instruction was not a surprise, in light of the statement he made about the second inquiry wherein he said “building those skills up, where they can empathize, is the goal”. If the goal of the inquiry-based unit was for students to build up empathy-centered skills, even if that was not explicitly stated to the students, as discussed in a previous theme, it

was no surprise that this pedagogical effort played into building up the overlap between inquiry and critical pedagogy in Mr. Finch's classroom.

Theme 4: Obstacles Impeded Critical Implementation

The last finding discovered through this study regarded the obstacles that Mr. Finch faced toward his implementation of inquiry-based curriculum to address a critical issue. Obstacles to implementation were a set of data that was explicitly sought out by this study, and in some ways was an opposite finding to the previous one that centered on how inquiry encouraged critical pedagogy. Some of these obstacles were expected, and some were not anticipated, but nonetheless were revealed in the analysis of the data. Regardless of if the examination of emergent themes led to unanticipated insights, or if the insights were expected, there is value in these findings, because thinking that certain things might serve as obstacles is different than knowing it to be true.

Obstacle 1: Development of critical consciousness

In order to engage in critical work, such as teaching a course with the intentionality and methods described in literature about critical pedagogy, there must be a practice of deep, institutional, systemic, and historical analysis of extant issues regarding equity and justice, or raising critical consciousness. While this study revealed ways that the work of Mr. Finch, and his approach to using inquiry to address a critical issue, absolutely implemented a form of teaching that gave his students opportunities to practice the development of a critical understanding of the world that could be called critical consciousness, there was also revealed in the study, evidence that a lack of critical consciousness, on both the part of the teacher and on the part of the students, served as an obstacle towards making the academic work being more capable of addressing critical issues.

While critical consciousness was one of the elements of critical pedagogy that was strongly demonstrated across the data sources, there were moments where its lack meant that the inquiry work being done was not as critical as it could have been. This lack of critical consciousness came to the forefront as an obstacle in the second interview when Mr. Finch was asked to explain why he did not make the first inquiry more critical. His response was that he "didn't think of it in Reconstruction, because I already had stuff that I can use in Reconstruction." This served to highlight how important critical consciousness was in the development of critical work in education. Reconstruction was a topic of study wherein a critical examination could be easier than many other topics, because it lent itself so well to the study of unequal treatment, based on race, and investigation into some of the historic foundations of modern racial oppression. While evidence of work towards or through critical consciousness is apparent throughout that first inquiry it was more evident in the second inquiry, and the Industrial Revolution is not a topic as inherently primed for the utilization of critical consciousness in its examination. This spoke to the impact that simply being intentional about addressing a critical issue had in an inquiry, but also spoke to the obstacle that a lack of critical consciousness presented as an obstacle. If Mr. Finch had not been asked, through the course of this study, to reflect on his practice and address a critical issue, he likely, would have continued to use curriculum that represented the status quo rather than challenging his curriculum to better address critical efforts, based on his explanations in interviews and journals.

Mr. Finch definitely appeared to be a teacher who saw injustice in the world, and recognized historical and systemic roots behind it. He appeared to not be used to applying critical consciousness to the level that was asked of him in the second inquiry to his curriculum development, however. To this point, in the final interview, Mr. Finch was asked why, in the

second inquiry, he focused entirely on the division between the rich and the poor when there were clearly issues of racial inequity that were brought up by students. He recognized that there was a racial divide that was part of the inequity of the Industrial Revolution as well, but struggled to explain why it was not discussed. The students were simply tired of examining issues of race after their previous units on the Civil War and Reconstruction, he explained, and so he wanted to give them a break from it.

I think focusing on the rich and the poor, and not looking at White people or African Americans or anyone in between, blue, green, orange, I think just looking at here's how it's affecting these rich and poor is great and then when you can tie it together at the end with how it's impacting people today you can see how it impacts the rich and the poor but that also there's that racial divide that comes into it. No reason we didn't talk about it, just looking more at that rich and poor factors.

This demonstrates that Mr. Finch is aware of the racial inequity tied up in the economic inequity he was focused on, but the evidence suggests that not being used to using his critical consciousness to reflect on his curriculum development proved to be an obstacle towards making his inquiry work more critical by addressing an inequity that was beyond the focus he sought to apply to the unit.

Mr. Finch also identified a lack of critical consciousness in his students to be an obstacle towards a more critical investigation through his inquiry units. When asked about what the greatest obstacle he faced towards helping his students understand the critical issue being studied he responded:

We are in a charter school. Where we're located we have students who don't know want as much as some other students in the area. I feel like sometimes they take that for granted. Not on purpose, but this is what their normal life is like. They don't realize that this is not what different parts of our state and country are like. You're going to have a lot larger of the divide of this injustice, especially socioeconomically. So, when we talk about how much people were making an hour it's hard for them to grasp this concept a lot...they know that they live in a nice area and their parents drive nice cars. People didn't have cars and lived in tenements jammed together. It's hard for them to put themselves in those situations and really engage in that.

To Mr. Finch the greatest obstacle to addressing critical issues in his classroom, with his students, was the lack of awareness they had towards their own privilege. He felt that the students had an inability to understand others who had significantly different experiences than them, or a critical consciousness and well-developed sense of empathy, if you will. When asked more about this he explained that it was not that he thought the students could not or should not engage in the development of a critical consciousness. He said that he thought they could, and did, use critical consciousness, but, he explained that "I don't expect them to already have it. I don't expect that to be a baseline where they're ready to do it [engage a critical consciousness to examine evidence]".

Obstacle 2: Time

It seems likely that every teacher would tell you that they could do the job better if they had more time to develop curriculum. While being in a charter school may have afforded Mr. Finch additional flexibility regarding the pacing of his instruction, he still reported that time was

a significant obstacle. The commonality of the obstacle for curriculum development, generally, did not make it irrelevant in this instance, however. Developing curriculum takes time of which teachers are often short. According to Mr. Finch reworking and/or developing an inquiry-based curriculum took all the more time, noting that inquiry means “constant planning, moving, improving” and that it is “just time consuming.” He went on to explain that inquiry “just involves a little bit more up front, a little bit more at the beginning to get the positive ending that you want from it” and that that is why, when it came to the taking informed action element of the C3 inquiry arc, he was usually “short on time.” This speaks to why areas of potential overlap between inquiry and critical pedagogy regarding taking informed action were not evident in the findings. What is more, one of the common themes that emerged in the data regarding the obstacles that Mr. Finch faced towards making his curriculum more critical was consistently a lack of time to complete the work he needed to do so, or time to grant attention to curriculum that would make the inquiry more critical.

This became all the more evident when it was also observed that, when instruction faced a time crunch due to unplanned circumstances, that instruction immediately turned towards a more traditional, authored approach to learning. This was best demonstrated when it was discovered that students had not received the assigned documents to analyze the day before when a substitute was in the room, and so Mr. Finch, under a time crunch to address that content and the new content of the day, simply told the students what the documents said and what they meant so that he could move along quickly. Engaging in an inquiry-based student-centered analysis simply took longer than telling students what happened in history, what he thought it meant, and why it was important.

Time was consistently cited as an obstacle regarding his efforts to making the curriculum more critical, as well. When asked why he marginalized the perspectives of women and children by giving only one day to the examination of those perspectives, he explained it was because he would have had to cut labor union and strike content to do that, there just was not enough time to do both. Why did he not explore some of the critical ideas that students seemed to want to explore? “[I]t became very time consuming.” Why did he not explicitly engage in an investigation of the divide between the rich and the poor as a form of oppression? “[T]o really get into the heart of that you’d have to look into socio-economic status of a bunch of different areas and stuff, too, that I just...some of the 8th graders, it would be time consuming.” He explicitly noted a few areas where the task of engaging in a more critical approach to inquiry was more time consuming, noting that finding sources in an inquiry is difficult, but finding sources that present multiple, particularly alternative perspectives, was all the more time consuming. Ultimately, he explained, “[t]here’s only so many topics you can talk about when you cover American history in one year.” Further, he said that some content had to be covered because it was being “pushed by the state” or because it was crucial to understanding other issues later in the curriculum. An instance of this was when he noted that he could not cut the assembly line lesson from his curriculum because it was needed to help students understand the Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire lesson, which is one of his primary ways of bringing in the marginalized perspective of women.

Obstacle 3: Compelling questions

As was discussed in the literature review, compelling questions are an essential, and difficult, part of developing inquiry-based instruction. It was not anticipated that developing a compelling question to address a critical issue would be even harder for Mr. Finch. When Mr.

Finch was working with me to develop a critical issue that would be the focus of the second inquiry, he seemed to grasp the concept quickly, and, by bouncing ideas off of me, came up with an idea for compelling and supporting questions within a short period of time.

I went from the is greed good aspect [the focus of the question the previous year] to technological advancement because... [t]echnological advancement allows me to talk about each issue or topic or content area throughout that time period, how it's impacting the rich, how it's impacting the poor, and equity and social justice aspects.

When looking back on the inquiry, after the fact, however, he stated that the one thing he would have changed about the inquiry to make it more critical was the wording of the compelling question and, to some degree, supporting questions. "The thing that I struggled with the entire time was the compelling question and the supporting questions." He went on to explain,

The one thing I would change is the wording. Trying to think of the wording in the compelling question and supporting questions and break it down more, and figure out how I would word it. It's not a bad wording...it's just...trying to figure that out.

The data was indicative of the difficult process of crafting good compelling questions in a situation that is not also focusing on a critical issue. Mr. Finch, however, found it all the more complex when adding in a critical element. Perhaps some of the difficulty laid in the momentum of previous practice. Mr. Finch explained that his process of developing compelling questions started by looking at what he had done in the past and looking at what materials, sources, and lessons he might be able to re-use. He then considered what new material he might need to create

or find. Such an approach towards the development of curriculum appeared to be normal, and easier than starting from scratch, for Mr. Finch, as it allowed him to continue to evolve his classroom practice without having to start from the beginning. Making a major change to the curriculum, by making a significant change to a compelling question can be difficult. Perhaps the tendency towards using past curriculum is part of why it appeared to be difficult for Mr. Finch.

Obstacle 4: Alternative perspectives

The last obstacle to the implementation of a critical approach to inquiry was a lack of alternative perspectives to use as sources in the inquiry process. An essential part of addressing a critical issue involved presenting students with perspectives that presented a narrative of the past that did not simply reinforce the dominant narratives that had been commonplace. Try as he might, however, he repeatedly noted frustration in being able to find such sources from marginalized groups. He expressed a desire to present more perspectives from the poor or working class, women, children, or people of color, but he often could not find those perspectives, he reported.

When discussing some recently discovered sources from alternative perspectives he said, “That’s what we need more of. Even the woman’s point of view. You try tying as many female voices into history. And it’s hard to find.” Further, he discussed the difficulty of discussing the Homestead strike due to the lack of alternative perspectives, explaining, “[I]t’s harder to find some of the sources with the workers.” In these instances, Mr. Finch expressed his desire to add alternative perspectives to his curriculum, but also described that he found doing so to be difficult because such perspectives were not as readily available.

In one instance, regarding looking at the workers perspective, students had actually mentioned in several classes that in order to better understand the Homestead Strike they would

have liked to examine the perspective of the workers who were striking. Noting this, Mr. Finch sought out such a source for them to examine as an introduction to the next lesson. In the end, he explained, the best he could find were long newspaper articles that might include a one-line quote from a worker. Ultimately, he compromised and played for them a Pete Seeger song about the Homestead Strike, written decades later, that was very sympathetic to the plight of the workers.

He expressed a desire to incorporate alternative voices in his inquiry-based curriculum, but ultimately, he says, “I’ve looked and looked and I haven’t found much.” He explained that, “trying to find those sources from the different perspectives that made it a little more difficult”. He saw the value in incorporating that element of critical pedagogy that relies on presenting multiple perspectives, but he sees the task as daunting, particularly in an inquiry-based curriculum. In an inquiry-based curriculum he could not simply explain alternative perspectives, he must find sources from those perspectives for the students to analyze, and he often had to compromise or omit perspectives in order to move forward with his instruction.

Final Thoughts on the Four Themes

The case study of Mr. Finch, and the way he used inquiry to address critical issues, which focused on issues of justice and equity, revealed themes both expected and unexpected. I knew I wanted to understand what this case would reveal about the ways that inquiry supported the investigation of critical issues in the classroom, and what obstacles an inquiry-using teacher faced in their attempt to do so, and so these themes are part of the foundational research questions of the study. While the dilemmas between the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy were not sought after in the study, the methods employed allowed for this finding to emerge. That said, such dilemmas could have been anticipated and the potential to discover this was

known from the start. What was not anticipated was the development of the theme around overlapping pedagogies. These pedagogical practices that Mr. Finch employed that were not firmly situated within inquiry nor critical pedagogy, seemed to facilitate both pedagogical approaches. The existence of such overlapping pedagogies made sense and were logical, and thus it stood up to reason, but it was not something anticipated based on the review of literature, nor the pilot study conducted in preparation for this study.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

To come to an understanding of how inquiry might be used in social studies to address critical issues I constructed this single case study. Mr. Finch had been learning, intensively, through graduate school, professional development, and experience, for several years, how to implement inquiry in his classroom using the C3 inquiry arc. However, he had limited experiences with critical concepts and reported that when the study began he had never learned about critical pedagogy nor engaged in intentional efforts to explicitly address critical issues in his classroom.

In order to understand how Mr. Finch would address critical issues using inquiry I collected data over the course of two inquiries based on the C3 inquiry arc. The first of which (about Reconstruction) was not adjusted for the purposes of this study, and the second of which (about the Industrial Revolution) was specifically adjusted to purposefully address a critical issue. In the second inquiry Mr. Finch elected to focus on the critical issue of economic injustice. This gave me the ability to see how Mr. Finch's practice changed when he went from a non-critical issue to a critical issue. This approach was mitigated by the fact that the first inquiry, about Reconstruction, naturally incorporated critical themes. Overall, the study was able to examine the impact that an intentional approach to focusing on a critical issue had on the inquiry-based practices of the teacher and to examine, deeply, the use of inquiry as a means for addressing critical issues in a classroom.

There were four primary findings of this study related to the use of inquiry-based instruction focused on critical issues. First, there seemed to be inherent dilemmas between implementing inquiry-based instruction and examining critical issues. There appeared to be aspects of both the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy where the teacher had to find a balance

between the two, because they did not appear to have the ability to function together without compromise. Second, when the teacher integrated the C3 inquiry arc he also seemed to actively implement certain elements of critical pedagogy, such as honoring student creation of knowledge, investigating multiple perspectives, and questioning sources of knowledge. Third, evidence revealed that the use of certain pedagogies created a stronger overlap between the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy. Such overlapping pedagogical strategies included collaborative discussion, emphasis on relevance, building/appealing to community, and appealing to empathy for others, past and present. Each served to strengthen both pedagogical approaches without being a sole function of either. Lastly, the data seemed to indicate that there were obstacles, or hindering factors, that prevented in Mr. Finch from making his instruction more critical. These included, a lack of experience in the application of critical consciousness, limited experience and training in the examination of critical issues, a lack of time needed to develop the curriculum towards critical goals, the difficulty involved in the complex task of crafting compelling questions, and a lack of available resources, specifically as it applied to alternative perspectives.

Implications for Stakeholders

These findings have implications for stakeholders in social studies education that are important to consider. Findings were centered around the ways that inquiry-based instruction functioned as a means of addressing critical issues in social studies. As was discussed in the literature review, social inequity is a persistent issue and because schools' play a prominent role in maintaining that inequity, they should also be heavily involved in teaching about it as a means of preparing students for living in a world full of such inequity (McLaren, 2016; Slavin, 1997; Zion, et al., 2015). Because the field of social studies is uniquely situated to address critical

issues (Au, 2009; Hawley, et al., 2016; Parker, 2008; Parkhouse, 2017) the implications from this study are uniquely applied to that field. Specifically, there are findings from this study that are relevant to the important stakeholder groups such as social studies teachers, teacher educators, and the social studies education field, in general (see Table 3).

Table 3

Implications for Stakeholders.

Social Studies Teachers	Teacher Educators	Social Studies Education Field
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ more overlapping pedagogies. • Seek to minimize the limitations of inquiry when addressing critical issues. • Reflect on critical consciousness. • Capitalize on opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give pre-/in-service teachers opportunities to practice addressing critical issues. • Highlight compatibility of inquiry to address critical issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop/provide alternative perspective sources for teachers. • Develop/provide a wide breadth of curriculum materials integrating inquiry and critical issues.

Social studies teachers

One of the primary goals of any study about pedagogy should be to examine the implications for practitioners in the field. The choices of teachers shape the landscape of education most immediately. Ultimately a practitioner in the field was the primary focus of this study. Through the findings of this study, suggestions can be made to social studies teachers, if they seek to use inquiry to address critical issues in their classrooms. Those especially include that they should seek to employ more overlapping pedagogies, recognize the limitations of the approach and seek to minimize them, reflect on teaching practice with particular attention to

critical consciousness, and capitalize on the opportunities that inquiry gives that encourage a move towards a more critical form of teaching.

Overlapping pedagogies

The first implication for social studies teachers comes in the discovery of overlapping pedagogies. There were teaching strategies that the teacher in this study used as part his practice that supported both the use of inquiry and the effort to teach about critical issues. Specifically, this study focused on pedagogies around concepts of relevancy/rapport, discussion/collaboration, community, and empathy in his classroom.

The *C3 Framework* was already positioned to address some level of relevancy (Lee, et al., 2015; NCSS, 2013; Swan, et al., 2018). The C3 inquiry arc calls for engaging students in meaningful analysis of historical evidence (NCSS, 2013; Saye, 2017) and critical pedagogy scholars call for the development of critical consciousness. Such a development of critical consciousness involves the recognition that knowledge is never neutral or apolitical (Boutte, et al., 2010; Crowley & King, 2018), information should be historicized and nuanced examination of issues (Giroux, 2010), and grounded in the real world (Freire, 2000; McLaren, 2016). The use of relevancy and rapport by Mr. Finch implies that these approaches align with both pedagogical approaches.

Similarly, the evidence revealed that discussion and collaboration, as used by Mr. Finch, can serve the purposes of both the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy. Mr. Finch saw discussion as a form of collaboration and framed it as such in his instruction. In doing so he engaged students in a collaborative form of communication wherein they presented arguments from evidence. Such analysis and construction of arguments from evidence is integral to the C3 inquiry arc (NCSS, 2013; Parker, 2012). Further, his approach to discussion also functioned to

enable students to practice being part of the social construction of knowledge in meaningful ways (Crowley & King, 2018; Giroux, 2004a; McLaren, 2009). The implication being that engaging in discussion and collaboration in instruction has the potential to strengthen the use of crucial elements of the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy.

Appeals to community and empathy were also shown by Mr. Finch to have the potential to serve the goals of the *C3 Framework* and critical pedagogy. At the same time those practices serve the goals of social studies, through connections to democratic citizenship in social studies, generally (Evans, 2004; Fallace, 2009; Hawley, et al., 2017; Nelson, 2001; Ross, 2001), and calls for the building of historical empathy (Lee, 2005). Further, these practices can address elements of critical pedagogy, including honoring the experiences of others (Ellsworth, 1989; Freire, 2000) and serving to break the cycle of dehumanization (O'Loughlin, 1995). The implication being that social studies teachers who wish to address critical issues through inquiry would be well served by also making such appeals.

Minimize limitations

The second implication for social studies teachers involves recognizing the limitations of using inquiry to address critical issues. While considering these limitations, a social studies teacher would do well to consider that context may modify the potential limitations they will need to overcome and anticipate them as much as possible. However, there are things that a teacher can learn from the study of Mr. Finch's classroom regardless of setting. Such a teacher will, for example, have to address the dilemmas involved with using inquiry to address a critical issue. Specifically, they will have to find a balance between providing background information (Saye, 2017) and honoring student construction of knowledge (Apple & Buras, 2006; Freire, 2000, 1997; Giroux, 2004b). Social studies teachers will also have to resolve the dilemmas

between the critical methodology of being explicit about the examination of issues of power/oppression (Giroux, 2003b; O'Loughlin, 1995; Parkhouse, 2017; Ross, 2001) as well as critical goals (Fishman & McLaren, 2005) that the teacher has with the honoring of student analysis (Apple & Buras, 2006; Freire, 2000, 1997; Giroux, 2004b).

Beyond determining how they will compromise regarding the dilemmas between the C3 inquiry arc and critical pedagogy, a social studies teacher seeking to address critical issues through inquiry should also be aware of the obstacles towards implementation that this study revealed. Knowing that time will be an issue, for example, such a teacher should make sure extra time is set aside to do this work. This may be particularly true given that Mr. Finch taught at a charter school and so time was less of a limiting factor for him, especially in regard to pacing. Other teachers may face a more difficult obstacle in this regard. If they recognize that finding the needed alternative perspectives (Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Crowley & King, 2018; Manfra, 2009; McLaren, 2009, 2016; Ross, 2001) is difficult, then they can be on the lookout for such perspectives, and collect them when such opportunities arise.

Teachers should also be aware that creating compelling questions is generally complex (Grant, 2013; Grant, et al., 2017; Saye, 2017) and, according to evidence from this study, it is more complex when also addressing critical issues. Thus, a teacher seeking to use inquiry to address a critical issue should consider that, and reflect all the more when crafting such a question. They might also involve more people in their process of writing compelling questions so as to improve the outcome through collaboration. Further, recognizing the power that momentum had for Mr. Finch's curriculum development may help social studies teachers be more aware of a tendency to do the same thing in ways that may stifle their efforts to use social studies to address critical issues. This is particularly important given the tendency for social

studies teachers to approach instruction in traditional, dominant-narrative ways (Loewen, 1995; VanSledright, 2011).

Critical consciousness

Social studies teachers should also approach reflection on their practice and curriculum with a critical consciousness, and do so with careful intentionality. This study found it is possible to develop and practice using critical consciousness when it comes to implementing inquiry-based instruction about a critical issue. This is important because such practice can help teachers get used to using such a lens on examining the world (Boutte, et al., 2010; Crowley & King, 2018; Freire, 2000; Giroux, 2010; Rodriguez, 2016). I also found, however, that inquiry can help bring more development of critical consciousness into the curriculum. It appears that if a teacher were to repeatedly develop and implement an inquiry-based curriculum with an eye towards critical issues, then that teacher will have many opportunities to apply critical consciousness to curriculum development.

Opportunities

Lastly, a social studies teacher should look at the areas where inquiry may encourage a more critical approach to teaching, seek out those opportunities, and capitalize on them. It is possible to engage in inquiry-based practices without finding the sorts of alternative perspectives called for by scholars of critical pedagogy (Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Crowley & King, 2018; Ross, 2001; Manfra, 2009; McLaren, 2009, 2016). At the same time the *C3 Framework* calls for multiple sources and multiple points of view (NCSS, 2013), and teachers should take advantage of that opportunity and go out of their way to include such perspectives in their curriculum. The same is true for the relationship between analyzing sources (NCSS, 2013) and questioning sources of knowledge (Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Apple, 2004; Rodriguez, 2016), or engaging

students in valid analysis and honoring the creation of knowledge (Apple & Buras, 2006; Freire, 2000, 1997; Giroux, 2004b). It was also discovered in this study that some historical topics lend themselves more easily to the investigation of critical issues. An investigation of a critical issue was shown to be possible in both inquiries, but the fact that it was so inherent in the Reconstruction inquiry has a meaningful implication for social studies teachers. As such, they should consider how the content they are teaching inherently addresses critical issues, and take advantage of that opportunity to increase the critical focus on their instruction. Inquiry in a social studies classroom presents important opportunities for teachers who want to use their curriculum to examine critical issues and they should take advantage of those opportunities.

Teacher educators

If implications for social studies teachers who wish to use inquiry to address critical issues in their classroom is the quickest way that an impact can occur, then it stands to reason that a long-term impact would be situated in the implications for teacher educators who are helping to prepare the next generation of social studies teachers. Primary amongst these implications was that such teacher educators would be well served to give their pre-service teacher opportunities to practice the specific skills of incorporating critical issues into their lessons. One of the obstacles that teacher educators can help overcome is a lack of experience and training, by providing opportunities for such experience and training. This can come in the form of helping their pre-service teachers develop their own sense of critical consciousness and giving them the opportunity to practice reflecting on curriculum and teaching with it as a frame of reference (Freire, 2000; Crowley & King, 2018; Boutte, et al., 2010; Giroux, 2010; Rodriguez, 2016). Recognizing the line between authored construction of knowledge and opportunities for the teacher to be a participant in the construction of knowledge in the classroom is a difficult line

to determine (Freire, 2000). Moments of training and practice are ideal times to find that line and reflect on the importance that it holds. Several times in the study, Mr. Finch expressed that he did not make things more critical because he did not know how, or had not done so in the past. Pre-/in-service teachers can gain that experience through their work with teacher educators.

Teacher educators can also help their pre-service teachers develop a sense of the ways inquiry-based pedagogy is compatible, and in fact ideal, for addressing critical issues in the classroom. This is demonstrated in the way that the two pedagogical approaches overlap. Specifically, the overlaps regarding student creation/recreation of knowledge (Freire, 2000; Giroux, 2004a; Saye, 2017), relevancy to student lives (Freire, 2000; Lee, et al., 2015; Swan, et al, 2018), the use of multiple perspectives (Crowley & King, 2018; Jennings & Lynn, 2005;, McLaren, 2009; NCSS, 2013) were supported in the findings in this study. When it is recognized, and considered normal, that inquiry can be used in such a way then teachers may be more likely to try using inquiry to address critical issues. Similarly, teacher educators can expressly discuss, in their courses, things like the overlapping pedagogies found in this study. By being explicit that amongst the advantages of these methods is the ability to bring critical issues into their classroom, teacher educators can give their pre-service teachers opportunities to address such topics with intentionality.

The social studies education field

While social studies teachers and teacher educators are members of the social studies education field, the field is larger than them, as well. There are people outside of those categories who have a stake in exploring the use of inquiry in social studies to address critical issues. Beyond teachers and teacher educators, these stakeholders include curriculum designers, administrators, resource publishers, and funders. These additional stakeholders have a role to

play in facilitating the use of inquiry focused on critical issues alongside teachers and teacher educators.

Primary, amongst these implications is the need for resources. There are two specific obstacles revealed in this study that hold implications for these stakeholders, those being, the lack of sources from alternative perspectives and the lack of time to develop curriculum. The implications of this study are that if proper resources are applied in the right ways these obstacles may be minimized. Such stakeholders can address the lack of alternative perspectives that facilitates addressing critical issues (Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Ross, 2001) by seeking opportunities to find such sources and to make them more easily available. There are many places a teacher can go to find primary source documents to use in their classroom, but Mr. Finch found these places to be overwhelmed with sources taking the dominant perspective. This lack of resources makes it more difficult for teachers to find the alternative perspectives they seek.

Similarly, there are growing numbers of published examples of curricular materials for teachers wanting to incorporate inquiry into their classroom. Few of these specifically provide such material with an eye towards incorporating critical issues. Exceptions include *Rethinking Schools* (2017) and Chandler and Hawley's *Race Lessons: Using Inquiry to Teach About Race in Social Studies* (2017). If there were curriculum resources, such as prepared inquiries, scaffolded sources, and planned activities, across the breadth of content that social studies teachers need, then such stakeholders may be able to give teachers a little bit of that most elusive of resources, the time to make their curriculum better.

Future Research

In terms of replicating the study to expand or confirm what is known about the topic of using inquiry to address critical issues there are two implications. First, this study examined a single case, and in different contexts different themes may be found. Could replicating the study in different contexts, or modifying it for a multiple case study approach, reveal new insights or confirm the results? With additional cases examined, issues like the inherently critical nature of the first inquiry could be mitigated, and so a clearer understanding of differences between a teacher using inquiry and a teacher using inquiry to address a critical issue could be developed. Examining multiple contexts and multiple examples can only clarify and strengthen what is known about the subject. Another way the study could be modified would be to incorporate quantitative elements, creating a mixed methods study, so as to gain deep insight into the practice of inquiry using teachers to address critical issues. Generalizable data regarding teacher perceptions and practices around inquiry and teaching critical issues could demonstrate how the findings might apply to a larger population of educators.

One area this study did not explore, that could add significantly to the literature around inquiry and critical education, has to do with the experiences of students. In these instances, I could foresee studies that focus on how specific groups of students experience inquiry being used in their classrooms to address critical issues. This would invite the use of many of the critical pedagogy theories mentioned in the first chapters of this study, as well. As examples, a study examining how girls/women experience this sort of instruction could utilize feminist pedagogy, and a study focused on the experiences of students of color could benefit from a focus on critical race pedagogy. Bringing in these various lenses would allow such a study to examine different

aspects of the use of inquiry to address critical issues and has the potential to make meaningful additions to how we understand how these pedagogical concepts interact and are experienced.

The findings of this study presented many interesting questions that can guide future research. Amongst these are, what additional adjustments can be made to an inquiry-based pedagogy to make it more critical? The only adjustment that was made in this study was asking the participant to focus his second inquiry on a critical issue. What efforts could be made to focus on overlapping pedagogies, like discussion/collaboration, empathy, relevancy/rapport, and community, with an eye towards the impact that they have on the curriculum regarding critical issues? Are there specific ways of implementing those pedagogies that impact the connection between inquiry and critical pedagogy differently? Are there other overlap pedagogies and do some have a greater impact than others?

Similarly, this study found obstacles that hinder the way inquiry addressed critical issues. What can be done to minimize those obstacles? Are there trainings teachers could undergo to help them overcome obstacles regarding experience and critical consciousness? What would happen if a teacher had extra time in the day to prepare curriculum? How would that impact their ability to engage in more critical work with their inquiry-based instruction? If a researcher provided a selection of sources, including many with alternative, non-dominant perspectives would that suffice to minimize some of the obstacles related to alternative perspectives and time?

There are also interesting questions to explore regarding the dilemmas that were discovered between inquiry and critical pedagogy. Primarily amongst them is the question of how to find the balance within those dilemmas. If background knowledge is important, and means using authored construction of knowledge, then what process do teachers use to find the balance that is right for them regarding how to introduce such background knowledge? Is there a

specific approach a teacher should take to make these decisions? This is likewise true, for the dilemma between honoring student analysis and being explicit about the critical goals and the investigation of power and oppression. Can power and oppression be explicitly examined without interfering in the goal of allowing students to engage in valid analysis and meaning making? If it can be done, what does that look like?

Lastly, there are research implications regarding compelling questions. This study was not unique in the conclusion that writing compelling questions is difficult. What this study added to the conversation is the layer of added complexity that comes from also making that compelling question focused on a critical issue. Therein lies an opportunity to explore the strategies teachers use to craft compelling questions. Findings could shed light on the most effective ways to craft compelling questions and the most effective ways to craft them to address critical issues. Of course, there would also be a need, in such a study, to determine what the idea of “effective” in these instances even means. Is an effective compelling question one that results in greater student learning? Engagement? Deeper analysis? Does it revolve around the development of a student’s critical consciousness? Objective learning outcomes? All of this and more are primed for investigation in such future research.

Conclusion

This study examined the way inquiry functioned, in one teacher’s practice, regarding addressing an issue of equity and justice. The findings ranged from confirming a theoretical support that inquiry had towards addressing critical issues, through the dilemmas and obstacles that existed between them, to the existence of overlapping pedagogies that bring them together. In finding these results, there are specific implications for social studies teachers, teacher educators, and researchers. Ultimately, what was learned was that inquiry is not critical

pedagogy, even when it is used to purposefully address a critical issue. There are, however, ways that the C3 inquiry arc supports engaging in critical work. With greater consideration towards the dilemmas between the two and the obstacles that have to be overcome, inquiry holds the potential to be an effective pedagogy towards teaching about critical issues in social studies classrooms.

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APPENDIX

Interview Protocols

Pre-observation

Background/Demographic Information

How do you describe yourself?

How long have you been teaching?

Can you tell me a little bit about your background as a teacher?

How did you come to teach at this school?

How would you describe this school?

Inquiry

What does inquiry-based teaching mean to you?

When did you start using inquiry in your classroom?

Why did you start using inquiry in your classroom?

Why do you keep using inquiry in your classroom?

How have the students responded to your use of inquiry?

How have other teachers or administrators responded?

What have been some of the challenges of using inquiry?

Critical Issues

In your classroom what process do you want students to go through to learn about history?

When an issue about injustice or inequity comes up in class how do you handle that?

When issues about justice or equity are being discussed in the news or socially does it ever come up in your classroom? How so?

Do you find that students want to discuss issues of justice and equity?

Instrument Validation

Is there any additional information you would like to provide about the things we discussed today?

Mid-observation

<You just finished an inquiry with your students. I am going to ask you some questions about what you did and did not do in that inquiry and how you think it went.>

Inquiry

What was the purpose of this inquiry?

How did you come up with your compelling question?

How did your process for developing supporting questions?

How did you decide what content or topics to include in the lessons?

How did you decide what sources to include in the lessons?

How did you decide what activities to use in the lessons?

Critical Issue

In this inquiry, what process did your students go through to learn about history?

<A critical issue is a relevant topic of investigation that addresses an issue of inequity or injustice.>

Did this inquiry address any critical issues?

If you wanted to make this inquiry more critical what would you have done differently?

Why didn't you address more critical issues in this inquiry?

Instrument Validation

Is there any additional information you would like to provide about the things we discussed today?

Post-observation

<In the inquiry you recently concluded you were asked to specifically address a critical issue.>

Process of using C3 to address critical issues

What critical issue did you address?

In what way do you consider that issue critical?

How did you go about incorporating a critical issue into your inquiry?

Did the focus of a critical issue change the way you came up with the compelling and supporting questions?

Did the focus on a critical issue change the way you selected sources and activities?

Did you use inquiry in a different way when addressing a critical issue?

Strengths and weaknesses of C3 to address critical issues

Were there any ways that using inquiry made it difficult to bring this critical issue into your classroom?

What difficulties were there in having your students examine this topic?

Were you able to find activities and sources to support the examination of this topic?

If you used inquiry to address a topic like this in the future what would you do differently?

Are you ever concerned that your students will not be prepared to address content from an inquiry on a standardized test (such as for a college entrance exam)?

How well did this inquiry fit into the content you are required to teach?

What do you think went particularly well in addressing this topic using inquiry?

Did inquiry make it easier for you to teach students about this topic in any ways?

Practice compared to critical pedagogy

How did the students go about understanding the critical issue? (Hon)

Where did their understanding of the content or issue come from? (Hon)

How did the backgrounds of the students impact the way you taught this inquiry? (Exp)

When students asked questions you weren't expecting, how did you handle that? (Cur)

How did this inquiry address issues of inequity or injustice? (Pow)

Do you think this inquiry helped students come to a better understanding of the world they live in? (Hidden)

How did you go about trying to give students a different perspective on the content than is typically taught? (Know)

How do students know if they can trust the sources you give them? (Know)

What did your students learn as a result of the times that they worked together? (Soc)

ALTERNATIVE: Why didn't you use any collaborative learning activities in your lessons? (Soc)

In what ways do you think your students have a better understanding of the world they live in as a result of this inquiry? (Consc)

Why did you have students examine the sources they examined? (Mult)

What were your goals in this inquiry? (CP)

Did the students know about these goals? (CP)

Instrument Validation

Were there any questions throughout this study that you found to be inadequate?

Is there any additional information you would like to provide about the things we discussed today?

A Priori Codes Tables

Codes for Critical Pedagogy

Code	Name	Explanation	Quote
Hon	Honoring Student Creation of knowledge.	Instances where students are treated as legitimate as they come to conclusions based on the evidence they have analyzed.	“That’s an interesting idea...how did you come up with it?”
Exp	Respecting Student Experiences.	Recognizing and respecting that student experiences are relevant and useful in the creation of knowledge.	“Have you ever experienced something like that?”
Cur	Encouraging Student Curiosity.	Encouraging students to engage in their own investigative efforts based in their natural curiosity.	“I hadn’t planned on discussing that today, but since you asked.”
Pow	Examine Power/Oppression.	Curriculum/content explicitly examines issues of power and oppression.	“When the Europeans did that it might have created the inequality that still exists today.”

Hidden	Hidden Curriculum	Engaging in an examination of the factors of school/society that are not explicit and what the hiding of those factors might mean.	“The dress code is different for the boys and girls. Why do you think that is?”
Know	Questioning Sources of Knowledge	Pursing a critical examination of sources and questioning the motives of the authors of those sources.	“Why do you think the author wrote that?”
Soc	Social Construction of Knowledge	Engaging in analytical work socially, collaborating with others to make meaning of evidence.	“Look at these sources with your table group, come up with a theme that you all agree on based on the texts.”
Consc	Critical Consciousness	Students are asked to connect what they’ve learned to society and the world where they live in a way that is relevant to their lives, historicizing modern social issues.	“How are we still living with the consequences of that?”
Mult	Multiple Perspectives	Curriculum is designed to have students examining alternative/opposing perspectives.	“Here are three sources, one for the new law, one against it, and one an outsider perspective.”

CP	Explicit Critical Pedagogy Goals	The teacher being explicit about their goals to create more social justice through their teaching.	“Making the world a better place...that’s why we do this work.”
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Codes for Anti-Critical Pedagogy

Code	Name	Explanation	Quote
Dishon	Dishonoring Student Creation of knowledge.	Instances where students sent a message that they are not free to construct their own knowledge	“I know the evidence may make it seem that way, but no...”
Disexp	Disrespecting Student Experiences.	Making it seem as though student experience is unimportant and not worthy of consideration.	“They’re so young, they don’t really look at the world that way.”
Discur	Discouraging Student Curiosity.	Discouraging students to engage in their own investigative efforts based in their natural curiosity.	“I hadn’t planned on discussing that today, so let’s get focused back on topic.”
Auth	Authored Construction of Knowledge	Students are sent the message that there is a singular correct source of information (a teacher, historian,	“Why do we think that happened? Because this sources says so.”

		book, etc.) that should not be questioned.	
Dom	Dominant Perspective	Instances where students examine evidence with no alternative/counter-perspective. Only the dominant narrative is presented.	“Here are three sources from European explorers explaining why they explored.”

Codes for Inquiry

Code	Name	Explanation	Quote
MS	Multiple Sources	Instances where students are given multiple sources to examine a topic.	“We’re going to look at three sources to examine this event...”
Arg	Arguments from Evidence	Students are being asked to develop arguments based on evidence that they have examined.	“Why do you think explorers went out and explored?...What makes you think that?”
Ana	Student Analysis	Students are asked to construct their own analysis of sources, using disciplinary tools, and come to conclusions about their meaning.	“I don’t think you need me to tell you what this means, I want you to tell me

			what you think it means.”
Act	Informed Action	Students are asked to engage in connecting what they have learned to how they can act in the world in to make it better.	“Now that you’ve learned about the Revolutionary War, how do you think we should address government treating us unfairly today?”

Journaling protocol

During Baseline Inquiry

What was today’s lesson about?

Why do I want my students to learn this?

Why did I teach it the way I did?

How did it go?

What would I change?

What would I keep the same?

During Critical Issue Inquiry

What was today’s lesson about?

How did it go?

How well did it add to the inquiry?

How well did it address the critical issue?