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The purpose of this study was to examine the tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework as they apply to the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018). The study utilized five tenets of CRT as codes to categorize and analyze the textbook depictions of race and systems of power in America. Data were divided into the following five categories: racism as systemic and normal; interest convergence as the catalyst for civil rights progress; race as a social construct; storytelling and counter-storytelling; and Whiteness as power, property, and recipients of civil rights advancements. The research questions were designed to explore how the textbook describes people, events, and ideas connected to race; how the textbook embraces or avoids concepts of Critical Race Theory; and how narratives of systems of power are challenged or maintained within the textbook. Results from the study indicate that evidence of CRT tenets exists within the pages of the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018), but that intentional explanations are needed to create a connective historical timeline that ties past racialized systems of oppression with modern day hierarchies of advantage and power. Implications for practitioners and researchers are discussed.

**KEYWORDS:** textbook analysis, critical race theory, power, education, American history
CURRICULUM IN THE CROSSHAIRS: POWER AND CRITICAL RACE THEORY IN AN
AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOK

CHRISTOPHER A. BERGSCHNEIDER

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial
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CURRICULUM IN THE CROSSHAIRS: POWER AND CRITICAL RACE THEORY IN AN
AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOK

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This dissertation is dedicated to my three sons, Carson, Drew, and Eli, who provide me motivation to be the best version of myself, and to my wife Beth whose love and support makes all things feel possible. No sense of individual accomplishment should ever be noted without an understanding of the interconnectedness of humanity. The time given to this study was time taken from my family, and I am eternally grateful for their understanding of the demands of the process, their unwavering confidence through adversity, and their shared joy through accomplishments. I love and appreciate you all.

I would like to express my love and appreciation to my parents for raising me in a home that allowed for free flow of ideas and opinions. In a world becoming ever more polarized, I truly wish everyone had the same ideologically open environment that I was afforded. Thank you for backing my goals, my vision, and my path.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my dissertation committee of Dr. Beth Hatt, Dr. Ryan Brown (my chair), Dr. Adel Al-Bataineh, and Dr. Ben Welllenreiter. I understand the already high demands of a college professor and I appreciate you all taking on the extra time and commitment. I especially appreciate the constant communication and feedback from Dr. Welllenreiter. You provided the perfect balance between guidance and letting me figure things out. You kept this whole process on the rails and I truly could not have done it without you.

C.A.B.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Perhaps no curriculum has been linked to the modern day polarized American political landscape quite like that of secondary social studies. It is in these classrooms where our increasingly divided country (Lupu, 2015) has established the roots of this citizenry’s political ideology (Kaestle, 1982). Despite the entrenched and varying political beliefs on modern socio-political issues, the social studies canon has produced a rather uniform and unifying narrative as a foundation for viewing our collective past (Winneburg et al., 2007). From the realization that a relatively singular national story exists (Richardson, 2011), the attention should turn to the driving force behind this collective narrative, the social studies textbooks themselves.

While many teachers lean on the textbook as a major component of curricular design, the social studies classroom experiences a heightened reliance on that singular source. Because schools are judged by their scores in math, science, reading, and writing (Kohn, 2000), social studies classes often get pushed to the periphery in the administration decision making process. As such, a mere 26% of teachers with history courses as their principal assignment hold both a postsecondary degree in the subject and a certificate to teach it (Hill & Gruber, 2011). The understandable reliance upon the textbook by undertrained practitioners leads to the examination of the textbook under the lens of academic research.

Much of the work in textbook analysis has been steeped in the critical assumptions of power, race, positionality, and the socio-political status quo (Apple & Christian-Smith 2017; Goodland, 1984; Sleeter & Grant, 1991). That textbooks contain biases and inaccuracies is not new information. The focus has shifted to examining how textbooks are biased and what should be done to counter those biases and inaccuracies. Klein (2017) notes the need for changes in
instructional resources as education itself continues to change. No resource has been as instrumental over time in the social studies classroom as the history textbook itself.

Like teachers, textbook creators work to present a narrative and pedagogies of history that reflects the way they were taught, making the cycle tough to break (Olson & Hora, 2013). Textbooks continue to present exaggerations, stereotypes, omissions, falsification of events, and misrepresentation of non-dominant cultures (Sleeter, 2012). The fact that the burden of picking out and correcting these issues falls to the teachers is problematic (Zimmerman, 2005).

The public dialogue concerning how and what children are learning has changed considerably over time. Since all texts are bound to be biased, the goal should be to have students consider, question, examine, and think metacognitively about the content (Zelizer, 1994). Perhaps they were predicting our current racial political climate, or perhaps our current racial angst is merely the most recent version of what America has experienced in different iterations over time, when researchers like Delpit (2006) and Sleeter (2012) connected the increase in students’ social capital (young people’s voice in helping drive policy) to a public push to challenge the teaching of history. Moreau (2011) argues that the fight for the message of the textbook is nothing new and has always been controlled by dominant groups. Zimmerman (2005) makes specific this notion of a fight for the history curriculum by framing it as a battle between the dominant Anglo Saxon Protestant majority and the ethnic minority Americans.

It is often difficult to observe where we fit in the greater timeline of institutional and societal development. Human beings are products of our times and our worldviews often correspond with the changing world around us. Those worldviews do not only encompass our perceptions surrounding the cultural norms of our present day, but also how we are connected to our past. The teaching of history brings about certain unavoidable struggles over the
conceptualization of the present through the unpacking of the past. The romantic thinkers, positivists, scientific historians, German philosophers, relativists, and more have debated over centuries where history belongs among the arts and sciences (Becker, 2021). Is history the dots, or is it how we connect those dots? The question alone leaves us with at least one definitive statement on history: there is more than one way to study the past (Collingwood & Knox, 2014). These deeper notions of historiography are critical to understanding the way in which history has been presented to the masses over time. The simplistic job description of the history textbook being narrowed down to the providing of facts on major issues may not take into account how the presentation of the historical narratives sets the stage for modern understandings of race, power, and positionality. This chapter will make specific the connection between these general historical quandaries, the narratives of modern day history textbooks, and the socio-political environment of the post-Trump era as the crux of my study is introduced.

**Framing the Problem**

It is a nuanced task to pinpoint the intersection of social studies textbook curriculum and real world societal debates, yet an important endeavor to examine their connection. While most textbooks are static and socio-political dialogue is volatile and fluid, they can be used to inform each other in a manner that impacts lifelong student understanding of issues surrounding power and race in both implicit and explicit ways. While there have been calls for a movement away from traditional textbooks (Loewen, 2019), several factors have contributed to the maintenance of the curricular and pedagogical status quo: The lack of social studies teacher preparation (US Department of Education, 2008), the corporate influence on American education (Neumann, 2014), and the cycle of teachers basing their curriculum upon their own educational experiences (Olson & Horra, 2013).
While critical theorists have long suggested that the educational choices and systems are innately political (Apple, 2019; Kenchloe, 2011; Postman, 1979), our politicians have displayed a recent interest in the connection (Lopez, 2017). Former President Donald Trump rode a wave of coded yet divisive racial language into and out of the White House. In a speech shortly after the start of the 2020 school year, Trump made his case on race in education by defining Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a “Marxist doctrine, holding that America is a wicked and racist nation, and that even young children are complicit in oppression” (Waxman, 2020, p. 1). He went on to promote the belief that children in American schools were being radically transformed by the imposition of CRT, and set out to use his presidency to fight for a pro-America curriculum that would “promote patriotic American education” (Waxman, 2020, p. 1). A post 2020 election study demonstrated that the Trump appeal had more to do with racial animosity toward African Americans than the economy (Fried & Harris, 2021). He left in his wake an America racially divided along political lines, one as ready as ever to debate the connections between race and curriculum in education.

**History of Critical Race Theory**

The political discourse concerning Critical Race Theory, while certainly a modern day hot button issue, is a part of the continuation of the historiographical dialogues that connect to the questions of what history is and how it should be studied. The CRT lens, as a way to view history, has joined the list of centuries of scaffolding and competing historical theories and paradigms. Critical Race Theory, long a field of study that found discourse primarily within academia, has made its way into the American lexicon through its omnipresent coverage in educational curriculum, political policy, and media coverage (Lopez, 2017). Over time, the definitions and understanding of CRT have varied, leading to confusion and ideological debate.
upon its true definition and use as a theoretical framework in education. Critical Race Theory in its academic form is a nuanced, layered, and sprawling field of study. Original scholars of CRT (Bell, 1980; Crenshaw, 2010; Delgado & Stefancic, 1993) were responding to Liberal Race Theorists, who saw racial problems as interpersonal and, thus, solvable components of world affairs. At its core, CRT is a movement to take race seriously and establish it as humanity's most confounding problem. However, as scholars built upon the work of previous generations, they established different conversations within separate institutions. Gloria Ladson-Billings has been a monumental voice for the infusion of CRT within the world of education. Ladson-Billings builds upon CRT tenets of systemic racism and interest convergence to define CRT in education as the deconstruction of racialized stories and power structures using the social studies classroom (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016). When writing on the prospects of CRT in education in 1994, Ladson-Billings was excited about its prospects to go deeper than simplistic celebrations of diversity, but doubted the opportunity for CRT to leave a mark on the mainstream. Close to three decades later, it has the potential to impact problems that Ladson-Billings saw with race, racism, and social injustice in the explanatory narrative. She noted, “Adopting and adapting CRT as a foundation for educational equity means that we will have to expose racism in education and propose radical solutions for addressing it” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 22). This study will refer to Ladson-Billings’ definition of CRT within educational structures as its academic definition (see Table 1).

Politicians, pundits, and journalists have crafted and utilized various and often distorted versions of CRT to tell their stories of American race and education. In some cases laws have been enacted to create a narrative of race that those lawmakers see fit to play out in the classroom. A summary of Texas House Bill 3979 will serve as the public definition of CRT
While the bill urges “essential knowledge and skills that develop each student’s civic engagement” it forbids classroom discussion of any “particular current event or widely debated and currently controversial issue of public policy or social affairs (Texas HB 3979, 2021, p. 1).” The law specifically cites, discredits, and disallows the teachings of the New York Time’s 1619 Project, which frames American history through race. The law denies the dynamic impact of systemic racism and disallows the teaching of racism and slavery beyond “deviations from, betrayals of, or failures to live up to, the authentic founding principles of the United States, which include liberty and equality (p. 1).” To summarize, Texas bill 3979 simultaneously defines and disavows Critical Race Theory as the teaching of material that establishes slavery as the true founding of the United States, describes an entire race as inherently racist, and leads to guilt and psychological distress of an entire race. Texas bill 3979 deems slavery and racism as aberrations from American values.

**Working Definitions of Critical Race Theory**

**Table 1**

*Definitions of Critical Race Theory*

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<th>Definition Type</th>
<th>Definition and Source of Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Definition of CRT</td>
<td>The exposure of racism within the power structures of America through more inclusive and truthful historical narratives (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Ladson-Billings &amp; Tate, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Definition of CRT</td>
<td>The guilt inducing burden of American racism created by our racist founders and continued by intolerant leaders of racist institutions (Texas HB 3979, 2021).</td>
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The American divide between these competing definitions of CRT and the teaching of American history is epitomized by the development of *The New York Times*’ 1619 Project (2019) and its counterpart, The President’s Advisory 1776 Commission (2021). The 1619 Project recenters American history upon race and the effects of slavery. Included within the project, which took on written and podcast form is the notion that American independence from Britain was at least partially a byproduct of the colonists desires to protect the institution of slavery from the British moral and legal reckoning (The 1619 Project, 2019). The project came under fire for its bold stance, including an open letter from five highly respected American historians from such institutions as Princeton and Harvard (*The New York Times*, 2019) calling into question the project’s ideological rather than historical framing. The *Times* responded to the article by citing, among other defenses, their reliance on another five highly respected historians, including the aforementioned Princeton and Harvard. This intellectual feud exemplifies the various forms of historical study. The use of ideological history, of which the *Times* project defended itself, is itself included in the pantheon of prominent American historians (Bailyn, 2017).

**National Presence of Critical Race Theory**

The 1619 Project did much to catapult CRT’s presence in American history education into the national spotlight. In response, the Trump administration issued the President’s Advisory 1776 Commission in order to promote a patriotic view of American history. The commission took aim at CRT and specifically The 1619 Project. A political battle for the racial compass of America continued following President Biden’s victory, demonstrating that while the Trump presidency may be over, racial division is still a powerful force in the American classroom. When the Biden administration, in the spring of 2021, proposed a federal grant to support US History programs that “reflect the diversity, identities, histories, contributions, and experiences
of all students” and “create inclusive, supportive, and identity-safe learning environments”, 39 Senate republicans complained to the Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, admonishing the shift as “a politicized and divisive agenda.” Several states have passed CRT suppression bills and 30 Congressional Republicans have sponsored a bill titled the Stop CRT Act (The Washington Post, 2021). People across the country are paying attention to the rhetoric surrounding the pedagogy and curriculum of American education, especially in the history classroom.

**State Presence of Critical Race Theory**

In Illinois, state mandates, academic learning standards, and local socio-political climates all influence the use of CRT in the curriculum. March of 2021 saw the signing of the Black caucus backed Education Workforce and Equity Act in Illinois. The law includes a 22 person Inclusive American History Commission, charged with reviewing educational resources connected to race, as well as an expansion of required Black history coursework. Social studies coursework must now include material on Black history prior to the beginning of Black enslavement in 1619 (Masterson & Vinicky, 2021). Social studies standards themselves in Illinois do not directly determine the curriculum or pedagogy of teachers. They instead identify student skills, such as analysis, connectivity, and inquiry.

The shift from content based standards to skill based standards within the 2016 overhaul of the Illinois Social Studies Standards (Illinois Learning Standards, social studies, 2016), the Illinois state board of education seemed to signal a shift from the memorization of trivial facts to a curriculum geared around student investigation of the worlds in which they operate. In an effort to make the 2016 Illinois social studies standards more culturally responsive, a team of 50 educators was convened by the Illinois State Board of Education in May of 2021 in order to add language that strengthened the inquiry standards to include "Identify and analyze the role of"
individuals, groups and institutions in people's struggle for safety, freedom, equality and justice (SS. H. 7.9-12)” and “Compare and connect significant diverse individuals, cultures and groups with events that changed history (SS. H. 2.2)” (Tocci, 2021). The 218 page *Education Workforce and Equity Act* in Illinois and the 2021 changes in the social studies standards to not only teaching about unrepresented groups, but doing so through the lens of social justice, comes a year after the murder of George Floyd and the nationwide/worldwide outcry for systemic change in the treatment of people of Color.

**Roots of the Critical Race Theory Debate in America**

There is a clear connection between race and power in American history, our systems, and our institutions (Chomsky, 2018; Freire, 1972; Zinn, 2015). Who gets to write the story of past matters in terms of how the present is understood (Zinn, 2015). The story of CRT in its modern place of debate is rooted in politics, media, and an American think tank. The term CRT entered the public discourse in America when President Bill Clinton’s Justice Department appointee, Lani Guinier was denied her position by Congress partly because she had been touting Critical Race Theory as a law professor at the University of Pennsylvania. The attempted appointment of Guiner was not enough to place Critical Race Theory as a permanent fixture in the national conversation on race. CRT was mentioned a mere four times on Fox News between 2012-2019. In the aftermath of the George Floyd murder, between June 5, 2020 and May 7, 2021, CRT was a topic on 150 Fox News broadcasts (Harris, 2021). George Floyd was surely not the only racial flashpoint in America over the past two decades. What happened to permanently move CRT from the world of academia to the national consciousness? As the framework became demonized, why were people scared of its potential influence?
The summer of 2020 not only saw large scale racial protest in America, it also bore witness to an increased coverage of CRT. The spike can be traced back to a public policy article written by Christopher Ruffo for a magazine produced by think tank Manhattan Institute. As the article gained him enough attention to land on the Fox News show, Tucker Carlson, Ruffo warned viewers that CRT was being weaponized by the left and urged President Trump to ban the framework in federal government training. Within three weeks of the Ruffo appearance on Fox, President Trump signed an executive order banning the use of CRT by departments and contractors of federal diversity training (Harris, 2021). The executive order, the constant defaming and misrepresentation of CRT on Fox News, and the subsequent cancellation bills sprouting up around the country worked to create a version of CRT that served as a threat to the American public.

An examination of what people were scared of when investigating the rise of a public version of CRT may be missing the point. The fact that Americans have proven over time to become more unified politically around racially representative threats (Lopez, 2017), and that the more homogeneous political party has been the Republican party, it has served the conservative base well to create and sell the threat of racial angst. Beyond race, a common threat has served well politically in American history. The threats of fascism leading up to and during World War II, communism during the Cold War, and terrorism during the War on Terror all served as unifying factors in facing a common enemy (Zinn, 2015). Like CRT in modern politics, a created threat is often exaggerated, manipulated, and misrepresented.

Explanation of the Problem

While attention to the subject of race can be viewed as a positive social dynamic, racial division can be problematic. When pursuing the history of racism in America, some people are
inclined to approach it as an inevitable result of racial hierarchy. However, we have a history of creating racial division in America as far back as the 17th century. Early laws were established to make Native North American and African American people feel hostile toward each other in order to keep them from uniting to escape or rebel. Poor Whites and indentured servants were taught to believe that they were superior to Black people. Legal advantages were given to White indentured servants that were not granted to Black people, including the right to testify against their masters if they were not being treated properly (Zinn, 2015). Poor Whites were recruited and formed into slave patrol units in order to hunt down runaway slaves. New York law disallowed Blacks from owning property, while simultaneously chastising their idleness and labeling them a drain on society (Kendi, 2017). A clear line between White and Black was established early in American history in order to transcend socioeconomic standing and reroute financial frustration into racial animosity. A textbook that ignores these explicit factors within the social creation of race and racism works to feed modern day erroneous narratives of those forces. The creation stories of an American racial hierarchy has been avoided by American history textbooks, as such stories contradict the narrative of racism as either natural or, in more modern history, an aberration from American ideals.

While purposeful racial division can be witnessed through laws and practices of our nation’s past, it is exemplified today through our increasingly racialized and polarized news coverage. Americans have become increasingly distrustful of mainstream news coverage and the trend is moving toward social media consumption of news. America’s racialized politics are covered by the most polarized news in the western world (Reuters, 2020). Algorithms that bring Americans more of what they agree with and less of an understanding of the other side have led to the building up of walls and deterioration of empathy (Tsang, 2018). The politicization of race
and the continuation of an “us” versus “them” racial dichotomy risks not only a lack of public and political examination but a willful continuation, as the idea of Americans seeing each other through increasingly prejudiced and intolerant eyes works to serve the more homogeneous political party (Mason, 2018).

The modern socio-political trend of media and politician driven racial division has an immediate and urgent connection to the social studies classroom. The collective study of American history has a chance to be one of the last bastions of hope for a common environment of racial discourse through the unpacking of multiple layers of power and the untangling of the complex web of the history of race in America. The problem, historically, with this hope has been the singular narrative developed and employed by American history textbooks (Richardson, 2011). A modern day cross-racial coalition of solidarity becomes more difficult when our history is framed through a narrative of racial progress with impediments to that progress crafted as outliers and “bad apples” (Shojania & Dixon-Woods, 2013). Narratives within textbooks that ignore or downplay intentional racial division while leaving structures of racism as conquered issues of the past helps to fuel a sort of cognitive dissonance in many Americans’ understanding of race, structure, and power. The racial inequities present within the structures of American institutions can be explained away as individual choices of the past if those instances are framed as solved issues of the past. Academic examinations of textbooks have demonstrated improvements over time. It is relevant in a time of racial angst in America to re-examine the American history textbook’s portrayal of power structures and race, specifically through the lens of the most discussed element of race in education today: CRT. If these conversations of race are not addressed within educational environments, such as American history classrooms, they risk being steered by entities which benefit from racial division.
Purpose of the Study

This study hopes to build upon previous research connecting the textbook, race, and power in America (Alridge, 2006; Brown & Brown, 2010; Hess, 2005; Padget, 2015). Research exists that critically examines American history textbooks through the lens of CRT. Hess (2005) placed the Supreme Court case *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* on a spectrum of scholarly research (Brown as simple icon, Brown as liberation referent, Brown as unfulfilled promise, Brown as well intentioned error, and Brown as irrelevant) before comparing them to the more simplified and optimistic versions of the case doled out in American textbooks. The author found that the textbooks she investigated shared a commonality of mirroring the teachers’ desires to avoid controversy. Alridge (2006) focused his CRT lens on textbooks’ coverage of the life of Martin Luther King Jr. and found that the texts collectively oversimplified the master narratives of his humanity, the oversimplification of the Civil Rights Era as far removed from the present, and created a story of racial struggle that is disconnected from modern issues of race and poverty. Brown and Brown (2011) took on this connection between past and present as they focused on textbooks’ coverage of racial violence in American history during the “post racial” time period of the Obama presidency to uncover how far our understanding of the past had come in a time that was being touted for its racial progress. The findings of Brown and Brown (2011) revealed a more accurate and complete historical narrative surrounding racial violence in American history textbooks, as compared to a long history of misrepresentations and inaccuracies. However, the narrative of racism presented within the textbooks took the form of actions of a few bad apples as a deviation from White society. This “abnormality”, as they were presented, did not acknowledge the institutionalized power structures which allowed these actions, nor systemic advantages gained by them, presence in society. Racial violence was
presented in the texts as strategic, but not systemic. Scholars, such as Padget (2015), have used the critical examination of the American history textbook as a way to help better inform their school’s curriculum choices. This study aims to build upon the existing body of research as it pertains to CRT in American history textbooks in order to extend and update the curricular roots of racial dialogues in the classroom. Through that process, this study looks to meld the purposes of examining the American history textbook through the lens of CRT as it pertains to the presentation of power in American history textbooks in the Trump political time period. Specifically, the textual analysis will attempt to uncover the framing of race as it relates to structures of power. This connection of race and power will work to uncover what is serving as the current baseline of racial understanding, in order to propel a more accurate and meaningful discussion about race in America’s past, present, and future.

Subject of the Study

A research decision that mirrors that of historical research involves the juxtaposition of breadth and depth. Studies have demonstrated the benefits of depth over breadth in educational research (Kreisman & Stange, 2019). Further, textbook analysis remains general and lacking in explicit discussion (Nichols, 2003). Past research has also uncovered the commonality of American history textbooks pulled from similar time periods (Alridge, 2006; Brown & Brown, 2010; Hess, 2005; Loewen, 2019). As such, this study will focus on the American history textbook used in my current social studies department at Dunlap High School, titled American History (Houghton, Mifflin, & Harcourt, 2018). Students at Dunlap High School are among over 250,000 students nationwide using the textbook American History. The Dunlap High School social studies department, in conjunction with the Dunlap School District curriculum department, selected the textbook American History (HMH, 2018) based upon the use of Elliot Seif’s Criteria
for Selecting Understanding Based Curriculum Materials. The 11 pronged rubric includes “Do the materials require learners to be thoughtful, reflective, and use high level skills?”, “Do the materials include big ideas and/or essential questions?”, and “Do the materials continuously revisit big ideas?” (McTighe & Seif, 2010). As we are situated in an era of changing state standards, increased national funding for social justice curriculum, and mounting political divide over the place of CRT within the curriculum. Demonstrating a variety of racial, social, and political backgrounds, Dunlap’s American history textbook serves as an interesting case study of the modern CRT debate within American education.

Usefulness of the Study

Instead of collecting dust on my bookshelf upon its completion, I look for my study to serve as a guide for supplementing the American history textbook at Dunlap High School. The crossover between academic research and the application to a practitioner’s social studies department curriculum is exemplified by Padget’s 2015 dissertation, A Critical Case Study of Selected US History Textbooks from a Tribal Critical Race Theory Perspective. Here Padget uses his study to examine and review possible textbooks to be purchased by his school for the social studies department. In my case, the textbook is already in use, but may be in need of supplementation.

Our social studies department at Dunlap High School will turnover at least two-thirds of our members within the next two years. Communication must provide connectivity for any group, and curriculum teams are no different. As parents, community members, students, teachers, and teaching prospects continue to question the place of CRT as a framework of American history education, this study can serve as a point of reference for those conversations.
This study will help gain insight into the possible gaps, omissions, and misrepresentations of racial discussions in America’s past and present.

Critical Race Theory as a framework within social studies education is a burgeoning area of study, and must be counted on to meet the amount of misinformation being pumped into the public domain. As future researchers, including myself, track the movement of the social studies curriculum, including, but not limited to textbooks, studies like this will serve as a baseline to understanding what tenets of CRT are present and/or missing. The study of CRT and power within the American history textbook can also serve as a catalyst for teacher interviews, with the intent to uncover social studies teacher understanding of the tenets of CRT within curriculum and pedagogy.

**Summary**

Education has been inextricably linked to the political climate in America for centuries. From Horrace Mann’s Prussian-based vision of an education system to bring obedient workers to the mines, obedient soldiers to the army, well-subordinated civil servants to government, well subordinated clerks to industry, and a citizenry that thought alike on major issues (Herbst, 2002) to modern day ideological battles over Critical Race Theory in the curriculum, socio-political and economic interests historically inform curricular decisions (Lopez, 2017). While issues of education, race, media, and politics have often been merged in studies that illuminate their connectivity, there are occasionally political climates that make urgent the need to examine the framing of these entities. The racial divisions in America, exacerbated by the Trump presidency and the 2020 protests in the aftermath of the George Floyd murder, should trigger questions of racial discussion in politics, media, and education. The purpose of this dissertation study will be to bring to light the connectivity between the guiding curricular texts of American history
teachers and the CRT lens through which historical narratives are explored or ignored within a modern political climate of racial divisiveness.

While critical race theory has been a subject of academic study for decades it has only recently become a subject of political dialogue and debate. While scholars have studied the flaws of American history textbooks in terms of stereotyping, factual inaccuracies, and myth making through a CRT lens, this study aims to make specific the connections between CRT and an American history textbook. When viewed as more of a philosophical quest, the study, and more importantly, the presentation of history becomes innately tied to social norms and world views. Those who control the message control the narrative. Control and power have long been part of the hidden curriculum- implicit curriculum conveyed without aware intent (Miller & Seller, 1990). Current political fights have begun to bring those innuendos out of the margins and into the headlines. The role of the American history classroom, and the textbooks that frame its curriculum, in guiding objective discussion of the connection between historical and modern of power and race led to the development of the following research questions:

**Research Questions**

1. How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook American History (2018)?

2. How do narratives in the textbook American History (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of critical race theory?

3. How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook American History (2018)?


**Procedures**

While Chapter I has been used to describe the timeliness and usefulness of the study from a long view perspective, the following chapters will be used to describe in further detail the detailed mission of the study. Chapter II will provide a literature review of power, critical studies, critical race theory, and textbook analysis. Chapter III will guide the reader through the methodology of the study and the positionality of the author. The findings and extracted themes of the study will be presented in Chapter IV, with discussion and analysis of said themes presented in Chapter V. Chapter V will also be utilized to advise and recommend future research on the topics of the study.
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Textbook Industry

Those who question the timeliness of an investigation of a textbook in the age of the internet and differentiated instruction need look no further than the catchphrase from *All the President’s Men* (Warner, 1983), “follow the money.” Like many socio-cultural inquiries, the research questions for this study are connected to an industry based upon economic profit. The textbook industry dates back hundreds of years, yet continues to find new and inventive ways to remain relevant and create a healthy bottom line. According to Association of American Publishers’ Stat Shot Report (Anderson, 2022), November 2021 textbook revenues were $220.3 million, up 23.4% from November 2020. Year to date revenues were $5.1 billion, representing a 14.1% increase from the first 11 months of the previous year.

Beyond the publishers themselves, another powerful force within the textbook industry are the players attempting to establish and direct the narratives of the texts. States are defined to publishers as either open or closed territories. Within open territories, publishers sell directly to school districts. In closed territories, however, districts must choose from textbooks approved by that state’s adoption committee (Apple, 2014). For most of the adoption states, a denied textbook is not considered for another six years. Each of these states has a different process and approval criteria (Loewen, 1995). As a result, publishers design their textbooks to the states with the most students, creating what publishers call the “Texas or California Effect” (Tulley & Farr, 1990, p.166).

While a publishing company making money in an educational system interwoven into a capitalist system is not inherently negative, it does press us to consider the forces guiding the curriculum. When we look back and examine the institution of education as a whole, we are
often left wondering why an education system might be designed more for obedience and control than for investigation and creative thinking. A good clue lies in a quote from one of the most powerful men in America in 1918. The year mandatory education became a national law, President Woodrow Wilson (the most educated president in our nation’s history), stated in a speech to businessmen, “We want one class to have a liberal education. We want another class, a very much larger class if necessary, to forgo the privilege of a liberal arts education and fit themselves to perform specific difficult manual tasks” (Zinn, 2015, p. 317). From the creation and utilization of an unquestioning citizenry (Chomsky et al., 2018) to the wave of capitalists pushing privatization of education in order to get their hands on the trillion dollar per year education establishment, the course of American public education has been increasingly steered by the plutocrats (Picciano & Spring, 2013). When the corporate agenda takes over curriculum, appeasement of the public on divisive issues becomes a priority (Mehta, 2015). The challenging of the voices and structures of power, an act necessary for productive and progressive change (Chomsky, 2018), becomes increasingly difficult.

**Historical Timeline of Textbook Analysis**

An analysis of the Texas/California dichotomy in American textbook narratives is one of the more recent studies examining the North Star of American history education (Goldstein, 2020). Dana Goldstein’s analysis focused on eight American history textbooks that have been approved in Texas and California. She found that while the texts have the same authors and publishers, they differed significantly on hundreds of entries depending upon which state they had been approved. While California texts included racial limits to suburban expansion in the 1950’s, regulations concerning the second amendment, non-binary gender identities and female involvement in Native North American relations, Texas texts did not (Goldstein, 2020).
Conversely, while Texas texts included the voices of border patrol agents, the celebration of Gilded Age entrepreneurs, and the Republican critique of President Obama’s environmental policies, California texts did not (Goldstein, 2020). Goldstein’s study highlights the connection between state politics and American history textbooks. While general timelines are congruent, the takes on specific issues mirror the political leanings of state politics.

Goldstein’s report is one of the more recent studies in the lineage of American history textbook analysis. The turn of the century had been dominated by James Loewen’s bookend first edition (1995) and revised 2007 edition of *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*. This survey examined 12 leading American history textbooks and uncovered an amalgam of biases, errors, myths, stereotypes, and omissions operating within a Eurocentric, pro-American, misogynistic, White narrative. Before Loewen, Sleeter and Grant had brought to light the rich White able bodied male slant within their textbook analysis in their 1991 work *Race, Class, Gender, and Disability*. The analysis of Sleeter and Grant (2017), following like-minded researchers before them, focused on what groups received the most attention in the textbooks. In determining who these textbook authors want the reader to know the most about, it can be discerned who they have ignored.

Prior to Sleeter and Grant, Frances Fitzgerald became renowned for her exhaustive analysis of textbooks in her study *America Revised* (1979). She noted that the various social movements in America throughout the 1950s and 60s had spurred an overhaul of American history textbooks that included a focus on race, ethnicity, class, and gender. Despite those inclusions, her study found that the presentation of these social factors lacked any real substance and stayed away from controversial topics, questions, and conversations that may have been deemed controversial at that given time.
Earlier that decade, Janice Trecker (1971) analyzed over a dozen history books, between 1937-1969, to isolate the depiction of women in the American classroom. She found few mentions of women at all, and that those rare mentions were often either inaccurate or incomplete. Trecker’s fruitless search for an accurate depiction of women in history textbooks mirrored the 1960s NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) inquiry into racial representations within history texts. Searching for a reflection of a multicultural and multiracial textbook experience, the NAACP research found a dominantly White middle class narrative (Brown & Brown, 2015).

**Recent Studies in Textbook Analysis**

The aforementioned pillars of textbook analysis laid the groundwork for more specialized investigations into American history textbooks. Brown and Brown (2010) focused their study on 19 history textbooks from Texas (grades 5-12 AP) in order to uncover the textbooks’ coverage of racial violence in American history as framed during the “post-racial” Obama presidency. They noted the triumphant racial rhetoric surrounding the election of the first U.S. president of color, and sought to determine whether historical content of racial violence in textbooks had become more pervasive and accurate.

The findings of Brown and Brown (2010) revealed a more accurate and complete historical narrative surrounding racial violence in American history textbooks, as compared to a long history of misrepresentations and inaccuracies. However, the narratives present within the textbooks represented the actions of a few bad apples as a deviation from White society. This “abnormality”, as they were presented, did not acknowledge the institutionalized power structures which allowed these actions nor systemic advantages gained by them play out throughout society. Racial violence was presented in the texts as strategic, but not systemic.
Before Brown and Brown used Berringer’s four step approach to literary analysis, Derrick Alridge (2006) used the same methodology to evaluate the master narratives in the depiction of Martin Luther King Jr. within six textbooks from 2002-2005. Aldridge (2006) uncovered commonalities within the texts in that they oversimplified the narratives of King’s humanity, presented the Civil Rights era as far removed from present day, and created a disconnect between King’s time and modern issues of race and poverty.

A year before Aldridge, Diane Hess (2005) placed scholarly research of the Supreme Court case *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* on a spectrum and compared those categories to the more simplified and positive versions of the case as presented in American history textbooks. Her categorization included Brown as simple icon, Brown as liberation referent, Brown as unfulfilled promise, Brown as well intentioned error, and Brown as irrelevant. Hess’ study found, similarly to an earlier study of Fitzgerald (1979), the textbooks mirrored teachers’ desires to avoid controversy.

While not focusing directly on race, Christopher R. Leahey used his 2007 study to explore how textbooks explore the war in Vietnam. Four textbooks were explored in order to bring to light key moments in the Vietnam War in order to demonstrate how ideology influences some of the most controversial events in our nation’s history. In keeping with the findings of previous textbook analysis, Leahey found that the most controversial components of the war were omitted or oversimplified. He found no mention of the controversial leadup to the Gulf of Tonkin Incident, which essentially pulled the United States into full scale war.

David Bruce Lavere (2004) included five high school textbooks in his study of the depiction of Native Americans. The goal of the analysis was to see how the depictions of Native Americans relate to the types of knowledge and skills called upon by the reform movements of
that time period. The research of Padget (2015) utilized a Tribal Critical Race Theory to analyze five textbooks from an indigenous perspective. The textbook analysis aided in the adoption of a US textbook at Padget’s high school, as well as providing evidence for his research question: “Under what conditions can Tribal Critical Race Theory help illuminate how American Indians are portrayed in textbooks?” (p. 5). He employed a critical discourse analysis in order to determine the accuracy of the depiction of the Five Great Values within Native cultures as portrayed within the five textbooks examined (Padget, 2015). He also demonstrates the connection between personal meaning and relevance to the field and body of research.

Pelegrino et al. (2013) used the CRT lens to examine eight American history books published between 2004-2013 in order to examine the complexity of their treatment of the historical segregation connected to the education of African Americans. They refer to the importance of the history textbook within the establishment of teachers’ scope and sequence (Ravitch, 2004) and selected their texts from the American Textbook Council’s (2012) list of Widely Adopted History Textbooks. While the authors of this study found significant coverage of the textbooks intersectionality of race and education, they found glaring voids in connectivity, the lack of a CRT lens, the lack of historical empathy, and the persistence of the narrative stating that valued education for Blacks is historically found solely through the integration into White schools (Pelegrino et al., 2013). Because the authors questioned both the adequate teacher preparation to deal with the complexities of race and the willingness to disconnect from the textbook, they suggested the onus should be placed on future textbooks to accept the responsibility of the cultural burdens of race based education within the curriculum.

The aforementioned research calls upon researchers to continue to monitor the progress being made within textbooks in regards to historical racial narratives, racial empathy, and the
CRT lens. As textbook adoption has proven to be a political undertaking, there is no assurance that the passing of time will equate to progress on these fronts. Continued textbook analysis serves as a way to understand how the racial undertones of modern socio-political discussions work their way into the American history curriculum. As I have used previous textbook analysis as stepping stones to my textbook research, I hope to serve as a starting point for others. I also look to utilize this textbook focused research in order to set up more immersive investigations into the racial power dynamics in American history curriculum as it pertains to teacher identity, teacher pedagogy, school environments, and the socio-political dynamics of the local community.

**Discussions of Race**

My study will build upon the empirical studies of textbook analysis by examining race within a major American history textbook and accept the recommendation to uncover the cultural connection between race, power, and the socio-political forces driving the history textbook narratives. As race is a central player in my study, I wish to provide context for the working definition of race, for the purpose of clarity. When examining race within historical texts, it is helpful to connect race itself to the social structures in which it operates. Solorzanno and Yosso (2002) define race as a socially constructed hierarchy, created to demonstrate the dominance of one race over others. They see racism as an institutionalized entity through the claim of superiority, the legitimization of racist actions, and the institutionalization of racism benefitting the superior group over others. While anthropologists for one hundred and fifty years have established the lack of a scientific and genetic basis of race, there are few who have doubted its historical impact over that time as a social reality.
W.E.B. Dubois has garnered increasing credit as a pioneer in the ideology of critical race theory decades before the term was even coined. In *The Conservation of Races* (1897), Dubois investigated and established an extensive base of research on the dichotomy between scientific and cultural realities of race. While he doubted the former, he acknowledged and emphasized the latter. With all due respect to Dubois, as it is pioneers in academia which represent the shoulders that later researchers stand upon, I will use a modern critique of Dubois’ to establish a definition of race for the purposes of this study. Both Dubois and Chike Jeffers deny the scientific reality of race; however, Dubois defines race as a cultural reality and Jeffers underscores race as a specifically political entity. Jeffers denies the authority of the historian and sociologist to define race as the precursor to Dubois’s notions of spiritually distinct groups. Jeffers (2013) defines race as cultural entities constructed politically for the purpose of subordination. Race, the creation of the racially subordinate, and the dynamics of power are subjects of analysis within this study of the American history textbook.

**White Privilege and Racial Structure**

Delgado et al. (2017) define White privilege as a system of opportunities and benefits granted to people simply because they are White. Edwardo Bonilla-Silva (2017) describes the racial structure as the totality of the social relations and practices that reinforce White privilege. When we consider why racial structures are reproduced in education, we must acknowledge that members of the dominant race benefit from the continuation of the status quo. Unacknowledged White privilege allows for the continuation of invisible Eurocentric narratives in educational policy, curriculum design, and pedagogy. The social studies classroom is a place well suited to deconstruct the multifaceted layers of the master narrative. Ladson-Billings (2018) defines race as a sense making concept (2018); critical race theory as a series of theoretical propositions that
race and racism are normal, not aberrant, in everyday life (Taylor et al., 2016); and calls on the social studies classroom to be a “curricular home for unlearning the racism that has confounded us as a nation” (Ladson-Billings, 2003, p. 63).

An outcome of racialized structure and White privilege are the figured worlds in which teachers and students operate. Like race, figured worlds are socially constructed and represent the values and labels placed upon the written and unwritten rules that influence behavior in social spaces (Holland et al., 1998). Within the environments of educational spaces, artifacts such as grades and test scores represent a socially constructed idea of smartness (Hatt, 2008; Hatt 2016). Notions of smartness have been historically linked to Whiteness (Leonardo & Boederick, 2011), serving as a figured world's example of racial hierarchy and White privilege within the curriculum.

**Discussions of Power**

If racism is a system of advantage based upon race (Wellman, 1994), then power and race are inextricably linked. Critical theorists have asserted for decades the notions of multiple forms and layers of power within education, a need for emancipation from the chains of domination, and the shedding of light on who loses power when others gain it. Critical theorists focus specifically and generally on the role of power dynamics, such as race, in the classroom (Apple, 2019; Freire, 1972; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007).

When dealing with such an equivocal term as power, it is helpful to provide a singular definition to work from in order to provide context. Since much of this investigation centers around social justice, we will use the definition of power employed by Dr. Martin Luther King, “Power is the ability to achieve purpose. Power is the ability to affect change” (Where do we go
from here?, 2015). Power often backs action and inaction, and uncovering the root of the power, the comprehensibility of the power, and the results of power are worthy of further investigation.

Apple (2019) states that not only does the American educational structure not work to alleviate the issues of inequity in our country, but that it, in fact, reinforces and reproduces political, economic, and cultural inequalities. In delving into the tug of war of American education, McLaren and Kincheloe (2007) note: “It’s two faces looking toward opposite goals and outcomes: in one direction, inclusive, socially sensitive objective concerned with multiple sources of knowledge and socioeconomic mobility for diverse students from multiple backgrounds; and in the other, a standardized, exclusive, socially regulatory agenda that serves the interest of the dominant power (p.12)”. They go on to note that “those students most closely aligned with the social and cultural markers associated with such power (p. 12).” Textbook analyses have investigated, and will continue to pursue, this power struggle in terms of the voices and ideas included and excluded from the narrative.

Like Apple and Kincheloe, Freire (1972) verifies the inconceivable notion of a neutral education process, noting “education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the interrogation of the younger generation in the logic of the present system (p. 34).” Freire adds that education either brings conformity to it, or it becomes part of the ‘practice of freedom’ the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world (p. 34).”

The corporate role of education over the landscape of American change is tough to escape. As such, what has traditionally been seen as a public role of curriculum development and textbook design has been overtaken by private interests (Kincheloe, 2001). Kincheloe, Apple, and Freire worked to shed light on the freeing power of education.
Internet and social media algorithms put in place by big tech corporations, often affiliated with one political side or the other, have made Americans more politically polarized over time. The United States currently has the most polarizing news coverage in the Western world (Reuters, 2020). Evidence also bears out that the political divide has become more closely connected with Americans' feelings on race. In essence, the political divide is the racial divide (Mutz, 2018). Groups that are threatened tend to retreat to the safety of their own groups (Mutz, 2018) and respond with increasingly negative feelings about the other side (Abromowitz & Webster, 2016). With our media coverage and consumption helping to create an us vs. them mentality, it is more important than ever to open up lines of inquiry and dialogue within our social studies classrooms.

**Questioning as a Sociopolitical Influence on Curriculum**

Another theme in the critical literature that is essential in understanding the socio-political underpinnings of the social studies curriculum is framing power in terms of who asks the questions. Many critical theorists emphasize the importance of putting the power of asking questions about the world in the hands of the students (Apple, 2019; Chomsky et al., 2018; Freire, 1972). The framing of the questions within a textbook are often connected to the content within the text itself. Questions themselves imply significance. Just as teachers pose verbal and written questions upon elements of their curriculum they deem important, so too do textbook creators. What issues lie at the center of questions, what readers are directed to explore, and how the questions are framed are worthy of analysis. The framing of questions connects to issues of power within the curriculum. In other words, the questions that textbooks are asking are often more important than the answers they are looking to elicit.
Freire (1972) emphasizes the power and possibility of indigenous knowledge. The pedagogy of the oppressed must not be developed by the oppressors. The banking method of education, as Freire famously phrases it, is an indoctrination method employed by those with power in order to keep the oppressed from asking real systemic questions (Chomsky et al., 2018). Horkheimer et al. (1997) ask the learner to consider the difference between what is and what should be with their concept of imminence. Weiner (2015) admits that teaching critically or using critical theory in curriculum development is different from teaching radically or progressively. When one espouses the virtues of a critical investigation through student developed questions, the teacher must acknowledge that conservative results are possible (Weiner, 2015). Michael Foucault (1988) sums up the connection between our modern technology and the need for students to question when he speaks of his dream of a new age of curiosity which utilizes our technical means. He notes the infinity of things to know and the ability to find our answers. When viewed through this new age of technology enabled curiosity, Kincheloe’s (2001) evolving themes in critical pedagogy become even more realistic: “The development of a social individual imagination: the ability to imagine new forms of self-realization and social collaboration that lead to emancipatory results and democratic efforts to reframe learning as part of the struggle against multiple forms of domination.(p. 176).”

It is important to consider what baselines of understanding are being created and what narratives of social collaboration are exalted or ignored, when analyzing a history textbook. Race will be present, but studies can focus on how race is a part of larger power dynamics: “Transformative educators are interested in how power operates in the social order and the ways it works to produce subjectivity(Kincheloe, 2001, p. 177).”
Textbooks are often presented as objective purveyors of knowledge, but they too work subjectively. How texts are interested in operational power is a worthy pursuit of analysis:

- Alternatives to the alienation of the individuals.
- Produces conscious individuals who are aware of their self-production and the social conditions under which they live. (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 178)

Within history textbooks, individuals are often honored for rising above the normalization of the masses. The mass level of individualism within movements is often ignored or glossed over (Lowen, 2007). How the textbook connects with individual readers in terms of race and power is important, as those instances represent a break from the norm. “The notion of an individual’s relational existence becomes extremely important in this context as we focus attention on the power of difference in social education (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 180).”

In Cartesian thinking, that which is clear and distinct to an individual is, in fact, true. The narratives within a textbook go far in establishing a collective truth. The “truths” of race, as presented in history textbooks, go far in presenting narratives of power. These themes in critical pedagogy connect to the following research questions:

1. How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook *American History* (2018)?
2. How do narratives in the textbook *American History* (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of critical race theory?
3. How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook *American History* (2018)?

These questions will work to tie together the ever-present realities of race, power, and education in the textbook and social studies curriculum as a whole.
Discussions of Critical Race Theory

The desire to examine racial dynamics of power within American history has drawn me to Critical Race Theory. Growing out of the critical legal studies movement (a denial of the neutrality of law) in the 1970s (Taylor et al., 2016), Critical Race Theory found traction in the field of education as scholars there identified with the issues of race and racism omnipresent in the law (Crenshaw, 2002; Tate, 1997). At the initial CRT workshop, held in Madison, Wisconsin in 1989, scholars there realized a common goal to identify and expose issues of race, structure, and power (Delgado et al., 2017). Over time, CRT has made its way into the study of numerous institutions and has branched off into alternative studies and critiques. Because there is no perfect one-size-fits-all framework for research, scholars have taken critical race theory in a variety of directions including, but not limited to, Latino Critical Race Theory (Villalpando, 2005), Asian Critical Race Theory (Rodriguez & Kim, 2018), Queer Theory (Ahmed, 2006), Tribal Critical Race Theory (Brayboy, 2005), and Africana Critical Studies (Bassey, 2007). Scholars in these areas have both built upon and challenged initial research of CRT. From that point, critical race theory has remained largely in academic circles until its jump into the American lexicon through omnipresent coverage of educational curriculum, political policy, and media coverage during the Trump presidency (Lopez, 2017).

Specific to the world of education, critical race theory has come to represent the methodological, critical, and theoretical frameworks utilized to dismantle racism within the world of education. Critical race theorists acknowledge the Eurocentric nature of American educational curriculum and pedagogies (Banks, 2004; Delgado, 1991; Delgado et al., 2017) and use CRT to challenge the Eurocentric racial narratives and curricular discrimination.
CRT Tenet 1: Systemic Racism

Early CRT scholars established a set of 5 tenets that future research within the field would be built upon (Taylor et al., 2016). While modern CRT research has expanded, built upon, and challenged previous research within the field, the five tenets work as a unifying general framework. The first of these tenets established a phrase that we hear often in today’s political battles over CRT: systemic racism, or the notion that racism is not an anomaly or an irregularity in society (Banks & Banks, 2004; Delgado et al., 2017; Smedley, 2011). Feagin and Ducey’s (2019) breakdown of systemic racism is helpful when connecting power to curriculum:

1. Patterns of unjust impoverishment and unjust enrichment and their transmission over time.
2. The resulting vested group interests and the alienating racist relations.
3. The cost and burdens of racism.
4. The important role of White elites.
5. The rationalization of racial oppression in White-racist framing.
6. The continuing resistance to racism.

The color blind narrative, built through a belief in meritocracy, allows the empowered to point to isolated incidents of racism and abuse of power. CRT theorists point to the opposition to the dominant narrative as an important teaching tool to bring to light systemic and structural racism (Zamudio, 2011). When examining the official curriculum within the textbook, it is important to consider what is not present as much as what is included (Eisner, 1996). When seen as aberrations to the norm, racist people and events of the past can be cast as the exception to the norm instead of a component of a racist normalized system or structure. Elements of systemic
racism within the textbook American History (HMH, 2018) will serve as a row of coding, a process that will be further broken down in chapter three.

**CRT Tenet 2: Interest Convergence**

Another tenet that can be used to uncover the underlying Eurocentric narratives offered to the public is that of interest convergence (Bell, 1980). Derrick Bell identified that progressive racial court case decisions were made once that change became comfortable for White society. He argued that American society is designed to advance White people and there will not be advances in racial justice until we have a convergence of the interests of Blacks and important White groups (Bell, 1980).

Specifically, Bell pointed to the *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* case of 1954, which provided the legal basis for the desegregation of American schools. Bell argued that the unanimous Supreme Court decision was made in the Brown case because it improved the credibility of the United States on the world stage during the Cold War (Bell, 1980). When interest in the actual enforcement of the integration of schools diverged, American schools reverted back to a segregated state in a more de facto manner. In examining segregation in American schools in the 65 years since *Brown vs. Board of Education*, the UCLA Civil Rights Project found that segregation rates were on the rise in recent years. By 2019, segregation in American schools closely mirrored the numbers from 1968 (Orfield et al., 2019).

A 21st century example of interest convergence can be found in the Supreme Court decision of *Grutter vs. Bollinger* of 2003, in which the court found the affirmative action program at the University of Michigan law school to be lawful. In the majority opinion, Justice O’Connor downplayed the importance of race in the case, and instead pointed to the decision’s enhancement of government institutions for all of American society, including the armed
services and business communities (Driver, 2011). Harkening back to his original theory, Bell noted in the aftermath of the Grutter decision, “No matter how much harm Blacks were suffering, because of racial hostility and discrimination, we could not obtain meaningful relief until policy makers perceived that the relief that Blacks sought furthered interests or resolved issues of more primary concern” (Driver, 2011, p. 151). The influences of Bell’s interest convergence within the field of constitutional law are important ideas to consider when examining the breakdown of a social studies curriculum and CRT lens to historical narratives. Elements of interest convergence within the textbook American History (HMH, 2018) will serve as a row of coding, a process that will be further broken down in Chapter III.

**CRT Tenet 3: Race as a Social Construct**

Race as a social construct with social and political realities has become an integral part of CRT and research (Akintunde, 2007; Armelagos & Gervin, 2003; Delgado, 1991; Valdes, 2003). As such, Eurocentrism is not simply the appreciation of European culture, but the non-appreciation of non-European culture. Whiteness is normalized, invisible, and thus, preferred. Within the cultural hierarchy, the norm is a privilege and non-European culture is devalued (Thompson, 2005). Rasmussen (2001) describes Whiteness as follows:

- Whiteness is invisible and unmarked–Whiteness is invisible to Whites, hypervisible to people of Color.
- Whiteness is “empty” and White identity is established through appropriation–Whiteness is defined by what is not.
- Whiteness is structural privilege–Advantage in obtaining jobs, homes, school, and healthcare.
- Whiteness is violence and terror.
Whiteness is the institutionalization of European colonialism—Racial superiority and inferiority established a permanent system of exploitation.

Race, and indeed Whiteness, as a social construct can be further exemplified when noting how the benefactors of Whiteness have changed over time. While naturalization in America was restricted to those deemed as White between the Naturalization Act of 1790 and the Nationality Act of 1952, who has been defined as White changed on many occasions during that time. Throughout the Black/White binary, Irish, Jews, Italians, Hispanics, and other groups previously seen on the outside of Whiteness, eventually became legally accepted into White society by the time the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made legal discrimination based upon race illegal (Zinn, 2015). However, just as de facto segregation continued in schools well after the Brown vs. Board of Education case of 1954, so too has de facto discrimination based upon race continued. Thus, the descriptions of Whiteness within CRT work as a dominant role within a racial power hierarchy, not only in the reality of the past, but also our remembrance of it. It is appropriate to examine not just race within the history textbook, but also structural privilege, the establishment of a permanent Eurocentric narrative, and the invisibility of Whiteness within the power structure of America’s past and present. Elements of race as a social construct within the textbook American History (HMH, 2018) will serve as a row of coding, a process that will be further broken down in Chapter III.

**CRT Tenet 4: Storytelling and Counter-storytelling**

The privileges of Whiteness play out beyond the historical events of the past to the modern day remembrance of the past. As the highly successful musical Hamilton asks, “Who lives, who dies, who tells your story?” (Miranda, 2016). Beyond Alexander Hamilton, it is a series of questions pertaining to every history book, every history classroom, and every history
teacher who has ever considered what is included and what is left out of our history. Critics of the status quo urge us to consider whose perspective is told when we learn about the Alamo from an American history textbook (Hatt & Urietta, 2020), whose interests are conveyed when we learn about Brown vs. the Board of Education (Bell, 1980), and who get to be remembered as the shapers, heroes, informers, and progressives in most mainstream history textbooks (Zinn, 2015). Critics of the mainstream narratives of history note the Eurocentric narrative and the lack of any real counter to those stories. counter-stories do the important work of interrupting, confronting, addressing, and working to eliminate racial oppression and inequity. Elements of storytelling and counter-storytelling within the textbook American History (HMH, 2018) will serve as a row of coding, a process that will be further broken down in chapter three.

**CRT Tenet 5: Whiteness as Power, Property, & Recipients of Civil Rights Legislation**

An amalgam of the tenets of the systemic nature of racism, interest convergence, counter-storytelling, race as a social construct, and the final tenet (Whites as recipients of civil rights legislation) can be seen within the implications of the Supreme Court Case of Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka. The Brown case is often referred to as an example of overcoming the wrongs of the past and making more equitable education possible. However, in order to understand the ill-fated results of this case, we must peel back the textbook glamorization of Brown to uncover Brooks vs. Moberly, Missouri (Detweiler, 1967). An examination of this case would lead us to the discovery of a district which had once employed 11 teachers of Color within its 108 teacher contingent. Upon the Brown ruling, the district closed the school for students of Color and fired all teachers of Color. The teachers sued to get their jobs back, with the pretext that some of them were surely among the most qualified in the district. Unsurprisingly in retrospect, they lost (Zinn, 2015). This pattern of Black school closures and the firing of Black
teachers was repeated throughout the country. Where once there had been 82,000 teachers of Color in the southern United States, there were less than half of that within a decade (Lash & Ratcliffe, 2014).

The Moberly case sets up the fact that we still have not recovered from this mass firing of teachers of Color. Once one of few places where educated African Americans could find employment, the school house was now a place where White board members, administrators, and parents would just assume to see White teachers (Milner & Howard, 2004). If the race of the teacher did not matter, the loss of teachers of Color would not matter. But it does. Students of color having had at least one teacher of color from third through fifth grades have been shown to have higher test scores, fewer behavior problems, and fewer suspensions (Gershenson et al., 2018). Students of Color with at least one teacher of Color have a 39% lower dropout rate and are much more likely to be accepted to gifted and talented programs than White students, even when age, health, class, and test scores are considered (Grissom & Redding, 2016). Within the Moberly case we see the counter-story to the Brown vs. Board narrative that we read in the textbook. We see an example of systemic racism unrealized to White America, unknowing benefactors of civil rights legislation. We also see an example of questions that are made more possible through a CRT approach to history. Instances of Whites as recipients of civil rights legislation within the textbook American History (HMH, 2018) will serve as a row of coding, a process that will be further broken down in Chapter III.

Material Theories of Race

CRT researchers have taken their studies in a number of different directions in the past few decades. Material theories of race focus on the economic and bodily concerns of systemic racism (Thompson, 2005). These theories look at the modern disadvantages faced by people of
Color as being rooted in historic systems and policies and tied to today’s perils. People of Color are twice as likely to be unemployed, three times as likely to be poor, and possess one-tenth the average wealth of White Americans. (Wise, 2011). While the average family of color still earns two-thirds the yearly income of the average White family (Feagin and Ducey, 2019), the larger gap in wealth can be connected to generational struggles and systemic obstacles. People of Color pay more for cars and housing units than White Americans, while those housing units are valued at 35% less (Bonilla-Silva, 2017). Economic and opportunistic inequities impact can be seen when examining health and longevity. In America, people of Color have twice the infant mortality rate and die nine years earlier than the average White person (2011). Material theories of race, as they connect to economic and bodily concerns, will serve as one of three columns which will intersect with the rows of textbook codes in the second round of coding. A more in-depth explanation of this process will be provided in Chapter III.

**Discursive Theories of Race**

While material theories can be more easily targeted through demographic and economic statistics, discursive theories frame many of those discrepancies within the norms and practices of Whiteness (Thompson, 2005). Aspects such as language, mass media, cultural symbols, or the narrative of history help define the norms and expectations of a civilization (Omi & Winant, 2015). More made it across the Atlantic Ocean than systems of government and economy. Europeans also brought the following cultural forces: the individual as the primary unit, the notion that the individual can control their environment, the obsession with winning, the chain of command, the push for progress, and success measured by economic possessions. Within that power paradigm, a premium has been placed on English language, written tradition, Christian religion, Anglo-Saxon history and leadership, the European immigrant experience, the nuclear
family as the ideal family unit, the male as the breadwinner, and the female as the homemaker (Thompson, 2005). Race is used in America in such a way as to make invisible the ways the common culture marks them as ethnic. Economic research in Chicago found that White sounding names were three times more likely to receive a call back on an interview than African American or foreign sounding names, even when their resumes were identical (Jacquemet & Yannelis, 2012). Discursive theories of race, as they connect to the normative positionality of Whiteness, will serve as the second of three columns which will intersect with the rows of textbook codes in the second round of coding.

**Institutional Theories of Race**

Institutional theories focus on the regulations and codes utilized in creating hierarchy within a society (Thompson, 2005). If racism itself is a system of advantage, those systems can be identified throughout American history in the form of the institution of slavery, Jim Crow laws and Black codes, voting laws, housing covenants, and the inequitable allocation of punitive punishments within the justice system (Thompson, 2005). What is more difficult to identify is how and where policies and systems play an active role in creating the modern realities of a world past their existence. Material theories, discursive theories, and institutional theories are often interconnected. Systems and policies become the normative perceptions of a society and often create a series of unbalanced outcomes. As Marx and Engels noted, “The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch, the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force” (Marx & Engels, 1845, p. 14). When power, platforms, and policies are connected to serve a particular group, a hierarchy of advantage and disadvantage over time seems inevitable. Institutional theories of race, as they
connect to the regulations, codes, and policies of a society, will serve as the last of three columns which will intersect with the rows of textbook codes in the second round of coding.

Now that politicians and journalists have shed light on CRT in the classroom, these concepts are becoming a greater part of the national conversation. It is important to see them as separate, yet connected. A key unifying factor between these various theories and of the tenets of which they sprout is the examination of systems of power.

**Critical Race Theory in Empirical Studies**

It is important to examine how practitioners are creating and examining curriculum through the CRT lens. Because it is so politically charged, the teaching of race presents unique challenges (Milner & Howard, 2004). Hambacher and Ginn (2020) utilized a CRT framework to study how the politically charged concepts of race were navigated by teachers between 2002-2018. The researchers accumulated 39 articles centered around race visible education during that time period in order to examine how education systems enable racist ideologies through “the official school curriculum,” which CRT contends is “a culturally specific artifact designed to maintain a White supremacist master script” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 18). Because Sleeter’s (2001) *Journal of Teacher Education* literature review found a void in pedagogy preparation for culturally diverse schools, Hambacher and Glenn used 2002 as their jumping off point. Across the empirical studies, researchers mainly examined a specific course or experience, and found that 70% of the articles focused on the preparation of pre-service teachers to work in culturally diverse environments, while the remainder examined instructional support teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors (Hambacher & Ginn, 2020). Their findings revealed race visible professional teacher development steeped in meritocracy and burdened by the political undertones of race. There was no mention of textbook utilization or deconstruction in
order to aid pre-service teachers in bridging the gap between the experiences of their students and the master narrative.

Woodson (2015) uses the CRT framework to explore six Black students' relationships with their history textbook in order to uncover the connections they make between modern socio-political issues and the history of civil rights struggles. The study uncovers a contentious relationship between the students and the text, as they discuss what is being ignored, overlooked, and misrepresented. The author suggests the use of counternarratives in the curriculum, along with the comparison and contradiction to modern socio-political contexts (Woodson, 2015). Novarro and Howard (2017) use the counter narrative strategy of CRT in their Modern World History unit set in South Central Los Angeles. The unit “Third World Liberation,” in which students prepare for a Socratic Seminar through the vantage point of a post-World War II Latin American leader, uses the experiential knowledge of people of Color (Solorzano, 1998) in order to take on the Eurocentric power dynamic of the textbook by challenging it with a counter-narrative. Urrieta (2004) took his postcolonial and cultural studies investigation to 24 Chicanx educators and uncovered through their understanding of American education a Whitewashing of American history, uncritical and hostile portrayals of people of Color, and a postcolonial canon of knowledge seeking to promote an Americanized master narrative throughout teacher perceptions, pedagogies, and texts.

This chapter was intended to place my work in a historical context and to justify the methods explained in Chapter III. While American history textbooks are sure to include various dynamics of industry, it is rare to find one that positions the textbook itself within those power structures of industry. Because states and districts spend billions of dollars collectively, they often strive to include material that is acceptable to the mainstream and avoids controversial
issues. While the development of CRT has coincided with greater inclusion and accuracy of racialized issues in American history textbooks, disputed issues of race and power within our institutions continue to be minimized or ignored in the history books despite their impassioned debate across society at large. Due to enhanced online algorithms and the profitability of division, we live in a time of heightened racial polarization within the United States. While this racialized encampment leads to explosive online and in person disputes, it is rarely the subject of deep discussion focused on empathy and understanding. The history classroom may be the best environment for civilized racial dialogue. As such, the analysis of American history textbooks must continue.
CHAPTER III: METHODS

Culture Wars Through the Textbook

For centuries, the subjective nature of American history textbooks has reflected the prominent and dominant socio-political ideologies of the times (Moreau, 2011). Textbooks themselves have both reflected and helped create the realities of racism, sexism, and classism in American society. The New English Tutor (Harris, 1690) established an early connection between school and religion by using the Bible as a basis for reading. By 1827, over 200,000 American children were learning to read while using the Bible in school as their primary text. Pre-Civil War textbooks were dominated by northern publishers and questioned the institution of slavery (Moreau, 2011). After the Civil War, however, what children learned about the war was determined by where they lived. While children living south of the Mason-Dixon line learned about American history through the eyes of Confederate Vice-President Alexander Stevens (1872), those in the North read a history by abolitionist Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1875).

Popular narratives helped drive textbook sales from $7.4 million in 1897 to $17.3 million in 1913. The 1922 history textbook, The History of the American People, Beard and Bagley make no effort to disguise their purpose, as they state in the preface a desire to present the major issues and problems “of the living present in the light of the historical past” (2018, p. v). They write of history being “rightly told” and use as an example the purposeful reduction of Native American history: “They are interesting and picturesque, but they made no impression upon the civilization of the United States” (p. vi). Furthermore, they wrote, “In a history designed to explain the present rather than to gratify curiosity and entertain, Indian habits of life and Indian wars must have a very minor position” (p. vi).
By the mid-century, protestant anti-communist anti-immigrant sentiment dominated American history textbooks. Changes to textbooks in the 1960s and 70s led to intensified culture wars, as opponents of these changes saw them as questioning “traditional values”. Textbooks had long included an ideological narrative, but the push for inclusion of women and racial minorities and a questioning of the Eurocentric norm led to backlash. Schools were firebombed and dynamited, buses were shot up, reporters were beaten, and mines were closed in attempts to change curriculum (Moreau, 2011).

These examples of the connection between socio-political hot button issues and the subjective nature of American history textbooks over time underscore the nature of this study. I will look to examine the undertones of the text to examine not just what is covered, but how it is covered and how it coincides with American social norms and narratives of the time.

**Methods and Methodology**

No fewer than three of the studies on which I built upon utilized Alridge’s methodology for literary analysis (Alridge, 2006). Alridge (2006), Brown and Brown (2010), and Kaul and Guiden (2018) all leaned upon a four-step literary analysis of intellectual history that calls upon the researcher to read the literature, note the themes, discuss the themes, and support conclusions with examples (Aldridge, 2006). Brown and Brown used the four-step process to analyze how textbooks depicted racial violence in the Obama era. They realized that Obama’s presidency brought a renewed attention to race in education. While my study was framed in the racial pendulum swing of the post-Trump presidency, I utilized the Alridge process to examine how the textbook *American History* depicted narratives of systems of power through embracing or avoiding Critical Race Theory. Each of the 28 modules of the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018), set up as chronological chapters from the 1400s through the 21st century, were read and
coded separately and sequentially. Once all 28 modules were coded, I used Chapter IV to note and discuss themes within the text by analyzing shifts, connections, and/or omissions within the chapter codes. Chapter V was then used to support conclusions, including key takeaways from the study, and implications for future research.

In coding the textual information within *American History* (HMH, 2018), I used a priori coding with predetermined codes. The first round a priori codes were the five tenets of CRT, as broken down in Chapter II:

1. examples of racism as normal/systemic within the textbook,
2. examples of interest convergence within the textbook,
3. examples of race being socially constructed within the textbook, examples of storytelling and counter-storytelling within the textbook, and
4. examples of White people benefitting from civil rights legislation.

These codes (see Table 2) were used to organize the raw data from the chapters of the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018). For the purposes of this study, raw data came in the form of direct quotes from the text that connect to one of the five tenets of Critical Race Theory.

**Table 2**

*Initial A Priori Coding Chart for Textbook Analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Priori Coding Examples of …</th>
<th>Text from <em>American History</em> textbook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racism as Normal &amp; Systemic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Convergence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race as a Social Construct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storytelling and counter-storytelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiteness as Power, Property, &amp; Recipients of Civil Rights Legislation</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The four step Alridge process of textbook analysis calls for the reading of the text, noting of themes, discussion of themes, and the support of conclusions through examples. Through the first round of coding, the text was read and the themes noted (in this case, the themes are the codes, which represent the five themes of critical race theory). Discussion of themes took place along with analysis, which called for a second round of coding. Raw data, in the form of textbook excerpts that exemplified the five tenets of CRT was further filtered into material theories of CRT (economic and bodily concerns), discursive theories of CRT (racial norms & practices of Whiteness), and institutional theories (regulations and codes used to create racial hierarchy). Table 3 was used for this second step in the coding. These theories of CRT were discussed in detail in Chapter II. In noting similarities, differences, shifts, and omissions when comparing the charts, evidence emerged in order to make an informative discussion of themes possible.

**Table 3**

*CRT Theories Coding*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bridge Codes: Rows represent first round codes</th>
<th>Material Theories (Economic &amp; bodily concerns)</th>
<th>Discursive Theories (Racial norms &amp; practices of Whiteness)</th>
<th>Institutional Theories (Regulations &amp; codes used to create racial hierarchy)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systemic Racism (Racism as normal, not an aberration)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Convergence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Storytelling &amp; Counter-Storytelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race as a social construct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whiteness as power, property, &amp; recipients of Civil Rights legislation</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By coding, categorizing, and unpacking these connections between power and critical race theory, I hope to unveil any potential dichotomy between descriptions and implications, as well as gain further insight into the representation of singular events versus structures of power within the textbook. This first round of coding took the form of short phrases from the text categorized into the aforementioned rows of the tenets of CRT. As trends and patterns emerged from the contextual notes, text based themes began to answer the research questions:

1. How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook *American History* (2018)?

2. How do narratives in the textbook *American History* (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of critical race theory?

3. How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook *American History* (2018)?

The research questions worked to guide the research and to connect the textbook to racial power dynamics in America. As people outside the academic world of CRT form opinions of the framework, and its utility within the world of American social studies education, it is helpful for them to understand where elements of CRT are already stationed within the curriculum. As teachers and administrators field questions about CRT within their curriculum, it is important for them to be armed with the knowledge of where tenets of CRT reside within their textbook. Answers to these research questions, through the CRT coding and analysis of the textbook, will help lead to a more well informed understanding of the presence and absence of the CRT framework tenets within the backbone of the social studies curriculum.
Positionality of the Researcher

Because coding is analysis, it is a subjective process. Heuristic in nature, coding works to summarize and condense the data through the lens of the researcher (Richards & Morse, 2013). As coding becomes linking the data to the idea, it is important to understand the perspective of the person making the connections. As a researcher, I work from the perspective of an educator in the field of secondary social studies. As previously mentioned, there are disagreements within the field as to what history is and how it should be studied/presented. In terms of these debates within historiography, I find myself most compelled by R.G. Collingwood. He noted that because history is not concerned with laws, but with human action, it is not science. However, because history is based upon evidence, it is not art. History is history—an independent way of knowing. If each person is their own historian, there is no ultimate truth in history, only self-discovery. Because we reenact history in our own mind, humans can change things if they change their own thinking (Collingwood, 1977). As such, one can accept authority if they choose to, but they themselves are the ultimate authority and have the ability to challenge any outside authority.

I have come to realize the connection between the questioning of the status quo in my classroom and the work being done by critical theorists such as Kincheloe, Apple, and Friere. I have evolved into a teacher more dedicated to a transformative education interested in investigating how power operates (Kincheloe, 2011), understanding the inescapable political nature of schools (Apple, 2019), and escaping the “banking method” of education in favor of one that empowers students (Freire, 1969).

If students are not taught to question the status quo in political and social matters, we in turn become a country that is susceptible to apathy and passiveness in the face of a rigid power
structure. While my ideological identity has taken on a critical lens, I understand acting against such an ingrained system to be a difficult and complex task. As teachers have often been drawn to the profession due to their success as students and comfort with the education system (Postman & Weingartner, 1969), they are likely to take part in the continuation of traditional curriculum and pedagogy. In terms of social studies teachers, this continuation means the generational pattern of celebration of individual achievement over the power of collaborative effort, storytelling with America continually representing the “good side”, and the notion of the past as linear and inevitable (Loewen, 1995).

In a natural connection to my curricular ideology, my research will focus on the power structures that exist in the American education system with the goal of understanding how concepts of power are challenged or maintained within the American history text through the prism of Critical Race Theory. As race and institutional racism run deep in the development of the American national identity, it is through the social studies curriculum that the underpinnings of systemic power hierarchies are either enlightened or concealed from each potentially game changing generation. As John Hope puts it, “The American idea is the nation’s holiday garb, its festive dress, its Sunday best. It covers up an everyday practice of betraying the claims of equality, justice, and democracy” (Feagin and Ducey, 2019). As the narrative in history and modern socio-political issues represents a Eurocentric narrative, it is important to provoke discomfort by dismantling White privilege (Rasmussen, 2001).

A study that concentrates on race in America must include some sense of the racial positionality of the author. As a 44 year old White male educator of upper middle class origins, it is important to note the continual evolution of my racial identity. The 1990’s explosion of hip
hopt culture into mainstream America coincided with my high school years and my first serious consideration of racial identity.

I was not close demographically, geographically, or socioeconomically, but I was exposed to what felt like another world through lyrics and lines, videos and ads, sports and the ever evolving mediums and platforms of hip hop. The 1980’s sports marketing revolution that included the collision of ESPN, Air Jordan (the man, the brand, and the shoe), billion dollar television contracts, and an eager to consume public led to an era of Blackness being cool to young White America. This era coincided with my teenage years that perhaps naturally made someone want to be different than their parents. I took to Black culture in my choices of music, movies, television, and sports. Pictures of the “Fab Five”, five young urban Black basketball players from the University of Michigan, covered my bedroom walls.

My college years witnessed a paradigm shift, as Howard Zinn’s A People’s History of the United States introduced me to a historical perspective of oppressed groups. Zinn detailed how things we have done as a nation have been directly influenced by and served to benefit White male elite. The book pegs the patterns of wars against people of color that have dominated our foreign policy and have been easily disguised as wars of freedom and democracy (Zinn, 2015).

Graduate school and the introduction to Critical Race Theory forced me to question concepts of my own advantages through Whiteness. When examining race, I had up until recent years examined only what it meant to be a minority in America; however, what it meant to be White brought out a new series of questions in my mind. What advantages have I had in terms of education, health, employment, crime, relationships, housing, etc.? It was a humbling realization, but an important step in self-reflection, inner examination, and set the stage for this research.
Positionality of the Textbook

As other studies centered upon textbook analysis have often focused upon the collection and/or comparison of several texts, this research will focus on a deep dive centered upon only one. As an all-encompassing investigation of race within a 1,300 page textbook suggests, a thorough investigation of such a text provides an in-depth examination that is not typical of studies focused on one topic over several textbooks such as Brown and Brown’s focus upon racial violence in textbooks (2010), Leahey’s concentration on the war in Vietnam (2007), or the framing of specific events such as the Battle of the Alamo (Hatt & Urietta, 2020). While those studies have been insightful and productive, this study looks to elicit a different and more exhaustive set of findings that can be used to understand the presentation of race and power in our modern polarizing political climate. As James Loewen points out, the differentiation between American history textbooks is minimal, so to focus upon depth over breadth seems appropriate in this investigation. The textbook analysis of *American History* (2018) will serve as a case study of power and race in America. In an age of backlash against CRT, this study could serve as a baseline for future studies to determine the amount and direction of possible change in American history textbooks.

*American History* (2018) has served as the textbook at Dunlap High School for the entirety of the four years I have taught at the school. However, my pedagogical belief system and desire not to rely on any singular textbook has led to the omission of the text from my US History curriculum. Nonetheless, the scope and sequence of each social studies course at Dunlap High School follows the timeline and topics of their corresponding textbook. The inquiry standards of the State of Illinois become tougher to connect to modern day conversations of race when seen through the lens of an Eurocentric textbook (Sleeter, 2012). However, recent
nationwide and statewide discussions about race visible education can be viewed as more relevant at Dunlap High School due to its representative racial breakdown. The White alone non-Hispanic or Latino population of America is 60.1% (Bureau, U.S.C., 2021). The White alone non-Hispanic or Latino population of Dunlap School District’s 4,541 students is 61.8% (ISBE, 2021). In a district that closely mirrors the racial breakdown of America, a study of the racial representation of the American history textbook is not only timely, but urgent.

The placement of the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018) among digital textbooks should be noted. The number of students using digital textbooks and e-books has increased over the years (DeNoyelles & Raible, 2017) and the pandemic induced school shutdowns saw that number jump significantly. One survey found that 80% of administrators said their districts were using digital textbooks in 2020 (Schaffhouser, 2020). As such, it is important to place the textbook at the center of this study within the context of the online trend. The fact that the digital version of the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018) is identical to the hardcopy textbook is not unusual. At each of the last three schools in which I have taught, the digital textbook includes the exact same text and visuals as the hardcopy textbook. At the time of the writing of this study, the digital movement has not made textbook analysis obsolete.

Beyond Dunlap High School, the *American History* textbook (HMH, 2018) is used by over 250,000 students and 6,500 teachers nationwide (HMH Operations Email). On top of its widespread use, the textbook is published by a company increasingly in the public eye, coming under fire by opponents of CRT. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt has been the target of opponents of CRT for its public support of Black Lives Matter and blog posts centered on racial justice (Ali, 2021). The “top reviews from the United States” on Amazon for the textbook *American History* leads with the sentiments of a member of such opposition, “Why do most history books have to
be so twisted to advocate for today's pet political fashions. No wonder kids KNOW NO HISTORY” (Amazon, n.d.). Both positioned in a prominent place for the significance of this study and representative of a large swath of American students, *American History* (HMH, 2018) stands to be an important textbook to analyze in the Trump era of polarized racial politics and education.

**Limitations of the Study**

The subjectiveness of the study of history is mirrored in this study as well. While anchored in the core tenets of Critical Race Theory, a well-established American history textbook, and 22 years of teaching experience, my research questions are still biased as they reflect my individual curiosities. My positionality as a White male practitioner and researcher leads to implicit limitations in the filtering and analysis of this study’s findings. The study is also limited in its scope due to the reliance on a singular textbook. While the issue of a singular textbook is explained, this component of the study waivers from similar studies within the empirical research.

The coding of the textbook American History (HMH, 2018) relied heavily upon my placing of data into the five tenets of Critical Race Theory. This process called for me to make subjective decisions within the placement of the textbook excerpts. The placing of this data within the two steps of the research process are tethered to my experience as a practitioner and my knowledge base of CRT. That knowledge, like all knowledge, is limited and can never be exhaustive. As such, recommendations and implications should be considered with the understanding of such limitations.
CHAPTER IV: PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

Chapter IV serves as discourse analysis, the study of language in use. Discourse analysis includes not only the literal meaning of the sentence structure, but the contextual meaning given to words and phrases (Gee & Handford, 2013). The utterance-type meaning examines where a word or phrase is placed on a range of possible meanings and is concerned with the communicative purpose of the words (Levinson, 2000). The utterance-token meaning is concerned with the situated meaning of words in phrases and uncovering the context of those words (Levinson, 2000). The practice of discourse analysis involves the use of claims, as the researcher must make assertions of their study of language in the context of society, culture, history, institutions, identity formation, politics, power, and more. Like all empirical inquiry, discourse analysis is open and susceptible to falsification; however, it can also be viewed as a powerful tool in uncovering what information and values are stressed or left unsaid (Gee & Handford, 2013).

The purpose of this study was to describe and explain the existence and absence of critical race theory frameworks within a modern day American history textbook. The study of the textbook American History (HMH, 2018) is to be used in furthering the discussion of race and power in social studies classrooms. The following exploratory questions were used to guide the study:

1. How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook American History (2018)?

2. How do narratives in the textbook American History (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of critical race theory?
3. How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook *American History* (2018)?

In this chapter, I present the data from the 28 modules of the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018). Each module was coded based upon the five tenets of critical race theory (Taylor et al., 2016) before a second round of coding was used to analyze the connection between the data within each tenet and the material, discursive, and institutional theories of race (Thompson, 2005).

Tables 2 and 3, found in Chapter III, have provided the framework for my round one and round two of coding. Tables 4 and 5 serve as examples of the initial and secondary coding done throughout the 28 modules of *American History* (HMH, 2018):

**Table 4**

*Example A Priori Coding Chart (Module 24: Civil Rights)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Priori Tenets of Critical Race Theory</th>
<th>Examples from <em>American History</em> textbook</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examples of Racism as Normal &amp; Systemic</td>
<td>Humiliating incidents were not new to the African Americans who rode the segregated buses of Montgomery, Alabama, in the mid-1950s. -p. 1056</td>
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<td></td>
<td>African American sharecroppers abandoned farms for the promise of industrial jobs in northern cities. However, they discovered racial prejudice and segregation there, too. Most could find housing only in all-black neighborhoods. Many white workers also resented the competition for jobs. This sometimes led to violence. -p. 1057</td>
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<td>In Texas, the governor warned that plans might “take years” to work out. He actively prevented desegregation by calling in the Texas Rangers. In Mississippi and Georgia, officials vowed total resistance (to Brown)...In the 1950s and 1960s, the KKK claimed responsibility for hundreds of violent attacks against African Americans and white supporters of civil rights. -p. 1060</td>
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<td>King held steadfast to his philosophy, even when a wave of racial violence swept through the South after the <em>Brown</em> decision. -p. 1063</td>
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<td>Barnett responded with a heated radio appeal: “I call on every Mississippian to keep his faith and courage. We will never surrender.” The broadcast turned out white demonstrators by the thousands. (response to Meredith) -p. 1070</td>
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<td>Police soon arrested a white supremacist, Byron de la Beckwith, but he was released after two trials resulted in hung juries. (public acceptance of racist action) -p. 1072</td>
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<td>Meanwhile, the right of all African Americans to vote remained elusive. In 1964, CORE and SNCC workers in the South began working together to register as many African Americans as they could to vote. -p. 1075</td>
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<td>Centuries of discrimination had produced social and economic inequalities. Anger over these inequalities led to a series of violent disturbances in the cities of the North. -p. 1077</td>
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<td>The problem facing African Americans in the North was de facto segregation—segregation not supported by laws but continued in practice. De facto segregation can be harder to fight than de jure segregation, or segregation by law, because eliminating it requires changing people’s attitudes rather than repealing laws. -p. 1079</td>
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<td>The issues it confronted—housing and job discrimination, educational inequality, poverty, and racism—involved the difficult task of changing people’s attitudes and behavior. Some of the proposed solutions, such as more tax monies spent in the inner cities and the forced busing of schoolchildren, angered some whites, who resisted further changes. Public support for the civil rights movement declined because the urban riots and the Black Panthers frightened some whites. -p. 1085</td>
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<td>Founded by working-class Chicano students in 1967 under the leadership of David Sanchez, the Brown Berets began their activism by protesting police brutality in East Los Angeles. -p. 1089</td>
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<td>The party (RUP) campaigned for bilingual education, improved public services, education for children of migrant workers, and an end to job discrimination. -p. 1090</td>
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<td><strong>Examples of Racism as Normal &amp; Systemic</strong></td>
<td>Unfortunately, the protest against illegal immigration affected many Hispanic American citizens as well. Even some Hispanic Americans whose families had been living in the United States for hundreds of years faced increased discrimination. -p. 1107</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>The attacks were part of a wave of violence and discrimination against Muslims (and those perceived as Muslims) and Arab Americans by people who held all Muslims responsible for the 2001 attacks. -p. 1109</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>New laws passed in 1996 further limited the civil rights of immigrants. The new laws created a mandatory detention policy for immigrants with prior criminal records, even if their offenses were old or minor. Even immigrants with misdemeanor offenses faced potentially harsh punishments—and possibly deportation. More recently, some states have passed laws that allow officials to question anyone suspected of being in the country illegally, requiring them to present papers on demand. Civil rights advocates point to this requirement as a violation of immigrants’ rights as Americans. -p. 1115</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Examples of Interest Convergence</strong></td>
<td>African Americans were denied access to jobs and housing and were refused service at restaurants and stores. When the violent response to protests against these injustices was splashed across Americans’ television screens, a reluctant federal government was moved to take action in support of civil rights legislation. -p. 1055</td>
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<td>First, the demand for soldiers in the early 1940s created a shortage of white male laborers. That labor shortage opened new job opportunities for African Americans, Latinos, and white women...President Roosevelt issued a presidential directive. The directive prohibited racial discrimination by federal agencies and all companies that were engaged in war work. The groundwork was laid for more organized campaigns to end segregation throughout the United States...Third, nearly one million African Americans served in the armed forces, which needed so many fighting men that they had to end their discriminatory policies. Such policies had previously kept African Americans from serving in fighting units. Many African American soldiers returned from the war determined to fight for their own freedom now that they had helped defeat fascist and racist regimes overseas. -p. 105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No interest convergence mentioned in Brown v Board</td>
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<td><strong>Examples of Interest</strong></td>
<td><strong>Convergence Continued</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td>On September 9, 1957, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1957, the first civil rights law since Reconstruction. Shepherded by Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, the law gave the attorney general greater power over school desegregation. It also gave the federal government jurisdiction, or authority, over violations of African American voting rights. -p. 1061</td>
<td>Continued protests, an economic boycott, and negative media coverage finally convinced Birmingham officials to end segregation. -p. 1071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In response to Hamer’s speech, telegrams and telephone calls poured in to the convention in support of seating the MFDP delegates. President Johnson feared losing the southern white vote if the Democrats sided with the MFDP, so his administration pressured civil rights leaders to convince the MFDP to accept a compromise. The Democrats would give 2 of Mississippi’s 68 seats to the MFDP, with a promise to ban discrimination at the 1968 convention. -p. 107</td>
<td>In 1990, L. Douglas Wilder of Virginia became the nation’s first African American governor since Reconstruction. He was the first African American in U.S. history to be elected—not appointed—to the position. -p. 1104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm wrote of his encounter with Muslims of different races and nationalities, including those who appeared white. -p. 1081</td>
<td>Before the 1980s, few people thought of themselves as Asian American. Instead, they considered themselves members of individual nationalities: Chinese American, Indian American, and so on. -p. 1108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segregated buses might never have rolled through the streets of Montgomery if the Civil Rights Act of 1875 had remained in force. This act outlawed segregation in public facilities. It decreed that “all persons . . . shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations . . . of inns, public conveyances on land or water, theaters, and other places of public amusement.” In 1883, however, the all-white Supreme Court (Plessy v Ferguson) declared the act unconstitutional. (counter to the story of progress) -p. 1057</td>
<td>They also arrested over 100 blacks without providing legal counsel or granting bail. A few days later, two black men were killed while in police custody. The “Columbia Race Riots,” as this incident came to be known, made national headlines. -p. 1058</td>
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<td><strong>Examples of Storytelling and Counter-storytelling</strong></td>
<td>In the end, Chief Justice Earl Warren sidestepped <em>Plessy</em>, claiming that segregated schools were not and never could be equal. (cast as a psychological issue, not a structural issue) - p. 1057</td>
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Some white supremacists felt that even stronger action should be taken to stop desegregation. In some places, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) reappeared. - p. 1060

Outside Central High, Eckford faced an abusive crowd. Terrified, the 15-year-old made it to a bus stop, where two friendly whites stayed with her. (allies) - p. 1061

African Americans filed a lawsuit and for 381 days—over a year—refused to ride the buses in Montgomery. In most cases they had to find other means of transportation by organizing car pools or walking long distances. (grassroots) - p. 1062

From the Grassroots Up (Section title) SNCC hoped to harness the energy of these student protesters. It would soon create one of the most important student activist movements in the nation’s history. (grassroots/allies) - p. 1064

At the Alabama state line, white racists got on Bus One carrying chains, brass knuckles, and pistols. They brutally beat African American riders and white activists who tried to intervene. (allies) - p. 1068

Despite their cultural diversity, Native Americans as a group have been the poorest of Americans and have suffered from the highest unemployment rate. They have also been more likely than any other group to suffer from tuberculosis and alcoholism. Although the Native American population rose during the 1960s, the death rate among Native American infants was nearly twice the national average (no direct connection to past treatment) - p. 1090

For some, this new activism (AIM) meant demanding that Native American lands, burial grounds, and fishing and timber rights be restored. Others wanted a new respect for their culture. (resistance) p. 1091

The 1980s and 1990s also witnessed a reversal in the trend toward school integration. As whites moved out of many cities into the suburbs, the remaining urban populations were largely African American (regression) - 1105

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“There's a finite pie and everybody wants his piece. Everybody is afraid of losing his piece of the pie. That’s what the fight against affirmative action is all about. People feel threatened. As for blacks, they’re passé. They're not in any more. Nobody wants to talk about race.” -Sylvester Monroe *The Great Divide* - p. 1105  

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| Examples of Whiteness as Power, Property, and Recipients of Civil Rights Legislation | On March 1, 1968, the Kerner Commission, which President Johnson had appointed to study the causes of urban violence, issued its 200,000-word report. In it, the panel named one main cause: white racism. Said the report: “This is our basic conclusion: Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal.” The report called for the nation to create new jobs, construct new housing, and end de facto segregation in order to wipe out the destructive ghetto environment. However, the Johnson administration ignored many of the recommendations because of white opposition to such sweeping changes. -p. 1083  

**Despite the hundreds of distinct Native American tribes and nations in the United States. One thing these diverse peoples have shared is a mostly bleak existence and a lack of autonomy, or ability to control and govern their own lives. - p. 1090**  

Hundreds more groups from all around the country have petitioned the government for federal recognition and are still awaiting determination of their status. -p. 1108 |
Table 5

Example CRT Theory Coding Chart (Module 24- Civil Rights)

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The second round consisted of a color coding process, with green representing material theories, yellow representing discursive theories, and light blue representing institutional theories. The next step was to review the coded data for the emerging patterns and themes which are discussed as they connect to the original research questions. This process is completed and discussed for each of the five CRT tenets as the basis for Chapter IV. Chapter V will allow for a discussion of overall findings of Chapter IV, with recommendations for further research found in Chapter VI.

**Coding of Tenet One: Racism as Normal and Systemic Within the Textbook**

One of the more prevalent notions of critical race theory as it moved out of the shadows of academia into the light of public discourse was the notion of racism as systemic. As the mentions of critical race theory on Fox news and other media outlets exploded in the summer of 2020 (Harris, 2021), the 2018 textbook American History (HMH, 2018) was already ripe with examples of this key tenet of the CRT framework. My coding marked 144 vivid data entries of racism as normal and systemic within the 28 modules of the textbook. Table five breaks down the 144 entries by module.

**Table 6**

*Tenet One Coding Breakdown by Module*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th># of Entries Exemplifying Tenet 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>1: American Beginnings</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16: World War I</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: The American Colonies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17: The Roaring 20’s</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: The American Revolution</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18: The Great Depression</td>
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<td>19: The New Deal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: A New Nation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20: World War II</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: Nationalism and Sectionalism</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21: The Cold War</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Opening the Frontier</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22: The Postwar Boom</td>
<td>5</td>
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The densest modules of coding were predictably The Civil War (Module 9), Reconstruction (Module 10), Immigration and Urbanization (Module 13), Progressivism (Module 14) and Civil Rights (Module 24). Only one module did not contain a single entry of racism as normal and systemic within the literature. Module 21, The Cold War, lacked a glaring inclusion by the authors of racism as normal and systemic. However, the obvious Eurocentrism
at the root of the Cold War militarization and globalization of markets may have been woven into the fabric of the times, as to not even be mentioned.

**Themes of Coding of Institutional Theories of Race Within Tenet One**

Institutional theories of race focus on regulations and historic codes (not to be confused with the codes within the study) used to create a hierarchy within a society. Although more prominent in the first half of the textbook, data entries marking institutional theories within tenet one can be found from the first module’s description of slavery in the new world to the final module’s inclusion of patterns of police misconduct and anti-immigrant laws. Early prominent entries describing slavery are found before descriptions of forced separation. Module one includes a quote from Christopher Columbus commenting on the ease of enslavement, “with about fifty men you could control and subjugate them all, making them do whatever you want” (HMH, 2018, p. 30). The continuation of slavery into the new United States and the Constitution paint slavery as a founding hierarchical regulation: “Ideals put forth in the Constitution, such as due process, rule of law, and individual rights were not applied to all people (HMH, 2018, p. 165.” The textbook does point out, “the protection of rights and freedoms was not given to all Americans at the time the Bill of Rights was adopted. Native Americans and slaves were excluded, due to long-standing discrimination by whites (HMH, 2018, p. 165).

This exclusion sets up future entries of rights being given or denied based upon race. Entries throughout the text focus on the codes and regulations of forced separation based upon race, but lack the connectivity to explain the created hierarchy. Excerpts describe separation of races in religion, housing, transportation, politics, education, and the military, while focusing less on White supremacy and more on tension and fear. In describing limitations on the already segregated Black soldiers of World War I, the text notes, “Many white army officers and
southern politicians objected to training African American soldiers to use weapons. They feared these black soldiers might pose a threat after the war” (HMH, 2018, p. 668). There is a glaring omission of a skillfully crafted racial hierarchy, making racial angst harder to comprehend. In place of planned division to benefit one group over the other, the text paints a picture of inevitability: “At the end of the 1950s, African Americans were still largely segregated from the dominant culture of white America. This ongoing segregation—and the racial tensions it fed—would become a powerful force for change in the turbulent 1960’s” (HMH, 2018, p. 1005).

Although lacking in detail and nuance in the creation of hierarchies, to its credit the textbook is full of detailed passages pertaining to racial regulations and codes themselves. Beyond slavery and segregation, the textbook describes slave codes, Black codes, voting restrictions, Jim Crow, court sanctioned racism (Dred Scott v. Sandford, Plessy v. Ferguson, Korematsu v. United States among others), housing restrictions, educational exclusion, immigration restrictions, and patterns of police misconduct. The text also does well to point out discrimination within a seldom challenged (both historically and in modern times) set of New Deal programs, including the NRA, CCC, TVA, and WPA. The challenging of well-established figures and programs in American historical canon is an important theme drawn out by the coding of American History. In this excerpt, FDR is criticized for bowing to southern Whites: “Despite efforts to promote racial equality, Roosevelt was never committed to full civil rights for African Americans (HMH, 2018, p. 801). The textbook elaborates, “He was afraid of upsetting white Democratic voters in the South, an important segment of his supporters. He refused to approve a federal antilynching law and an end to the poll tax, two clear goals of the civil rights movement (HMH, 2018, p. 801).
The text goes on to criticize the New Deal programs themselves, “Further, a number of New Deal agencies clearly discriminated against African Americans, including the NRA, the CCC, and the TVA. These programs gave lower wages to African Americans and favored whites” (HMH, 2018, p. 801).

The New Deal module comes on the heels of the Great Depression module, which ironically segregates the inclusion of people of color to the end of the chapter and oversimplifies the implications of systemic racism. One would have to go to the end of the module to find a mention of people of color in the worst economic times of the century, only to find this brief excerpt: “Conditions for African Americans and Latinos were especially difficult. Their unemployment rates were higher and they were the lowest paid. They also dealt with increasing racial violence from whites. Twenty-four African Americans were lynched in 1933” (HMH, 2018, p. 762). This passage is indicative of modules set up to describe mainstream America as white America before getting to conditions for people of Color. Unlike the main characters of the chapter, as in Reconstruction or Civil Rights, the economic condition of people of Color remains a side note in the textbook.

Oversimplification is also a problem as the text explores patterns of police misconduct. While it is notable that the text includes the phrases “police brutality” (p. 1089) and “racial profiling” (p. 1279), the bigger picture is worth exploring further. The text does highlight that while African Americans represent about 13% of illegal drug users in the United States, they account for three-quarters of all drug possession sentences (HMH, 2018, p. 1277). In addition to profiling in sentencing, the text also presents systemic racial profiling in the deaths of young African American men. After explaining the cases of Freddie Gray, Eric Gardner, and Michael Brown, the text summarizes, “These events renewed scrutiny of how police relate to minorities,
particularly young, urban, African American men. Civil rights advocates have presented case after case of what they characterize as racial profiling by law enforcement” (HMH, 2018, p. 1279). It is important to note how the textbook separates itself from experts in stating, “These advocates also say that police are more apt to shoot or kill black and Hispanic suspects than whites” (HMH, 2018, p. 1279). While the inclusion of these names and systemic trends is an important step, this section highlights the dangerous omission of historical implications and modern nuanced investigation.

The description of trends and instances of police malpractice is problematic in that it places these flashpoints of racial injustice in a vacuum instead of upon a historical continuum of racist police policies and actions. A possible buildup to the Michael Brown killing, which inspired the Ferguson movement, might have included a flashback to a history of the LAPD in the years, months, and hours leading up to the 1965 Watts rebellion and 1992 LA uprising. To include an event of such social significance without the placement on a historical spectrum sets a reader up for misunderstanding of causation and connectivity to past eras and systems. A deeper understanding of the Ferguson unrest would also require an examination of the Investigation of the US Justice Department’s two distinct findings on the death of Michael Brown and the climate of the Ferguson Police Department (US Department of Justice, 2015).

The entirety of the textbook documentation of the death of Michael Brown reads as follows: “In August 2014, the spotlight of public attention shone harshly on Ferguson, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis. A young African American man, Michael Brown, robbed a convenience store. In a later confrontation, a police officer shot and killed Brown, although he was unarmed (HMH, 2018, p. 1278). The textbook links the killing of Michael Brown to the social justice movement that followed: “The Ferguson community erupted in protests, both peaceful and
violent. Many media reports labeled the police response to those protests as racist and overly militarized (HMH, 2018, p. 1278)”

Again, the text oversimplifies a case that led to ongoing racial division in America. What the text fails to do is what the country failed to do: disconnect the individual incident from the ongoing patterns and climate of Ferguson, Missouri. A thorough analysis of both the event and the climate would have allowed for deeper conversations on both sides of the racial divide.

The first Justice Department report found that officer Daren Wilson was rightly guided in his actions the day that Michael Brown was killed. Brown’s arms were in Wilson’s police vehicle and Wilson’s actions failed to meet the Justice Department’s definition of police misconduct (US Department of Justice, 2015). Meanwhile, the Justice Department also completed a broader investigation into Ferguson’s policing practices over time. They found that as the police department was used to help fund the city’s budget, specific predatory techniques and financial amounts were requested of Ferguson’s chief of police by the city’s finance director. Officers were rewarded for “productivity” and predatory policing was present in the system (US Department of Justice, 2015). Michael Brown was both wrong in his actions leading up to his death and right in seeing the Ferguson Police Department as illegitimate. The textbook American History was not seen as a tool to parse the two distinct reports, thus limiting its ability to serve as a tool for racial discourse in the classroom.

**Themes of Coding of Discursive Theories of Race Within Tenet One**

While the textbook codes connecting to institutional theories of race focus on regulations and codes used to create a hierarchy, those connecting to discursive theories focus on the norms and practices of Whiteness. Like the institutional theories codes, the discursive theories codes fit into the CRT tenet of examples of racism as normal and systemic; yet, in this case, fell out of the
realm of established restrictions and into the realm of feelings and attitudes of domination, assimilation, fear, and othering. Once color-coded, the inverse correlation between the two theories became surprisingly evident. While there were 19 blue codes (institutional theories) in the first 10 modules, there were only nine blue codes found in the final 10 modules of the textbook. The yellow codes (discursive theories) on the other hand yielded nine data entries in the first ten modules and 22 in the final 10 modules of the textbook.

In examining the structures and attitudes of the Reconstruction South, the textbook notes, “Republicans gradually came to believe that government could not impose the moral and social changes needed for former slaves to make progress in the South. As a result, Republicans slowly retreated from the policies of Reconstruction” (HMH, 2018, p. 448). Because the textbook does find opportunities to insert commentary (scathing criticisms of Herbert Hoover’s handling of the Great Depression, for example), it can be slighted for the times it does not note hypocrisy or irony of historical events or attitudes. In connecting to the passage above, that led to the fact that “Within a few years, African Americans in the South were once again relegated to second-class status” (HMH, 2018, p. 450), there is no highlighting of the irony that the government that created norms and practices of Whiteness through racist regulations and codes now saw the destruction of that racial hierarchy as beyond their purview.

It should be emphasized that the textbook includes continual examples and definitive explanations of systemic racism within the norms and practices of Whiteness. Instances of White flight, White creation and fear of “others”, assimilation/”White burden”, and de facto segregation can be found throughout the 28 modules. Oftentimes, however, a strong base tapers off due to a lack of strong connectivity between time periods or lack of detailed implications. When going beyond the codes and regulations of racial hierarchy, the textbook notes, “African Americans
faced not only formal discrimination, but also informal rules and customs, called racial etiquette, that regulated relationships between whites and blacks. Usually these customs belittled and humiliated African Americans, enforcing their second class status” (HMH 2018, p. 584).

The text does make a connection between the social systemic structures of racial etiquette and that of racial hierarchy when it notes, “African Americans and others who did not follow racial etiquette could face severe punishments or death. All too often, blacks who were accused of violating the etiquette were lynched” (HMH, 2018, p. 585). While the textbook does a consistent job of noting the White fear of “others” - a theme worthy of its own separate analysis - they miss an opportunity to directly connect the lynching of Blacks to the White fear of Black upward mobility (Wells, 2020). The lynchings were not merely the result of “stepping out of line” socially, but the attempted assurance of an economic hierarchy within the racial hierarchy.

Beyond the inclusion of racial etiquette, the text describes the social barriers of de facto segregation when they note in module 14 (Progressivism): “Although not enforced by laws, de facto segregation had some of the same effects on African Americans in northern cities as de jure segregation had on African Americans in the South” (HMH, 2018, p. 586). Later in the text, emphasis is placed on difficulty in unwinding de facto segregation when, in module 24 (Civil Rights) it is noted that “De facto segregation can be harder to fight than de jure segregation, or segregation by law, because eliminating it requires changing people’s attitudes rather than repealing laws” (HMH, 2018, p. 1079). While it is worthy to note the establishment of systemic social barriers, it is also an incomplete picture without the examination of the institutional barriers also facing northern people of Color.

The sole reliance on discursive theories of northern racism in American history ignores policies of redlining, blockbusting, and racially restrictive housing covenants that legally
segregated every major city in the United States (Rothstein, 2017). The Federal Housing Administration (noted in the textbook *American History*, 2018, page 786) refused to insure the building of Black neighborhood from the time of its creation in 1934 in a policy that became known as redlining- named after the actual red lines drawn by government agencies around unsafe lending areas due to the African American residents (Rothstein, 2017). Meanwhile, the FHA was subsidizing the mass production of White neighborhoods, with the caveat that the homes not be sold to African American families. By the time the Fair Housing Act of 1968 (not mentioned in the textbook *American History*, 2018) banned racial housing discrimination, the patterns of residential areas in metropolitan areas had been established. By the time African Americans could legally buy the homes in White areas of metropolitan areas, the homes had appreciated to the point as to make them unaffordable to most families of color. In the wake of government sponsored housing barriers came an exploitive real estate practice known as blockbusting. In an effort to entice White home owners to sell their homes at below market prices, techniques were employed (as simple as people of color being paid to drive or push a baby stroller through an area) to create a sense that Black owners had begun to move into the area. Real estate agents then sold the homes at prices much higher than market value to African American families facing limited housing options (Gotham, 2002). An examination of these practices, codes, and regulations in the textbook would make for a more comprehensive understanding of modern day segregation.

Another force driving segregation that is covered extensively in the text is the Ku Klux Klan, found in module 10 (Reconstruction), module 17 (Roaring 20s), and module 24 (Civil Rights). Describing the organization as a ubiquitous and powerful social organization, the textbook introduces the KKK, “By 1868, the Klan existed in practically every southern state. Its
overarching goal was to restore white supremacy. Its method was to prevent African Americans from exercising their own political rights” (HMH, 2018, p. 442). The KKK appears again in the text in connection with the Great Migration: “The Klan believed in keeping blacks ‘In their place.’ The Great Migration, the movement of African Americans to northern cities, had heightened racial tension there (HMH, 2018, p. 713).” The text notes the opportunism of the Klan: “The KKK took advantage of that tension to increase its repression and violence against black Americans (HMH, 2018, p. 713).”

Putting aside the notion that the Klan’s tactics were likely a driving force for many refugees escaping the racial terror of the South, the text fails in this case to frame the Klan’s tactics as a counter to the progressive era’s possible inclusion of people of Color or immigrants. The text addresses the Klan again three decades later, “In the 1950’s and 1960’s, the KKK claimed responsibility for hundreds of violent attacks against African Americans and white supporters of civil rights” (HMH, 2018, p. 1060).

Discursive theories of race within the text continue the pattern of challenging well established figures of historical significance. Abraham Lincoln is exposed as a White supremacist as he is quoted in the text, “I am not, nor have I ever been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races” (HMH, 2018, p. 363). However, that is all that is included from Lincoln’s 1858 speech in Charleston, Illinois. The text cuts out the lines, “that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of making voters or jurors of negros, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people (Zinn, 2015, p. 269).” That alone would establish Lincoln as a white supremacist, yet it is cemented as such in the line, “and in as much as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the
position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race (Zinn, 2015, p. 269).

While the text omits the harsher language from the Charleston speech, the message is clear. Lincoln’s belief in White superiority was again on display within the textbook in module 10 (Reconstruction), as it notes, “He (Lincoln) pardoned more than 13,000 former Confederates because he believed that “white men alone must manage the South” (HMH, 2018, p. 419).

Textual coverage of another war, 100 years after the Civil War, included more veiled language than Lincoln, yet the message of belief in white superiority was much the same. Quoting Secretary of State Robert McNamara toward the end of the war in Vietnam, “If I had thought they (Vietnamese) would take this punishment and fight this well, I would have thought differently at the start” (HMH, 2018, p. 1130). Feelings of supremacy of the White race, attitudes of Whiteness being the dominant culture, and the “othering” of people of Color can be seen as evidence of discursive theories of race through the textbook in attitudes of society at large as well as dominant political figures.

### Themes of Coding of Material Theories of Race Within Tenet One

Lastly, data entries of material theories of race within the textbook have been coded in such a manner as to uncover economic and bodily concerns (theory of race number three) of systemic racism (CRT tenet one). Economic and bodily concerns of race can be seen throughout the textbook, and, although not directly stated in the text, can be viewed as results of the coded institutional and discursive theories included above. Whether the institutional regulations and codes of race led to norms and practices of Whiteness or vice versa is a question that I will discuss further in Chapter V. For now, it is appropriate to note that each of them play a role in the economic and bodily concerns of systemic racism.
Perhaps it is appropriate that the initial economic concerns presented in the textbook as they relate to race were those of Europeans. In framing human beings as a commodity in module one (American Beginnings), the text states, “As more natives died of diseases, the demand for Africans grew. The prices of enslaved Africans rose, and more Europeans joined the slave trade. African slavery was becoming an essential part of the European-American economic system” (HMH, 2018, p. 32). Module two (The American Colonies) summarizes the transition of slavery into the lives of European settlers to America: “Their economy became dependent on enslaved African labor” (HMH, p. 69, 2018). Specific to the conditions of the South, “The plantation economy led to a largely rural society in which enslaved Africans played an unwilling yet important role” (HMH, 2018, p. 79), before striking a deterministic tone with “As the colonies grew, they became ever more dependent on the use of African slavery” (HMM, 2018, p. 95). Connecting the material theories of economic concern with discursive theories of White superiority, the text concludes, “A slave worked for life and thus brought a much larger return on investment. In addition, most white colonists convinced themselves that Africans’ dark skin was a sign of inferiority, and so had few reservations about subjecting them to a life of servitude” (HMH, 2018, p. 82). This passage on skin color is a unique and important entry, as it serves as the lone attempt to deal with skin pigmentation, melanin, and the complexities of the actual genetics of race. It is striking that with the frequency the textbook gives meaning to race that it does not explore what race means. This anomaly will be explored further when analyzing the textbook coding of Tenet 3- Examples of Race as a Social Construct within the textbook American History (HMH, 2018).

As early as module three (The American Revolution), the textbook makes a link between discrimination and poverty for free people of Color. This is a theme that is repeated in the text
through the final module. It is highlighted that free Blacks in the time of slavery, former slaves
during Reconstruction, people of color during the Nadir (a period of racial regression after 1877,
that will be discussed further in the analysis of CRT Tenet 4–Storytelling and counter-
storytelling within the Textbook American History (HMH, 2018), World War eras, the booming
postwar era, and people of Color all the way up through the publishing of the text faced and
continue to face economic hardship as a result of discrimination. The text does not leave
economic hardship via discrimination in the Civil Rights era. In module 28 (The United States in
the 21st Century), the textbook recents the connection between discursive and material theories
of race: “Another factor contributing to poverty has been discrimination against racial minorities.
Statistics highlight how much more prevalent poverty is among minorities.” The text notes “In
2010, the poverty rate among non-Hispanic whites was 9.9 percent. Among Hispanics and
African Americans it was 26.6 percent and 27.4 percent respectively. (HMH, 2018, p. 1295)

Again, however, the textbook frames theories of race in a vacuum. While unequal
economic conditions are highlighted, and even connected to discrimination, it is seldom
connected to historical disparities and unequal starting points. Even in the most obvious era to
use a historical timeline for context--Reconstruction--the textbook comes up short. “As the
reality of freedom sank in, freed African Americans faced many decisions. Without land, jobs,
tools, money, and few skills besides those of farming, what were they to do? How would they
feed and clothe themselves? How and where would they live?” (HMH, 2018, p. 433). In an
effort to set up the section on sharecropping and tenant farming, the textbook fails to fully detail
the prospect and promise of 40 Acres and a Mule. In early 1865, General William T. Sherman
and Secretary of War Edward Stanton met with 20 leaders of the Black community in Savannah,
Georgia to discuss a massive land redistribution plan. The crux of the conversation was to
answer the questions listed above. In short, what could be done to help reset the economic racial hierarchy in post-slavery America? Armed with input from Black leadership, General Sherman issued the President Lincoln approved Special Field Order No. 15 on January 16, 1885. The order consisted of three main parts. The first section defined the 400,000 acres to be redistributed to newly freed African Americans. Section two proclaimed that this area would be governed solely by the African Americans residing in these areas. The final section portioned the land to be 40 acres per family, to be protected by the US military. Although the textbook mentions the 40 acres being carved from 400,000 acres, there is no mention of the Black leadership helping shape the redistribution plan: “General Sherman had promised the freed slaves who followed his army 40 acres of land per family and the use of army mules. Soon afterward, about 40,000 freed persons settled on 400,000 abandoned or forfeited acres” (HMH, 2018, p. 438). In the fall of 1865, as 40,000 freedmen had settled and begun to work their newly claimed coastal land of coastal Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida, President Andrew Johnson reversed the order. The 400,000 acres was given back to the very people who had waged war against the United States (Gates, 2017). The inclusion Black community leaders and a breakdown of Special Field Order No. 15 and its repeal in the textbook would provide anchors for which future mentions of racial economic inferiority could be tied.

Bodily concern is a recurring theme in the textbook as well, from the overtaking of native Tainos on Hispaniola, to African enslavement, the slavemaster’s whip, lynchings and other racial terror of the Reconstruction era and Nadir, war upon and violence toward Indigenous Americans, attacks on immigrants and Muslims, the violent backlash to the Civil Rights advancements, and patterns of police brutality. Describing an infamous account of pre-Civil War racial violence, “On May 21, 1856, a proslavery posse of 800 armed men swept into Lawrence to carry out the
grand jury’s will (HMH, 2018, p. 353).” Details of the attack are described: “The posse burned down the antislavery headquarters, destroyed two newspapers’ printing presses, and looted many houses and stores. Abolitionist newspapers dubbed the event ‘The Sack of Lawrence’. (HMH, 2018, p. 353)

By the 1950s news cameras had joined newspapers in bringing racial violence to the nation: “There was no denying the ugly face of racism. Day after day, news reporters captured the scene of whites beating, jeering at, and pouring food over students who refused to strike back” (HMH, 2018, p. 1065). Public acceptance of this racial violence is alluded to within the text, but not directly stated. When covering the assassination of Civil Rights leader Medgar Evers, the text includes, “Police soon arrested a white supremacist, Byron de la Beckwith, but he was released after two trials resulted in hung juries” (HMH, 2018, p. 1072). As lynchings, killings, and racially motivated violent attacks went unpunished, the public acceptance of this violence could be framed as racism being normal and systemic rather than aberrations or “bad apples”.

Another framing problem within the text comes in the form of the inadequate linking of economic and bodily concerns. Material theories of race include both of these concerns because they are inextricably linked in terms of keeping people of Color at an economic disadvantage. The text misses opportunities to make this link. The combination of economic and bodily concerns should be clear, but the textbook does not take intentional steps to link the two. Nor does the book consistently link the racial systems of hierarchy (both institutional and discursive) to an economic racial hierarchy.

Throughout the textbook American History (HMH, 2018), there are dozens of examples of racism as normal and systemic within institutional, discursive, and material theories of race.
Though there are connectivity issues throughout, the pieces are there to confirm the current CRT framework within the textbook.

**Coding of Tenet Two: Examples of Interest Convergence Within the Textbook**

Another key tenet of critical race theory as it moved out of the shadows of academia into the light of public discourse was the theory of interest convergence. Derrick Bell argued that the historical improvement of conditions for marginalized and mistreated groups has been secondary to the interest of important White groups (Bell, 1980). According to the theory of interest convergence, progress comes for people of Color when there is an incentive for the associated powerful White groups. My coding uncovered 36 data entries of interest convergence within the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018). The bulk of the material theories of race (economic and bodily concerns) that highlight interest convergence in the text center on economic advancements for people of Color when it has been beneficial to White society. The majority of discursive theories of race (norms and practices of Whiteness) that connect to interest convergence within the text focus on the political catering to people of Color when votes and party affiliation have been gained by White dominated political parties. Institutional theories (regulations and codes) of interest convergence within the text are presented as possessing both economic and political incentives for White purveyors of power.

**Themes of Coding of Discursive Theories of Race Within Tenet Two**

Ironically, the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*—the example that Bell based his theory upon—is not one of the examples of interest convergence within the textbook. However, as Bell pointed to the improvement of global US standing during the Cold War as the incentive that drove the unanimous 1954 Supreme Court decision, the text did note instances of other decisions that were seemingly made to improve the lives of people of Color that had ulterior geopolitical
motives. In describing the context surrounding the creation of the Peace Corps’ mission to improve the lives of people of Color around the world, the text notes, “One of the first campaign promises Kennedy fulfilled was the creation of the Peace Corps. It was a program of volunteer assistance to the developing nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It succeeded in its goal of increasing goodwill toward the United States throughout the world” (HMH, 2018, p. 1021). Domestically, politicians are consistently represented within the text as establishing policies and platforms that advanced the causes of marginalized people of Color.

Moving from military leader to political pioneer, George Washington surely noticed the amount of slaves being freed in parts of the country after the Revolution as he made the decision on his own slaves: “Planters in the upper South debated the morality of slavery. Some, like George Washington, freed their slaves. In Maryland and Virginia, the number of free blacks increased from about 4,000 to 20,000 following the war” (HMH, 2018, p. 139). Further north, many slaveholders had the economic luxury of taking the moral high ground. In a textual excerpt that combines material, discursive, and institutional theories of race within interest convergence, the textbook breaks down this mass freeing of slaves: “By the late 1700’s, slavery in the North was dying out. Farmers had little economic motivation to use slaves as workers (HMH, 2018, p. 236).” The text goes on to note, “Also, an increasing number of northerners began to voice their religious and political opposition to slavery. Consequently, by 1804 almost all of the northern states had voluntarily abolished slavery. (HMH, 2018, p. 236)

Not coincidentally, it was in these northern states that the paternalistic yet still White supremacist abolitionist movement was rooted. “Some Christians believed it was their moral duty to help improve the lives of others and called for the reform of unjust practices. These included slavery and the poor treatment of workers” (HMH, 2018, p. 305). However, it was not
just outsiders calling for the end of slavery. Slaves themselves had taken steps toward their own freedom.

Violent uprisings had struck fear into the hearts of those who had previously clung tightly to the institution of slavery. As the text describes, “Virginia governor John Floyd wrote of his wish for a ‘law…gradually abolishing slavery in the State.’ By January 1832, the state legislature was hotly debating that very prospect (HMH, 2018, p. 328).” The text goes on to note the timely connection between Nat Turner’s rebellion and abolitionist sentiment by noting the interest: ‘Nothing else could have prompted the discussions,’ reported the Richmond Enquirer, but the bloody massacre (Turner’s Rebellion) in the month of August’ (HMH, 2018, p. 328). Slavery was as political an institution as it was economic by the 1850’s, and the Republican party capitalized on fractured regional sentiments to draw a general platform on the topic that could galvanize a dominant national base: “In Washington, tensions escalated as senators and representatives from each region struggled to protect their way of life. Nowhere was this conflict more evident than in debates about slavery” (HMH, 2018, p. 342). “The Republican party’s ability to draw support from such diverse groups provided the party with the strength to win a political tug of war with the other parties” (HMH, 2018, p. 359). Ultimately, it was not benign benevolence that led to the pre-Civil War surge to root out slavery as an American institution. Rather, economic latitude, attitudes of moral supremacy, fear of mass uprisings, and political advantage provided the interest convergence for that push.

The political advantages of supporting people of Color exploded after the Civil War as a new voting block was established. Black men were now voting in numbers and the Republican party took steps to lock down that block. According to the text, “After the election, the Radicals feared that pro-Confederate southern whites might try to limit black suffrage. Therefore, they
would introduce the Fifteenth Amendment” (HMH, 2018, p. 424). Constituencies of non-White voters led to interest convergence throughout the county. The text points to a regional political boss in Missouri as an example:

Big Jim Pendergast, an Irish American saloonkeeper, worked his way up from precinct captain to Democratic city boss in Kansas City, Missouri. He did this by helping Italian, African, and Irish American voters in his ward. By 1900, he controlled Missouri politics as well. (HMH, 2018, p. 546)

Interest convergence within the textbook continued to merge into various institutions in the 20th century.

As war called for unity at home, the drumbeat of World War I brought out patriotic rhetoric in the form of a type of propaganda promoting equality of sacrifice. The text remarks, “For the United States to effectively fight the Central powers, its military needed the cooperation of its minority population. Government publications appealed to all Americans, regardless of race or ethnicity, to support the war effort” (HMH, 2018, p. 667). The textbook goes on to cite an example of this propaganda, “One pamphlet reminded Americans that “black men, yellow men, white men, from all quarters of the globe, are fighting side by side to free the world from the Hun peril. That’s the patriotism of equality!” (HMH, 2018, p. 667). The book does not use this farce of equality as an opportunity to point out that the US military was segregated throughout World War I on the basis of racial hierarchy. The racial segregation of the US military would continue through World War II, and the facade of racial harmony in America would be exposed by unpunished KKK intimidation, racially motivated lynchings, and strict Black code laws.

The stark racial reality of America during the Great Depression served as an opportunity for the Democrats and FDR. Never described by the text as a Civil Rights advocate, FDR is highlighted as an opportunist as he worked people of Color into his New Deal programs in order to obtain their voting allegiance.
Although New Deal policies had mixed results for minorities, these groups generally backed President Roosevelt. In fact, one of FDR’s great achievements was to create the New Deal coalition- an alignment of diverse groups dedicated to supporting the Democratic Party. The coalition included southern whites, various urban groups, African Americans, and unionized industrial workers. (HMH, 2018, p. 803)

The appointment of African Americans to key positions in the government, as well as New Deal economic assistance, resulted in a pendulum swing from Republican to Democrat for the African American vote. FDR’s second election was the first time that the majority of African Americans had voted Democrat over Republican.

The goodwill toward Democrats, leading to a solid block of African American voters, continued under Truman, Johnson, and Kennedy. While running for president, the Kennedys worked to help free Martin Luther King, Jr. from jail, a move that held sway with African American voters:

Meanwhile, Robert Kennedy, his brother and campaign manager persuaded the judge who had sentenced King to release the civil rights leader on bail, pending approval. News of the event captured the immediate attention of the African American community. African American votes would help Kennedy carry key states in the Midwest and South. (HMH, 2018, p. 1018)

Once elected, the Kennedy administration worked to solidify the Black vote. The text notes, “For example, Kennedy’s administration introduced affirmative action policies to place more African Americans in federal jobs and banned discriminatory hiring practices by government contractors” (HMH, p. 1021, 2018). Discursive theories of race have helped steer the interest convergence of civil rights leaning legislation, codes, and regulations. Institutional theories of race within the text provide more evidence of that convergence.
Themes of Coding of Institutional Theories of Race Within Tenet Two

Although examples of interest convergence are evident in the textbook prior to the Civil War, the text provides context for the underlying rationale of Lincoln’s pivotal executive action. In setting up the content of the Emancipation Proclamation, the textbook states,

As the war progressed, however, Lincoln did find a way to extend his constitutional war powers to end slavery. Because slaves built fortifications and grew food for the Confederacy, they could be seen as military assets. As Commander in Chief, Lincoln decided that, just as he could authorize the Union army to seize Confederate supplies, he could also authorize the army to emancipate slaves. Although it had not been his intention at the start of the war, he now found abolition to be a cornerstone of his war plan. (HMH, 2018, p. 383)

The works and words of Lincoln were parlayed into African American support of the Republican party.

Even southerners had interest in the passage of the 13th Amendment, as it was placed as a caveat to readmittance to the union. The text summarizes, “In addition, each state that sought readmission would have to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery” (HMH, 2018, p. 418). Many US Congressmen, from both sides of the isle, realized the position the Civil War Amendments (13th, 14th, and 15th) had in reinforcing the power of the federal government: “By declaring that no state could restrict the rights or legal protection of any citizen, the Fourteenth Amendment marked a shift in the balance between federal and state power” (HMH, 2018, p. 422). Citizenship for Indigenous Americans also came with interest convergence in the form of land: “After the Dawes Act of 1887, some Native American groups were able to trade reservation land for citizenship” (HMH, 2018, p. 588). Again, in the 20th century, the text notes citizenship for Indigenous Americans as the result of the convergence of White and non-White interests: “Partially in recognition of their service (in World War 1), President Coolidge signed the Indian Citizenship Act into law in 1924” (HMH, 2018, p. 716). The interest for politicians to
reward Indigenous Americans with citizenship was not only to recognize their wartime service, but also to be able to use their service moving forward.

As with the inclusion of African Americans into the wartime patriotism of World War I, immigrant opportunities for farm labor during World War II are exposed by the text as interest convergence:

Faced with the possibility of low harvests (due to the high number of American laborers fighting in the war), the US government responded. In 1942, it launched a program in which Mexican braceros, or hired hands, were invited to the United States to work on farms. Hundreds of thousands of braceros entered the United States between 1942 and 1947. By the war’s end, many braceros had also taken jobs in the railroad industry. (HMH, 2018, p. 868)

Business and political leaders historically intervene to create job opportunities for people of color when there is an economic demand or political clout to be gained.

Soldiers of Color came home from yet another war in which they were segregated and discriminated against in the summer and fall of 1945. In 1948, Truman attempted to build upon FDR’s New Deal coalition by taking the step of outlawing discrimination in the hiring of government employees. Like the patterns of systemic racism within tenet one of CRT, patterns of interest convergence may need to be specifically noted in order to bring historical examples into modern day conversations.

Themes of Coding of Material Theories of Race Within Tenet Two

One pattern within the text that highlights the interest convergence within material theories of race lies in the acceptance of Black music and culture by White society. Within module 17 (The Roaring Twenties) the book highlights the fame and popularity of prominent jazz musicians of the time including Cab Calloway, Bessie Smith, and Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington. The text’s inclusion of sheet music sales, crossover film success, and international acclaim indicate that these performers were promoted and supported by White business moguls,
but it is never directly stated (HMH, 2018, p. 746). Module 22 (The Postwar Boom) notes the African American roots and White audiences of rock n’ roll music and culture. Sun Studios and RCA are noted for backing the likes of Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Bill Haley and the Comets, and Elvis Presley (HMH, 2018, p. 1003). However, the closest the textbook comes to the convergence of corporate profits and the ubiquitous acceptance of Black culture is found in the final module (The United States in the 21st Century): “In the 1990’s global media companies saw an opportunity and began marketing hip-hop-related items in other countries. These included music, movies, clothing, and dance. Soon, hip-hop culture had become popular on six continents” (HMH, 2018, p. 1327). A synergistic pattern of financial exploitation would make connections between generations and better explain acceptance of Black culture in eras where other components of the Black experience are banned, shunned, ostracized, or criminalized.

When Americans sought positive accepting relationships with Indigenous Americans, it was often due to material interests, as pointed out in the text: “As long as settlers needed Native Americans as trading partners and guides, relationships between settlers and Native Americans could be beneficial” (HMH, 2018, p. 279). Resources would often guide seemingly benevolent government decisions. Realizing the Civil War would be a war of resources, Lincoln freed the slaves in the Confederacy as contraband, while leaving the border state slaves in bondage as to not upset the economic prowess of the Union (HMH, 2018, p. 383). After the Civil War it was not just the politicians who were misrepresenting civil rights advancements in the south by reason of exploitation.

The textbook includes the knowing misrepresentation of the post-Civil War South by newspaper editor Henry Grady:

The old South rested everything on slavery and agriculture, unconscious that these could neither give nor maintain healthy growth. The new South presents a perfect
democracy…a social system compact and closely knitted, less splendid on the surface but stronger at the core- a hundred farms for every plantation, fifty homes for every palace- and a diversified industry that meets the complex needs of this complex age. (HMH, 2018, p. 431)

The text is quick to point out why Grady might have disguised the reality of the South.

Immediately after his quote, the textbook notes:

Despite Grady’s grand words, he was not interested in creating a society of equality. Grady, like other southern industrial leaders, believed in the separation of the races. Although he claimed that black southerners were given fair chances to succeed economically, his words were empty talk. Grady hoped that by suggesting racial tensions in the South had been resolved, he could entice northerners to invest in southern businesses. His efforts had some success and Atlanta became the South’s major industrial center. (HMH, 2018, p. 431)

Through discursive, institutional, and material theories of race, interest convergence is made evident, yet not explicit. Civil Rights advancements in the form of freedom, Constitutional rights, economic opportunities, cultural acceptance by White mainstream America, and inclusion in the nationwide growth and prosperity happen when they converge with the interests of influential White groups. The inclusion of these data entries help further the answering of the initial research questions.

**Prelude to Coding of Tenet Three: Race as a Social Construct Outside the Textbook**

Decades before Critical Race Theory became a political hot button issue in American history classrooms, a study was done that noted the gradual elimination of race from anthropological texts from 1932-1979. The authors determined,

We seem incapable of making a necessary distinction between the natural biological variations in the human species that are products of largely evolutionary forces and the social meanings that were imposed on peoples with these varying features during the construction of the ideology of race. (Littlefield, Lieberman, & Reynolds, 1982)

The study underscored the fact that by 1979 the field of anthropology (the scientific study of what makes us human) had found the creation of race to be a completely sociocultural
phenomenon, While anthropologist had come to define race as completely separate from the field of biology, they note its meaning in terms of social application. Social anthropologist Audrey Smedley defines race not as a measurement of physical differences, but of the social recognition and reaction that race brings. Specifically, she states, “Race is about status and inequity of rank in a society where competition for wealth and power are played out at the individual level” (Smedley, 2011). As such, race and power are inextricably linked through the process of comparison. While differences had been noticed for centuries, the meaning given to those differences created racism. According to Smedley, the social creation of race developed over time from the universal classification of human beings, to ranking these groups against each other, to the belief that outer differences were representative of inner differences, to the conclusion that these differences were passed from one generation to the next, and ultimately to the conviction that each “race” was created differently on purpose by God (Smedley, 2011). This developed with European exploration and enslavement of Africans, continued past the Civil War, and leads into the long term belief that the “races” are different despite the lack of evidence of any groups differing more than individuals. Culture and ethnicity connects people through a complex creation of a whole through knowledge systems, belief, art, morals, customs, law, and need not connect to physical features (Tyler, 1881). Race, conversely, is seen as such a divider in America that people cannot see the common culture that makes them ethnically American.

Coding of Tenet Three: Race as a Social Construct Within the Textbook

A precursor to the coding of race as a social construct within the textbook is necessary, as race in its anthropological positioning is almost completely ignored within the textbook American History (HMH, 2018). As close as the textbook comes to acknowledging the social creation of race is found in module two (The American Colonies): “Most white colonists
convinced themselves that Africans’ skin was a sign of inferiority, and so had few reservations about subjecting them to a life of servitude” (HMH, 2018, p. 82). Much later in the text (Module 24- Civil Rights), Malcolm X is referred to by the text as noting the skin color of Muslims in his world travels, “Malcolm wrote of his encounter with Muslims of different races and nationalities, including those who appeared white” (HMH, 2018, p. 1081). I bring those two passages to the forefront of this section because they are the only two entries that I coded which directly connect to the biological perceptions of race. This low volume would be adequate if race instead were described explicitly in the textbook as a cultural creation; however, it is not described as such and no attempt is made to give race a definition for which to tether racial references. People throughout the textbook are referred to by race, as White, African American, mixed race, or by nationality (with an inference of race). White and Black groups and individuals are noted throughout the text, but there is not a conscious effort to define what Black and White meant over that time. Who qualified as White? Although it is and was a racial construct, this label had and still entails meaning and privilege. Thus, it is important to know who passed that barrier and how we know. Who qualified as Black? Despite the lack of understanding the complexities of genetics, societies of the past still had their own ways of grouping people by race and limiting opportunities for those not deemed White. However, this labeling and grouping is never seriously investigated and placed on a continuum of how race has been created over time and what those labels have meant for individuals and groups throughout America.

As the CRT concept of race as a social construct is largely ignored by the textbook, I take liberties to make loose connections between the text and the tenet. As opposed to the analysis of the coding of previous CRT tenets, this tenet will not be broken down through discursive, institutional, and material theories. Of the 26 entries of race as a social construct that emerged
from the textbook coding, the overwhelming majority of them were placed in the institutional theories of race category. This placement stems from the notion of race as a type of categorizing that Americans have done with race since before the establishment of this country. The main themes I have included to demonstrate an acknowledgement of the ingredients of race as a social construct are the othering and grouping of people by race, the creation of desirable and undesirable groups, and the intermixing of races with unspecified results.

What I mean by unspecified results of mixing populations is that although the textbook is definitive in the representation of some people or individuals as belonging to a particular race, it is more ambiguous in its handling of mixed race individuals. In covering the Supreme Court case that established the precedent of separate-but-equal, the text states,

Plessy claimed that segregation violated his right to equal protection under the law. Moreover, he claimed that being of ‘mixed-descent’, he was entitled to ‘every recognition, right, privilege, and immunity secured to the citizens of the United States of the white race.’ (HMH, 2018, p. 589)

The text omits a critical component of the case: Plessy describing himself as seven-eighths Caucasian (Elliott, 2006, p. 264), Plessy could easily have lived his life as a White man. Instead, he used his racial privilege to challenge not only the legalized hierarchy of race in America, but also the flaws in the creation of race itself. Nowhere in the textbook is it mentioned that the arrest of Plessy was a test case and that all of those involved with his arrest were in lock step with Plessy in challenging Louisiana’s Separate Car Act. By Louisiana law, because Homer Plessy was one-eighth “colored blood (Elliott, 2006, p. 264), he was forbidden from riding in the White passenger car. By not digging into the nuanced categorization and meaning of race within the case, readers are left seeing Plessy vs. Ferguson as literally and figuratively a Black and White issue.
Other people within the textbook are described by race, yet race is only noted when the individual was seen as something other than White. Nobody is noted as a White politician, a White author, or a White civil rights activist. In module 19 (The New Deal), the textbook mentions a program to help artists get through the tough economic times: “It also helped Richard Wright, an African American author, complete his acclaimed novel *Native Son* (1940) about a young man trying to survive in a racist world” (HMH, p. 810, 2018). Crispus Attucks is described as “a sailor of African and Native American ancestry” (HMH, p. 106, 2018) and Jim Beckworth as “the son of a white man and an African American woman” (HMH, 2018, p. 245). Were these mixed race individuals White or Black, and why? The text does not provide an investigation or explanation. Perhaps a clue of such mixed race individuals is found within the penultimate module (The New Millennium). The text presents President Barack Obama as the “country’s first African American president”, while the next sentence describes him as “a young U.S. senator from Illinois and the son of a white mother and African father” (HMH, 2018, p. 1234).

Despite not stating the race of mixed individuals before President Obama, it can be surmised through his classification in the text as African American that all other individuals of mixed race must be seen by the textbook as people of Color. Throughout the textbook racial descriptions are used for individuals and groups of people, yet there are no descriptions of the laws, codes, and techniques used to classify them. The one drop rule, the principle that anyone with a discernable trace of African ancestry is Black, has a deep and telling history in American race relations, yet is not defined or explored in the textbook. In examining the past and present utilization of the one drop rule, historian David A. Hollinger notes,

The movement for recognition of ‘mixed-race identity’ has made some headway, including for people with a fraction of African ancestry, but most governments, private
agencies, educational institutions, and advocacy organizations that classify and count people by ethno racial categories at all continue to perpetuate hypodescent racialization when they talk about African Americans. (2005, p. 28)

The inclusion of the one drop rule and placement on a historical timeline to draw out connections and implications would enable the textbook to be used as a catalyst for racial discourse and understanding.

Hollinger’s use of the word hypodescent acknowledges America as a racial hierarchy in which children of mixed race are automatically placed in the inferior group. While the textbook does not utilize this term, it does include passages of diverse groups that provide the modern racial makeup of America today. When Americans are labeled as Black, it is often a connection to their African roots: “Modern African Americans have strong ancestral ties to Western Africa” (HMH, 2018, p. 14).

Many Latin Americans have a blend of Spanish and Indigenous ancestry: Spanish settlers in the Americas were mostly men and were known as peninsulares. Marriage between peninsulares and native women was common. These marriages created a large mestizo-or mixed Spanish and Native American- population. Their descendants today live in Mexico, other Latin American countries, and the United States. (HMH, 2018, p. 38)

The label of White is connected to European immigrants:

Gradually, more Dutch as well as Germans, French, Scandinavians, Jews, and other European immigrants settled the area. The colony also included many Africans, free as well as enslaved. By the 1660’s, one fifth of New Netherland’s population was of African ancestry. (HMH, 2018, p. 64)

However, the inclusion of certain European groups of immigrants as more or less desirable within the text is important, as it opens readers eyes to the meaning of Whiteness beyond simply European. “Irish immigrants faced bitter prejudice, both because they were Roman Catholic and because they were poor” (HMH, 2018, p. 336). Irish are juxtaposed with other more accepted European groups: “The German immigrants who reached the United States in the 1840’s did not face nearly as much persecution as had Irish arrivals” (HMH, 2018, p. 337).
The fact that Irish were European yet not seen as White on the racialized hierarchy in America is a confusing yet important investigation into the country’s complex relationship with race. Again, the textbook includes the ingredients in the CRT tenet of race as a social construct, but falls short of the explicit connections.

The theme of racial othering was a result of the mixing of these diverse groups of people, as presented in the text, “In spite of this fear of being swamped by non-English speakers, English colonists found ways of getting along with their new neighbors, thus furthering the evolution of a truly diverse American society” (HMH, 2018, p. 88). The text briefly notes the vast differences between African slaves brought to America, but does not explore the implications of those distinctions: “The Africans who were transported to North America came from a variety of different cultures and spoke varied languages” (HMH, 2018, p. 94). Another omission of racial implications comes in the form of African and Indigenous mixing. The text does note the mixing, but omits the colonial response to the trend: “Many who succeeded in running away from their masters found refuge with Native American tribes, and marriages between runaway slaves and Native Americans was common” (HMH, 2018, p. 95). The textbook leaves this passage without the acknowledgement that wealthy elite colonists found this mix threatening. Laws were passed throughout the colonies that limited and forbade public meetings and marriages between any combination of Indigenous Americans and African Americans. The Five Civilized Tribes were encouraged to own slaves and laws were passed to promote and emphasize white superiority (Zinn, 2015). The existence of such laws is important to connect to the themes of racial mixing, as they help demonstrate the fact that racial mixing and cooperation was seen as a threat to the manufactured racial hierarchy.
The textbook does well to include the questioning of the degree to which African Americans were truly African. Leaders such as Abraham Lincoln (p. 383) and Marcus Garvey (p. 588) are described by the text as promoting “Back to Africa” movements in which groups of African Americans would resettle in Western Africa. These resettlement efforts dated back to the early 1800s and hinged upon racial hierarchy, racial disharmony, and the treatment of African Americans as foreigners. A quote by James Forten is an appropriate critique within the text to these relocation plans:

Here I have dwelt until I am nearly sixty years of age, and have brought up and educated a family...Yet some ingenious gentlemen have recently discovered that I am still an African; that a continent three thousand miles, and more, from the place where I was born, is my native country. And I am advised to go home...Perhaps if I should only be set on the shore of that distant land, I should recognize all I might see there, and run at once to the old hut where my forefathers lived a hundred years ago. (HMH, 2018, p. 313)

The inclusion of this quote provides an opportunity for the textbook to investigate the meanings and connectivity of race, culture, ethnicity, nationality, genetics, and more. Instead, it is merely used as a segue into the early abolitionist movements in America.

Fear as a root cause of racial othering is prevalent throughout the textbook. Module 17 (The Roaring Twenties) attaches a created meaning to immigration and race:

Nativist feelings were fueled by the fact that some people involved in postwar labor disputes were immigrant anarchists and Socialists, who many Americans believed were actually Communists. Racist ideas like those expressed by Madison Grant, an anthropologist at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, fed nativist attitudes. (HMH, 2018, p. 713)

Fear of economic competition is expressed through the description of Latinos in Module 18 (The Great Depression):

Latinos- mainly Mexicans and Mexican Americans living in the Southwest- were also targets. Whites demanded that Latinos be deported, or expelled from the country, even though many had been born in America. By the late 1930’s hundreds of thousands of people of Mexican descent relocated to Mexico. Some of them left voluntarily; others the federal government deported. (HMH, 2018, p. 763)
Examples of the social construct of race, such as the “othering” of people based upon race, the meaning given by society to those races, the preferential treatment of certain races over others, and the societal and individual mixing of races are presented in the textbook without discussion. Connective narratives of the creation and development of race in America would be beneficial in understanding past and present concepts of race, the power dynamics of racial hierarchy, and the framework of critical race theory.

**Coding of Tenet Four: Storytelling and Counter-storytelling Within the Textbook**

Whether writing a paper, a book, a journal article; recording a podcast or vlog; creating an infographic; or producing a documentary; “doing” history entails telling a story. History textbooks are no different. When analyzing a textbook, as with all works of history, it is important to investigate who is telling the stories, what are the narratives of the stories, who are the main characters of the stories, how are those characters framed, and what are the lessons/takeaways of/from the stories. In calling for counter-storytelling as an analytical framework and tool within education, Solorzano and Yosso come from the position that people of Color have never possessed institutional power, and that strategies that challenge that power are necessary in combating racism and inequality. Racism is often hidden in the normative values (Matsuda et al., 1993), majoritarian stories (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993), and master narratives (Montecinos, 1995) of *American History*. Because these stories and narratives are built upon systems of oppression discussed in tenet one, they become interwoven and invisible if not highlighted and challenged. Solorzano and Yosso (2002) argue that critical race theory provides a framework to challenge the power of Whiteness in creating stories about race and working to create counter-stories to empower those too often left in the margins.
Themes of Coding of Discursive Theories of Race Within Tenet Four

The teaching of American history has often been seen as propaganda, with texts framing people, ideas, and events in an idealized and patriotic manner. American History (HMH, 2018) fits the mold of this romanticized version of the past in its use of clichés of Americana. Analyzing the text through discursive theories of race immediately calls to question what groups of people are in the mind of the writers as they use words and phrases such as freedom, liberty, American values, American character, and the American Dream.

Early in the text, during its discussion of the American Revolution, “determination, resilience, and unity” (HMH, 2018, p. 126) are used as characteristics of American character. There is no mention of slavery or racial hierarchy as an addendum to the inclusion of unity in the description. Nor is there a mention of what people are included and what people were left out of the establishment of “a stable republic, a government of the people” (HMH, 2018, p. 139). The text verges on calling the idealization of the American republic in the next module (The US Constitution), when it notes, “However, republicanism, the idea that governments should be based on the consent of the of the people, meant different things to different Americans” (HMH, p. 145). The inclusion of peoples’ calls for a national bill of rights to protect personal freedoms makes no mention of who’s rights would be protected and whose would be left out (HMH, 2018, p. 163, 2018).

The notion of the American Dream is included within the textbook no fewer than four times, all without caveats of who qualified for this “dream”. The arrival of the industrial revolution to the United States, and the economic prosperity brought about by the new technology is addressed by the text: “This optimism gave birth to the idea of the American Dream, the notion that any individual could improve his or her lot in life through his or her own
efforts” (HMH, 2018, p. 240). The formation of the idea of the American Dream in lockstep with the idea of a meritocracy certainly insinuates free Whites, does a disservice to readers who may be wondering just when, if ever, the American dream and the opportunities provided from hard work would be extended to people of Color. The text reintroduces this phrase when marking the economic boom of the 1920s: “The 1920’s were prosperous ones for the United States. It seemed like the American Dream was coming true. Americans owned around 40 percent of the world’s wealth, and that wealth changed the way most Americans lived” (HMH, 2018, p. 706). Although institutionalized slavery had ended, Black codes, segregation, lynchings, and other forms of racialized terror worked to keep people of Color on the lower rungs of society, politics, and economics. Were they included in this American Dream? By the post-war boom of the 1950s and 60s, the dream was represented by the demographic shift to the suburbs: “For many people, the suburbs embodied the American Dream of an affordable single-family house, good schools, a safe, healthy environment for children, and congenial neighbors just like themselves” (HMH, 2018, p. 987). Of course, de facto segregation, along with red-lining and racially restrictive housing covenants kept the vast majority of these areas White only. Once again, the textbook fails to mention race in reference to gatekeepers in telling the story of the American Dream.

The inclusion of racial categorization would help the textbook define what immigrants truly qualified for the American dream. In module 13 (Urbanization and Immigration), the text simply notes, “Others came to chase the American Dream, hearing stories of opportunities and wealth in the United States. All of these immigrants, however, came seeking a better life for themselves and their families” (HMH, 2018, p. 526). Race is also absent when tackling the assimilation process that these immigrants faced as they chased this dream:

Most immigrants sent their children to America’s free public schools, where they quickly became “Americanized.” Russian Jewish immigrant Mary Antin recalled the large
numbers of non-English speaking immigrant children. By the end of the school year, they could recite “patriotic verses in honor of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln…with plenty of enthusiasm.” (HMH, 2018, p. 579)

The cliché of the American Dream is important to include in the attempt to encompass the social, political, and economic pursuits of Americans throughout history. However, an inclusion of race at the forefront of those discussions would go far in understanding the racial hierarchy that serves as a barrier to the idealized vision of the American meritocracy.

While the textbook strikes an optimistic and patriotic tone throughout, it seldom takes space to break down and define the implications of patriotism as an othering device. One of the few instances in which the text counters the glorification of patriotism can be found in module 16 (World War I): “While the government’s propaganda campaign promoted patriotism, it also inflamed hatred and violations of civil liberties of certain ethnic groups and opponents of the war” (HMH, 2018, p. 680). The blurred lines of love and devotion to the country, including the White dominated racial hierarchy within its institutions, and hatred of others not fitting into the accepted groups can be parsed and investigated when including race in the examination of patriotism.

The people deemed heroes within a written history can provide insight into the racial hierarchy embedded in patriotism. Of the 15 people mentioned in the buildup to the American Revolution between pages 107-117, all were White men. However, race and class are not mentioned in the chapter that describes the events that shaped the American Revolution as “a turning point in humanity's fight for freedom” (HMH, 2018, p. 106). The following module (The U.S. Constitution), describes the 55 delegates at the Constitutional Convention through age, gender, education, career, and status, yet neglects to mention that they were all White. The
exclusion of race while describing a series of meetings of men who would determine the fate of slavery in America is problematic.

The textbook does show glimpses of countering the heroic status of revered figures, such as Christopher Columbus, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt. While Columbus is initially praised in the text as a cultural unifier, as module one (American Beginnings) notes, “Columbus’s voyages set off a chain of events that brought together the peoples of Europe, Africa, and the Americas. The interactions among the people of these three continents laid the foundation for modern multicultural America” (HMH, 2018, p. 29). While the resulting creation and continuation of a racial hierarchy in North America is not specifically stated, the text does push back on the legacy of Christopher Columbus by pointing out, “the legacy of Christopher Columbus was primarily one of genocide, cruelty, and slavery” (HMH, 2018, p. 34). The text then quotes Howard Zinn to speak on behalf of those marginalized in the name of “progress.” “Zinn questions whether the suffering of Native Americans can be justified by European gains: ‘If there are necessary sacrifices to be made, is it not essential to hold to the principle that those to be sacrificed must make the decision to be sacrificed themselves?’” (HMH, 2018, p. 34).

Like Columbus, Andrew Jackson is first praised before the praise is countered. “He (Jackson) became a symbol that anyone, not only members of established political families, could win elections” (HMH, 2018, p. 250). Pushing back on the notion that Jackson represented the common man, the text notes that his ownership of over 100 slaves put him in the wealthy class (HMH, 2018, p. 251) and that his policies violated the rights of Indigenous Americans (HMH, 2018, p. 248). However, the book stops short of using Jackson’s racist views and policies to drive the rationale for his popularity. The racial hierarchy and White supremacy espoused by
Jackson’s actions before, during, and after his presidency was supported by much of the White public and can be connected to create a counter-story to drive past the individual racism of Jackson into the historic use of racial division in politics. The people represented as heroes, patriotic narratives, and clichés of Americana used throughout the textbook *American History* (2018) demonstrate discursive theories of race operating as examples of storytelling and counter-storytelling within the CRT framework.

**Themes of Coding of Material Theories of Race Within Tenet Four**

While the attitudes and approaches of clichés and heroes of Americana within the storytelling of the textbook represent the discursive theories of race, the material theories of race within this tenet will be represented by “hard times”. Specifically, I will juxtapose the textbook’s treatment of the economic difficulty faced by Americans in the 1930s to the economic difficulty faced specifically by people of color in the 1980s. As expected, the hard times of the 1930s are accentuated by the textbook coverage of the Great Depression. However, the tough economic times of the 1980s hit people of Color at a far greater rate than Whites. A 1982 study revealed the Black poverty rate to be 32.5% while the White poverty rate was 10.2% (*New York Times*, 1982, p. 32). The story of hard times for this marginalized group in the 1980s goes unmentioned by the textbook. The theme of economic textbook coverage begins with the 1930s.

The story of 1930s poverty is one of vulnerability, psychological trauma, and government intervention. By describing the Depression as something that “robbed people of work, food, and hope” (HMH, p. 780, 2018), it is framed as an economic force that happened to people, not simply something going on around them. In an era of financial upheaval and uncertainty which greatly impacted White America, the textbook focuses on the stressful sacrifices and lifelong implications of poverty:
The economic problems forced many Americans to accept compromises and make sacrifices that affected them for the rest of their lives. Adults stopped going to the doctor or dentist because they couldn’t afford it. Young people gave up their dreams of going to college. Others put off getting married, raising large families, or having children at all. For many people, the stigma of poverty and of having to scrimp and save never disappeared completely. For some, achieving financial security became the primary focus in life. (HMH, 2018, p. 767)

It is important to note that the psychological burden of poverty is never again explored within the textbook. It is not explored when noting the economic challenges of newly freed slaves, people of Color facing the financial stress of the heavy hand of Jim Crow, nor the lack of options and opportunities after deindustrialization.

The text is quick to note President Hoover’s lackluster response to the economic crisis of the 1930s and the swelling frustration with the lack of direct government action. The trickle down economic policies that become admirably connected to the financial success for White America in the 1980s are critiqued by the textbook when noting their inability to help people with their economic situations in the 1930s:

Hoover believed that the money would trickle down to the average citizen through job growth and higher wages. Many critics questioned this approach; they argued that the program would benefit only corporations and that the poor still needed direct relief. Hungry people could not wait for the benefits to trickle down to their tables. (HMH, 2018, p. 773)

The text goes to note the popularity of Franklin Roosevelt’s direct assistance through his New Deal programs. No public concerns of free handouts are noted within the text; sentiments of people needing to pull themselves up by their bootstraps are nowhere to be found. Another sentiment that seems saved for White Americans is the textbook description of fatherless families. The following passage could easily describe families of Color dealing with the mass incarceration surge in the wake of the 1980s War on Drugs, but is placed in a section describing families in the 1940s dealing with soldiers away at war: “Teenagers left at home without parents
sometimes drifted into juvenile delinquency. And when fathers finally did come home, there was often a painful period of readjustment as family members got to know one another again” (HMH, 2018, p. 871).

By module 26 (Transitions and Conservatism), the textbook is back to noting a public belief in the Social Darwinism described in module 12 (Industrialization): “According to Social Darwinism, riches were a sign of God’s favor. Therefore the poor must be lazy or inferior people who deserved their lot in life” (HMH, 2018, p. 510). By the 1980s, impoverished Black communities, exacerbated by the deindustrialization of the 1970s, relied on the direct assistance that had become seen as handouts by White Americans. Instead of hitting these issues in racial terms, the textbook uses vague euphemized terminology: “By 1980, government spending on entitlement programs - programs that provide guaranteed programs to particular groups- was nearly $300 billion annually. The costs, together with fraudulently obtained benefits, caused resentment among many taxpayers” (HMH, 2018, p. 1192). The coded language of the textbook mirrored that of society in the 1970s and 80s.

The pattern of coded language in the Nixon and Reagan years, including the war on drugs, law and order, and lowering taxes, were veiled racial dialogue to communicate with White voters. While the textbook mentions the effect of the 1980s acceleration of the war on drugs to “prosecute users as well as dealers” (HMH, p. 1202, 2018), it does not place it in a racial context and leaves the story of drugs in the 1980s as strictly a criminal issue. Furthermore, the Reagan era tax cuts are noted by the textbook to have an unequal impact, but again, race is not mentioned directly. After noting middle class entitlements such as Social Security, Medicare, and veterans’ programs went untouched, the text describes the counter to those protected programs: “On the other hand, Congress slashed by 10 percent the budget for programs that benefited other groups.
These programs included urban mass transit, food stamps, welfare benefits, job training, Medicaid, school lunches, and student loans” (HMH, 2018, p. 1198). By failing to highlight the Southern Strategy, the war on drugs, tax cuts, the war on drugs, or get tough law and order initiatives as racial components of post-Civil Rights American politics, the textbook is following the lead of these politicians.

It is important to note what the textbook says and does not say. It is noteworthy that race is not a part of the 1970s and 80s political discourse. It is also important to note how people, events, and ideas are labeled by the text, and how those labels change throughout the text. In describing large violent public disturbances, different labels are attached to those actions throughout the textbook. Early examples of violent disturbances, often White led economically fueled violence, are referred to by the text as rebellions and uprisings (HMH, 2018, p. 55, 89, 95, 154). Not until race is introduced to these actions of violence is the term riot used. The descriptions of the early uprisings are given more space, detail, and meaning within the textbook. Bacon’s, Whiskey, and Shay's rebellions are given five paragraphs each. The whiskey rebellion is referred to as “a milestone” (HMH, 2018, pp. 204-205), and Shay’s as a sign of “something seriously wrong” (HMH, pp. 154-155).

The remaining violent mass disturbances are all labeled riots by the textbook, with no differentiation between when people of Color were victims of racial massacres (1860s Draft Riots, 1919 Chicago Race Riots, 1943 Zoot Suit Riots, 1946 Columbia Race Riots) or the voicing frustration in the form of social or economic uprisings (1965 Watts Riots, 1992 LA Riots). The text lacks historical detail, nuance, and connectivity for the reader to be able to uncover why many historians refer to 1965 as the Watts Rebellion or 1992 as the LA Uprising. The entirety of the leadup to, events within, and implications of the LA Uprising consists of two
sentences within *American History* (HMH, p. 1106, 2018). The Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921, brought to the forefront of America’s attention during the racial unrest of 2020, is completely absent within the text. As such, the stories of Black Wall street, the narratives of Black entrepreneurship and success in the face of institutional racism and segregation, and the violent White backlash against Black success go unread, undiscussed, and unconnected.

**Themes of Coding of Institutional Theories of Race Within Tenet Four**

While themes of riots, rebellions, and uprisings were discussed with the material theories of race due to their connection to bodily and material concerns, the Great Migration and movement of people of Color from the South to the West and North will be discussed in more depth with the institutional theories of race. While there are certainly bodily and material concerns connected to the push-pull catalysts of this migration, it is the racist institutions of the South that provided the largest incentive for movement.

Labels and word choice are interesting and important. The textbook uses the word “migration” for both the invasion of Indigenous peoples’ land during the Jefferson presidency (HMH, 2018, p. 217) and the mass exodus of people of Color fleeing racial terror in the South. In both instances the textbook stresses the economic resources being chased. In the later example, the text defines the Great Migration as “the large-scale movement of hundreds of thousands of southern blacks to cities in the North ” (HMH, 2018, p. 681). According to the text, the two push factors driving the migration in the early 20th century were “racial discrimination in the South" (HMH, 2018, p. 681) and the fact that a “boll weevil infestation, aided by floods and droughts, had ruined much of the South’s cotton fields" (HMH, 2018, p. 682). According to the text, this downtick in agricultural job opportunities led to the allure of new factory jobs in the northern cities. While a *Chicago Defender* article is cited by the textbook as contrasting “Dixieland
lynnings with the prosperity of African Americans in the North” (HMH, 2018, p. 682), there is never a framing of the people leaving the South during the Great Migration as refugees from racial terror.

Lynching is mentioned verbatim three times within the textbook, none of which include descriptions of lynchings, examples of lynchings, or White utility of the culture of lynching. Because lynching is not consistently referred to by the text as a dominant southern force, it is not linked to the massive movement of Black people out of that region. When The Great Migration appears again, as an attachment to the Harlem Renaissance, it is once again connected to the segregation and discrimination of Jim Crow, yet not the constant threat of physical violence or death. The text states, “After World War I, Jim Crow laws continued to make life hard for African Americans in the South. Many black Americans looked north for more security, freedom, and opportunities” (HMH, 2018, p. 741). After noting the new goals and changing attitudes that people of Color had toward themselves, the text ties the southern strive to the northern movement: “Between 1910 and 1920 a movement known as the Great Migration took place” (HMH, 2018, p. 741). From there, the text goes into the virtues of the Harlem Renaissance, never to mention the Great Migration nor the lynching of Black people from there.

Migration is also used as the word to describe the American movement into western land of Indigenous Americans: “During Jefferson’s presidency Americans continued their western migration across the Appalachians” (HMH, 20180, p. 217). Although Indigenous Americans are mentioned, they are typically textualized through their connection to White Americans: “William Henry Harrison persuaded them (Native American chiefs) to sign away 3 million acres of tribal land to the U.S. government” (HMH, 2018, p. 221). The White narrative of western movement is hammered home throughout the textbook through such word choices as “persuaded”. An
Indigenous American telling of this event might have used a different word. Another example of White narrative word choice comes in the following excerpt: “On the banks of the Tippecanoe River, he burned the Shawnee capital known as Prophetstown to the ground. Harrison’s victory at what came to be known as the Battle of Tippecanoe, made him a national hero” (HMH, 2018, p. 221). The inclusion of “victory” and “hero” drives home the perspective from which the textbook is written. The following quote, a summary of the White western pioneer, is quite telling in determining who, according to the text, are Americans, “A new national identity had developed, and Americans looked forward to establishing their own traditions rather than emulating old European ways” (HMH, 2018, p. 225).

Continuing the trend of talking through the White American narrative, the textbook continues to cover westward expansion: “It seemed inevitable to many Americans that the growth and expansion they had always known would stop. They assumed that the United States would extend its dominion to the Pacific Ocean” (HMH, 2018, 277). Again, subtle word choices demonstrate the positionality of the textbook when foreshadowing the battles for land in the modern American southwest: “Unfortunately, establishing the boundary in the Southwest would not be so easy” (HMH, 2018, p. 283). The text does not establish specifically who exactly this situation is unfortunate for, but the reader can assume the difficulty in land acquisition is unfortunate for White settlers.

In continually noting the character of the settlers moving into Indigenous land, the text appears to give validity to this land invasion: “Although pioneer life was hard, the pioneers kept moving westward and settling” (HMH, 2018, p. 217). This pattern continues when noting the movement into modern day Texas: “Many Americans as well as Mexicans rushed at the chance to settle Texas. The same restless determination that produced new inventions fed the American
urge to fulfill the country’s manifest destiny” (HMH, 2018, 288). In addition to noting the character of the American settlers, the text uses the term manifest destiny as its own rather than a commentary of the day or a sign of the times. Manifest destiny is used once again as a textbook phrase in the leadup to the war on Mexico: “The addition of Oregon and Texas into the United States had created feelings of great national pride…the theory of manifest destiny had launched the United States into its first war on foreign territory” (HMH, 2018, p. 294).

The narrative of White American progress through character and domination had been on display in the text with the depiction of the Battle of the Alamo: “Defenders of the Alamo fought bravely against Mexican forces” (HMH, 2018, p. 290). Although the presence of African Americans in Texas is noted (HMH, 2018, p. 289), there is no mention of slavery or of Texas being a haven for slave owners. There is, however, a detailed explanation of the pride the newly independent Texans felt in comparing their fight for independence to the colonists who had “chafed under British rule 60 years earlier” (HMH, 2018, p. 290). The text goes on to refer to the war on Mexico as the “War in Mexico” (HMH, 2018, p. 295) and the “War with Mexico” (HMH, 2018, p. 295), insinuating both were willing participants in this American war for land acquisition. Nowhere in the modules describing the continual American conquests are the morals, character, hopes, or aspirations of the Indigenous Americans or Mexicans.

Collectively, the discursive, material, and institutional theories of race within the textbook demonstrate Eurocentric White American narratives. Clichés of Americana are demonstrated through White eras of social and economic success. White heroes are emphasized with little push back or criticism from the text. Hard economic times for White Americans are treated differently than those of people of Color within the narratives and storylines of the text. The naming of rebellions, uprisings, and riots changes within the text once the chronological
timeline gets to the racially motivated riots of the 1860s. While race segregation in the South is presented as a driving force behind the Great Migration, there is no mention of lynching or the racial violence that would classify those making the move to the North and West as refugees of racial terror. Many of the textbooks' stories and narratives are seen through the eyes of White society. Little validity is given by the text to the marginalized, victimized, and underrepresented.

**Coding of Tenet Five: Examples of Whiteness as Power, Property, and Recipients of Civil Rights Legislation Within the Textbook**

Critical Race Theory tenets one through four hint at what tenet five makes clear: to be perceived as White throughout American history is to be a recipient of power, property, and civil rights legislation at a rate greater than people of Color. The example Beverly Tatum provides to demonstrate this concept is that if a person of Color denied their application for an apartment, but would have been granted approval if they were White, they find themselves outside the boundaries of White privilege (Tatum, 2017). Whiteness as power is exemplified through the hierarchical racial institutions investigated in tenet one. The interest convergence exemplified in tenet two will be presented through the gatekeepers of civil rights legislation in an examination of this final tenet. The lines of who qualifies for this privilege change over time, providing evidence for its social creation. The power, privilege, and reception of civil rights legislation through Whiteness has meaning in the stories and narratives of American history. However, as has been uncovered through this and other studies, that meaning is sometimes invisible in society and the telling of our history.
Themes of Coding of Material Theories of Race Within Tenet Five

The connection between Whiteness and legal power is established early within the textbook, as it makes note that America’s first representative government allowed only for White landowning men to vote (HMH, 2018, p. 53). Private ownership of land, and its contrasting ideology from Indigenous Americans is noted prior to that: “‘We cannot sell the lives of men and animals’, said one Blackfoot chief in the 1800’s, ‘therefore we cannot sell this land.’ This attitude would lead to many clashes with the Europeans, who believed in private ownership of land” (HMH, 2018, p. 11). The European power to claim land is mentioned extensively in module one (American Beginnings). European power came from the establishment of four major nations: Portugal, Spain, France, and England (HMH, 2018, p. 25) and their development signaled a new world order: “European monarchs became more powerful as a result of the Crusades, weakening the power of the nobles who fought them. These monarchs were then able to sponsor overseas exploration to seek more wealth and power” (HMH, 2018, p. 26). A major theme early in the text is the transfer of power, first to the new world in the form of White European explorers and settlers, and then to White independent Americans.

The textbook highlights the fact that the first immigrants from England to North America took with them the authority for an independent government through the Royal Charter (HMH, 2018, p. 58). The European claim of land is presented throughout the text (HMH, 2018, pp. 15, 31, 33, 655, 692, 1121) alongside the transfer of that power to their American counterparts, with whiteness as the caveat to that power, holding steady and true throughout the text (HMH, 2018, pp. 139, 208, 224, 624, 951). An example of this transfer can be found in module five (A New Nation): “Pioneers moving west assumed that the 1783 Treaty of Paris, in which Great Britain had ceded its land rights west of the Appalachians, gave them free rein to settle the area” (HMH,
Europeans not only transferred the power to claim land, but also to establish and determine land value. Here, the text describes an oft repeated practice of underpaying Indigenous Americans for their land: “This settlement continued a pattern in which settlers and the government paid Native Americans much less for their land than it was worth” (HMH, 2018, p. 210).

The European power to claim land led to their self-proclaimed power to claim people as their property as well. Slaves are referred to as property several times throughout the text (HMH, 2018, pp. 343, 362, 368, 383), yet never explicitly as White property. Yes, people of Color owned slaves; yet it was a White European institution transferred to the independent White dominated United States that functioned to allow for those seen as Black to be owned, most typically by White Americans. “Slaves were property, southerners claimed, and the Constitution protected property” (HMH, 2018, p. 343). The following textbook excerpt explains the legal cementing of the former southern assertion, while also establishing White Americans as the recipients of Bill of Rights protections.

The court ruled (in Scott vs. Sandford) that slaves were property, not people. As a result, they did not have the rights of citizens…the court ruled that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional. Congress could not forbid slavery in any part of the territories. Doing so would interfere with slaveholders’ right to own property, a right protected by the Fifth Amendment. (HMH, 2018, p. 362)

The textbook establishes, but never links together, exclusive private White ownership—established by European powers and transferred to White Americans—in a series of hierarchical institutions that link White property with White legal power.

Beyond the establishment of White property and the transfer of European power to White Americans, the textbook insinuates White American power as the validity for extensive economic, political, and military actions throughout American history. The text presents the
public belief in Manifest Destiny (HMH, 2018, p. 277), Sauk removal by the American
government (HMH, 2018, p. 278), American violation of treaties (HMH, 2018, p. 278), the
annexation of sovereign land (HMH, 2018, pp. 291-293), the Indian Wars (HMH, 2018, p. 456),
the claim of resources on reservation land (HMH, 2018, p. 871), resource and power claims in
Cuba (HMH, 2018, p. 951) and Hawaii (HMH, 2018, p. 624), involvement in Vietnam (HMH,
2018, p. 951), and more as an underlying theme of White validity. While it is never directly
stated, the White privilege to claim property—passed to the Americans from European nations—is
assumed to act as the validity in these instances and more. An example of this power can be
found in module 15 (Imperialism):

White Hawaiian planters profited from close ties with the United States. In 1875, the
United States agreed to import Hawaiian sugar duty-free. Also in that year, Hawaii’s
King Kalakaua had been strong-armed by white business leaders. They forced him to
amend Hawaii’s constitution, effectively limiting voting rights to only wealthy
landowners. (HMH, 2018, p. 624)

The following two textbook passages provide a subtler framing of White power to both claim
land and extend government power in the process: “The man who would win, slaveholder James
K. Polk, firmly favored annexation of Texas ‘at the earliest practicable period’” (HMH, 2018, p.
291) and “Polk now believed that war with Mexico would bring not only Texas but also New
Mexico and California into the Union” (HMH, 2018, p. 292).

The exploitation of Vietnam, as detailed in the textbook American History (HMH, 2018)
can be used as evidence of the extension of the transfer of power from European powers to the
American institutions of power. “From the late 1800’s until World War II, France ruled most of
Indochina. This included Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. French colonists, who built plantations
on peasant land and extracted rice and rubber for their own profit” (HMM, 2018, p. 1121). After
the French withdrew their troops, as their vision of a southeast colony waivered, American forces
filled the void of White power structures in the region. “In the 1940’s Vietnam was a French colony. The Kennedy administration wanted to contain any further spread of communism in Southeast Asia. It supported Diem, pouring financial assistance into the region. It sent thousands of military advisors” (HMH, 2018, p. 951). The textbook provides the evidence, but fails to make clear the assertion of American exceptionalism as an extension and manifestation of White European transfer of authority in claiming property to White American institutions of power.

**Themes of Coding of Discursive Theories of Race Within Tenet Five**

As material theories of race focus on economic and bodily concerns, discursive theories focus on attitudes and approaches of race. Within the CRT tenets, the text demonstrates the economic theories of race through Whiteness as property; discursive theories of race are demonstrated within the text through the concept of Whiteness as power.

Certain sections explicitly describe the dominant group as White and other times it is implied. White is used as a descriptor of those demonstrating the White power to claim land no fewer than five times within the module 11 (Westward Expansion). The following excerpt from the text works well to connect components of race, land, power, and the establishment of a White normative culture:

> The culture of the white settlers who streamed westward differed in many ways from that of the Native Americans on the plains. Unlike Native Americans, who believed that the land could not be owned, the settlers believed that owning land, making a mining claim, or starting a business would give them a stake in the country. They argued that the Native Americans had forfeited their rights to the land because they hadn’t settled down to improve it. Concluding that the plains were “unsettled”, migrants streamed westward along railroad and wagon trails to claim the land. (HMH, 2018, p. 458)

The cultural standard setting of White Americans is strengthened in the passage, “Lured by new opportunities and supported by government policies that sought to force Native Americans onto reservations and convince them to abandon their traditional culture, white Americans moved in
and settled these lands” (HMH, 2018, p. 464). The claim by “whites” of two-thirds of land that had been set aside for Native Americans (HMH, 2018, p. 463) and legal seizure of land by “White Americans” from Mexican Americans who did not understand American laws and tax system furthers the pattern of White dominant culture.

However, as American culture is addressed in later modules, Whiteness is seldom used in the textbook descriptions. As the text explains the assimilation process of immigrants in the early 20th century, it states, “The Americanization movement was designed to assimilate people of wide ranging cultures in the dominant culture. This social campaign was sponsored by the government and by concerned citizens” (HMH, 2018, p. 537). Why the textbook ceases to include Whiteness within the description of dominant culture is unclear. A key theme of the presentation of Whiteness as power in the textbook is the establishment of White culture as the norm. Examples of this theme include the replacement of Native American culture with English culture (HMH, 2018, p. 63), the American System uniting “American interests” (HMH, 2018, p. 238), assimilating Native Americans by “absorbing them into white ways” (HMH, 2018, p. 251), converting people to Christianity (HMH, 2018, p. 281), the Ku Klux Klan’s protection of the status quo (HMH, 2018, pp. 713, 714, 720), efforts to “Americanize” non-Whites (HMH, 2018, p. 802), the homogenized American post war car culture (HMH, 2018, p. 992), and the portrayal of “white middle class suburban experiences” in pop culture (HMH, 2018, p. 1000). Elements of entertainment, advertising, politics, education, religion, and criminal justice are among the societal components in which Whiteness is demonstrated within the textbook as the normative culture.

Another theme within the presentation of Whiteness as power within the textbook is the protection from punishment. In reference to Tatum’s housing description of privileged treatment
(Tatum, 2017), one can examine punishment in such a manner. In essence, a White person is a benefactor of power if they would not be punished for something that a person of Color would be. The establishment of a racially based distribution of punishment is established early in the text: “Slave owners whipped and beat those slaves they thought were disobedient or disrespectful. In Virginia, the courts did not consider slave owners guilty of murder for killing their slaves during punishment” (HMH, 2018, p. 84). The inclusion that members of the Illinois militia “slaughtered more than 200 Sauk and Fox people " is merely one example within the text of unpunished White violence perpetrated against Indigenous Americans (HMH, 2018, p. 278).

The text notes the treatment of 58 Confederate legislators; despite acts of treason they were reinstated to the U.S. Congress and pardoned by President Johnson (HMH, 2018, p. 419). Not only does the protection from punishment act as a privilege for White people in America, but also plays out on a world stage. The text describes the systematic murder of over 200 villagers in the village of Mi Lai in Vietnam. This is an example of White American violence against people of Color going unpunished on the world stage. The textbook notes that of the 25 army officers who were charged, only one was convicted (HMH, 2018, 1152).

Beyond establishing Whiteness as the cultural norm and Whiteness as protection from punishment, the textbook exemplifies numerous other examples of White power and privilege, although not directly stated as such. Early efforts are showed to be made by White European colonists (in an effort that was transferred to White Americans) to control, limit, or eliminate the gatherings and camaraderie of people of color:

As in the South, however, enslaved persons in the North led harsh lives and were considered less than human beings. Laws forbade them to gather or to carry weapons, and there were no laws to protect them against cruel treatment. (HMH, 2018, p. 89)
In an extension of White power to control movement of populations of people of Color, the text notes the power of slave traders to divide families at their will (HMH, 2018, p. 94). Whiteness meant the power to deny access to the vote (HMH, 2018, pp. 145, 419), to school (HMH, 2018, p. 306), and to public transportation (HMH, 2018, p. 306). It meant controlling and monopolizing ownership of weapons, opportunities to serve on juries, determining who people could marry, and who could own land (HMH, 2018, p. 420). Critically, and perhaps most representatively, Whiteness provided your legal personhood in a country where people of Color could be deemed property (HMH, 2018, p. 157).

**Themes of Coding of Institutional Theories of Race Within Tenet Five**

In a close connection to the evidence within the text demonstrating Whiteness as power, the institutional theories of race within the text demonstrate Whiteness as recipients of civil rights legislation. Discursive theories of race within the text made clear the power of Whiteness to withhold and deny resources and opportunities to people of Color. This section will extend that out to specific laws, legal cases, and legal proceedings. The U.S. government, established as a White political institution of power, made racial hierarchy a key criteria when determining legality in both domestic and foreign affairs. In reference to the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie, which guaranteed land rights of the Central Plains to various Indigenous American groups, the text notes, “The U.S. government repeatedly violated the terms of the treaty. Subsequent treaties demanded that Native Americans abandon their lands and move to reservations" (HMH, 2018, p. 281). The government treatment of Indigenous Americans, as represented in the text, mirrors the actions of settlers in creating and sustaining a White power structure in the west.

Several major Supreme Court Cases depicted in the text demonstrate Whiteness as the recipients of civil rights legislation.
In the Slaughterhouse Cases of 1873, for example, the Court decided that the Fourteenth Amendment protected only the rights people had by virtue of their citizenship in the United States. The Court contended that most of Americans’ basic civil rights were obtained through their citizenship in a state and that the amendment did not protect those rights. (HMH, 2018, p. 447)

As such, the legalized racial hierarchy that continued in many states well after the Civil War Amendments had its federal seal of approval. The infamous Plessy vs. Ferguson case, which established the far reaching precedent of separate but equal, is presented within the text as another example of Whites being the beneficiaries of the 14th Amendment: “In 1896, in Plessy v. Ferguson, the Supreme Court ruled that the separation of races in public accommodations did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment. The decision established the doctrine of separate but equal” (HMH, 2018, p. 584). In taking on the extent to which states could limit the right to vote, the Supreme court in the 1873 case U.S. v. Reese is depicted by the text to have ruled that while race may not be a restricting factor in voting, other factors such as residency requirements or literacy could inhibit the right to vote (HMH, 2018, p. 447). As such, the Fifteenth Amendment, in this case, most often benefited Whites over Blacks in an era where former slaves had limited education and housing. What the textbook again fails to do is explicitly frame these cases in the context of White power and privilege.

The power to deny civil rights to others, as well as being the beneficiaries of civil rights legislation is part of a larger institutional theory of race, the restrictive and limiting power of Whiteness as gatekeepers. As the Emancipation Proclamation,- in the short run, and the 13th Amendment- in the long run demonstrated, White political power was necessary to free slaves in the United States. “In the end, it would take a war and a presidential action to end slavery” (HMH, 2018, p. 316). Power is specifically used as the text notes the closing salvos of the war to end slavery, “As Union forces pushed deeper into Confederate territory, thousands of slaves
sought freedom behind the lines of the Union army…They waited to welcome the Yankees, who had the power to liberate them” (HMH, 2018, p. 388). Gatekeepers are allowed the power to determine who is allowed in—in the case of the freeing of the slavery, and also who is not allowed- in the case of the Declaration of Independence. The textbook takes steps to not only celebrate the Declaration, but also focus on who was disallowed the freedoms being demanded: “It was not meant to embrace women, Native Americans, and African American slaves- a large number of Americans” (HMH, 2018, 117). This entry also acts as an example of counter-storytelling, a CRT tenet that will be examined further in a later section of this chapter.

Whiteness as recipients of civil rights legislation through their role as gatekeepers is seen throughout the text in such instances as who the Constitution applied to (HMH, 2018, p. 346), the power to liberate (HMH, 2018, p. 388), the power to appoint to political positions of power (HMH, 2018, 437), and even access into the White House:

Eleanor Roosevelt played a key role in opening doors for African Americans in government. She invited African American leaders, including Walter White of the NAACP, for an unprecedented meeting at the White House to help end discrimination against African Americans in some New Deal programs. She also coordinated meetings between the president and the NAACP to discuss antilynching legislation. (HMH, 2018, p. 801)

The inclusion of the word “unprecedented” in the previous excerpt insinuates that the position of power went beyond the power of the White House and into the reserved realm of Whiteness. The instances of Whiteness as gatekeepers merge with the tenet of interest convergence in order to exemplify Whiteness as recipients of civil rights legislation within the textbook.

If power is to be seen as something that is lost by one group when gained by another group, then the struggle for social capital in American history is not surprising. The text highlights an important theme within the tenet of Whiteness as recipients of civil rights legislation when it notes the backlash to advancements made by people of Color in the 1950s and
“Conservatives, however, bitterly criticized the Court. They claimed that Mapp and Miranda benefited criminal suspects and severely limited the power of the police to investigate crimes. During the late 1960s and 1970s, Republican candidates for office seized on the ‘crime issue’” (HMH, 2018, p. 1033). The text describes the public stance on these Supreme Court rulings, that often protected suspects of color against discriminatory police practices concerning search and seizures in the former case and self-incrimination in the latter, as soft on crime.

In the wake of these Supreme Court rulings, as well as major civil rights legislation, came a backlash in the form of “law and order.” Republican politicians seized upon this opportunity in the 1970s and 80s: “He (Nixon) began the ‘law and order’ policies that he had promised his ‘silent majority.’ Those were middle-class Americans who wanted order restored to a country plagued by urban riots and anti-war demonstrations” (HMH, 2018, p. 1166). The following passage from the textbook exemplifies the power gained by the Republican party via the fallout from the civil rights advancements for people of color:

Some members of Congress expressed concern over the rapid pace of reform. They argued over whether the federal government should play such a large role in matters of social welfare. A conservative backlash began to take shape as a new group of Republican leaders rose to power. (HMH, 2018, p. 1035)

The Republican backlash to the civil rights movement led to the rolling back of civil rights legislation and even to the framing of White victimhood. The text states, “Several states have also passed laws or constitutional amendments requiring race-blind admissions- effectively barring affirmative action. These laws reflect a popular view that sees affirmative action as ‘reverse discrimination’” (HMH, 2018, p. 1184). In another passage, one that would fit nicely within the analysis of the tenet focusing on storytelling and counter-storytelling due its provocative word selections, the book targets college campuses as a specific concern of conservatives: “Other conservative critics warned that campus rebels posed a danger to
traditional values, and threatened to plunge American society into anarchy” (HMH, 2018, p. 1043).

Collectively, the textbook alludes to Whiteness as recipients of civil rights legislation through the power to deny or withhold, the power to act as gatekeepers, and the power to gain political capital through backlash and victimhood. What is seldom found in the text in terms of Whiteness as recipients of civil rights legislation is the inclusion of race in the undertone of legislation, court rulings, criminal justice, and politics. As noted in a previous section, the coded language of the politicians of the day seem to work their way into the textbook. Often, the reader is left to decipher the racial makeup of references such as “other groups” (HMH, 2018, p. 1198), “a popular view” (HMH, 2018, p. 1184), “a conservative backlash” (HMH, 2018, p. 1035), and the “silent majority” (HMH, 2018, p. 1166).

Many of the examples of Whiteness as power, property, and recipients of civil rights legislation follow this pattern of indirect inclusion. Seldom is race mentioned directly, but there are many references to social stratification and division. The themes of creation of power through private ownership of land, the transfer of that power from European to White American hands, slaves as property, and validity through Whiteness are the coded examples of Whiteness as property within the textbook. The themes of setting Whiteness as the norm of the dominant culture, Whiteness as power to control, and Whiteness as protection from punishment are the coded examples of Whiteness as power within the textbook. The themes of Whiteness as the power to deny or withhold rights, Whiteness as gatekeepers, and Whiteness as political capital from backlash to minority gains are the coded examples of Whiteness as recipients to civil rights legislation.
Summary

In Chapter I, I stated the purpose of the study and described the context of local, state, and national socio-political discussions of race, power, and education. The framework of critical race theory was introduced and connected to the study of the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018). My personal and professional experiences were also introduced in order to explain my connection to this topic. The chapter concluded with my overarching research questions.

Chapter II provided a discussion of the research behind race, racism, power, and critical race theory. The five tenets of critical race theory were broken down in order to provide legitimacy and understanding. The literature demonstrated an array of studies utilizing critical race theory as the framework, but a void of research investigating race and power within an individual textbook from the Trump era. The theories of race were also examined in order to provide guidance and background to the reader for greater understanding of the study.

Chapter III was utilized to describe the methods and explained the methodology that drove my choice of methods. My a priori coding and second round of coding were explained in Chapter III as well. The chapter concluded with my positionality as a researcher and the positionality of the textbook as the subject of the study.

I have used Chapter IV to present and explain the study through passages from the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018). The study is a critical case study of the aforementioned text in order to extract elements of the five tenets of critical race theory: racism as systemic and normal, interest convergence, race as a social construct, storytelling and counterstory telling, and Whiteness as power, property, and recipients of civil rights legislation.

In Chapter V I will analyze the data presented in Chapter IV in order to link the findings to the original research questions of race and power within the textbook. The analysis will follow
the tenets in the same order as presented in Chapter IV and provide insight to the research questions in each tenet section.

The broad themes from Chapter V will inform the implications and recommendations for future research to be included in Chapter VI. Chapter VI will also include my plans to extend the knowledge and insights gained from this study.
CHAPTER V: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The reading, coding, and discourse analysis of *American History* (HMH, 2018) resulted in the emergence of big picture themes and a greater understanding of the textbook’s coverage of race, power, and Critical Race Theory (CRT).

Chapter V will be used to discuss what has been amassed and organized from the Chapter IV analysis and present themes out larger trends from the research. Each of the five tenets of critical race theory within the textbook *American History* (2018) will be discussed in the same order in which they were introduced in Chapter IV. Textbook sentence structure and context will be examined in order to provide a connection between the textbook and the research questions. Each of the three research questions will be investigated through the lens of each CRT tenet. Themes will be analyzed in order to provide a big picture understanding of the concepts at the root of the research questions and provide the basis for the Chapter VI recommendations for future research.

**Tenet One Discussions: Examples of Racism as Normal and Systemic Within the Textbook**

Themes of both structure and substance emerged through the two steps of textbook analysis within the study. As mentioned in Chapter IV, there was a noticeable difference in the data entries connecting to institutional theories of race in the initial third of *American History* (HMH, 2018) as compared with the latter third of the text. Institutional entries dropped from 19 to nine. Inversely, discursive theories of race yielded nine entries in the first third of the text and 22 in the final third. There are different possible explanations for the inverse correlation between institutional theories and discursive theories within the text. Perhaps the structures necessary for racial hierarchy had already been established early in America’s history, thus the need for
additional structures (regulations, codes, laws, rulings, restrictions) felt less necessary to Whites at the helm of those institutions. Another possibility is that as the structures for racial hierarchy eroded over time (the elimination of systems of oppression such as slavery or Jim Crow, for example), the attitudes and practices of that hierarchy remained and even strengthened. The decreased inclusion of institutional theories of race is problematic in that it insinuates that the major structures of systemic oppression were not replaced by less obvious racial structures such as mass incarceration or redlining housing policies. By not shedding light on these more recent systems of racial oppression, readers are left to put the burden of economic, social, and political struggle upon the victims of those omitted or glossed over systems and policies.

The textbook misses opportunities to make connections between historic events and present day American culture. The racial etiquette referred to by the textbook as a catalyst for racial animosity and violence toward Blacks (HMH, 2018, p. 585) might be identifiable to students of Color as they operate within modern day White expectations of behavior. For the textbook to include examples of connections across time (multiculturalism and global economies, for example), yet exclude examples of cultural expectations that may be more immediate and noticeable to marginalized groups, is problematic.

The exclusion of policies such as redlining and blockbusting in the textbook is also problematic to people of Color. As the textbook is read and discussed in classroom settings, the omission of exclusionary housing practices subtly promotes the idea of a meritocracy within the movement to the suburbs in the 20th century. Thus, students of color are more likely to internalize the accumulation of wealth and status and the average racial minorities’ place on the lower rungs socioeconomic ladder, as earned on both ends. While texts such as Rothstein (2017)
and Zinn (2015) can be used to supplement this void, teachers should not be positioned to do the legwork of the textbook.

Beyond omissions, the textbook also works to limit the true character of certain “heroes" of American history. As the textbook highlights Abraham Lincoln’s speech in Charleston, Illinois, it highlights his veiled opposition to racial equality. However, it cuts off his more pointed utterances of White supremacy. The exclusion of the full force of Lincoln’s Charleston speech works to tone down "Honest Abe" as a clear cut White supremacist. Modern classroom discussions of race, power, systems of oppression, the status quo, and social justice would have a different feel if the character of historic figures were not shaped by the textbook.

The exclusion of systems of advantage, glossing over of character flaws of White American heroes, and the lack of connectivity to the modern world provide a narrative of not only progress, but the defeat of systemic racism. Even within the telling of Reconstruction South, the textbook frames White supremacy as momentarily defeated. In describing the techniques and goals of the KKK, the textbook notes, “the overarching goal was to restore white supremacy” (HMH, 2018, p. 442). The inclusion of the word “restore” is used as if White supremacy had languished after the Civil War. This passage exemplifies the importance of textbook wording as it works within the context of both past and present.

There is a lack of historical continuity within *American History* (HMH, 2018). A pattern could be made demonstrating the dominant group retreating to traditional norms when threatened by a social movement or a call to transformative action. Also, while White fear of “others” (Native Americans, African Americans, Chinese immigrants, Irish immigrants, Mexican immigrants, Arab immigrants among others), is continuously noted within the text, there is no continual emphasis in the irony that historically the victims of economic hardships, political
injustice, and physical violence are the ones seen as the threat. An examination of historical patterns and implications within the textbook could draw out questions of who and what represent the modern day victims, perpetrators, social movements, and retreats to traditional norms. These deeper modern discussions based upon evidence from historical patterns might help flip the script on a common discussion of CRT: the intentional creation of White guilt. Instead of focusing on how White students might view the past, a more connected and intentional framing of history through the CRT tenet of systems of racism might draw attention to how people of Color have seen and continue to internalize the telling of the past.

Research Question Number One Through CRT Tenet One

Research question one asks, How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook American History (2018)? Though the concept of race is never seriously dissected and investigated in terms of its changing definitions and historical norms, it is nonetheless a major theme within the textbook American History (HMH, 2018). People described by the textbook in connection with race are often lumped together as if to be representative of particular positions based upon their race. Examples of this aggregation can be seen in module 10 (Reconstruction), “Many white southerners, though, refused to accept blacks’ new status and resisted the idea of equal rights” (HMH, p. 429, 2018). Then, shortly after, “In addition, many former slaveholders deeply resented having to negotiate for the services of their former slaves” (HMH, p. 430, 2018). Society at large is most often described through discursive theories of race, as groups are often framed as creating, maintaining, or challenging the norms and practices of Whiteness. Racial attitudes toward domination, assimilation, segregation, “othering”, competition, and comparison are often presented through generalized racial groups and their ideas.
The text calls to notice the racial landscape when describing many of the actions of individual political, economic, military, and social players. The textbook engages the historic reputations of influential individuals on a racial front, while maintaining the influence of institutional structures. Thus, there is an amalgam of discursive and institutional theories of race when describing the chosen influential individuals and their ideas within the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018).

Racially motivated events are most prevalent within the coding of material and institutional theories of race. Events, like people, are described as working within the pre-established or maintained institutions of the time. Even as institutions are established, as with the creation of the African slave trade, they often connect to other dominant structures and institutions of that time period. Racial, gender, and class hierarchy had become an integral part of the pre-established American systems of organized religion and the maintenance of the capitalist market system. Structured religion, during the time of slavery, is cast as a mechanism for the maintenance of social order. Beyond the preservation of the status quo, religious teachings were seen as part of the assimilation of African slaves into a supposedly more evolved Eurocentric spiritual world. Economically, in the case of slaves taken from Africa, the system is presented within the text as an extension of the institution of capitalism. Decisions within the slave trade apparatus are depicted through emotionless and calculated economic terms.

**Research Question Number Two Through CRT Tenet One**

The second research question asked, *How do narratives in the textbook American History (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of critical race theory?* As a review of my working definition of CRT, I leaned upon the works of Gloria Ladson-Billings (2016) to view this central framework as the exposure of racism within the power structures of America through more inclusive and
truthful historical narratives. While this working definition conflicts with the public definition (Texas HB 3979, 2021) encapsulated by the guilt-inducing burden of American racism created by our racist founders and continued by intolerant leaders of racist institutions), it serves as a foundational academic definition decades in development. Within the textbook, people working within the historical systems of racist institutions are more often seen as products of systems rather than their creators. While some historical figures are cast as working in conjunction with these racist institutions, some are cast as fighting against them. In either case, the book does present the institutions themselves as powerful structures, bigger than one person or singular event. The events connected to systems of racism are also connected to larger institutions of which they were simply a cog within the wheel. Institutions of religion, education, banking, housing, military, organized labor, and more are noted throughout the text as racially hierarchical systems.

The textbook takes steps to describe factors that led to the shaping of racial systems and describes how individuals and societies operated in those racialized institutions. Thus, although the phrase Critical Race Theory does not appear within the textbook, a key tenet of CRT—racism as normal and systemic—is prevalent throughout. What appears to be absent, however, in terms of the CRT framework within the textbook, is the presentation of a purposeful creation and maintenance of racial hierarchy. As such, the textbook assumes normalized and systemic racism while neglecting to take the steps to challenge the creation and maintenance of those systems. Regulations and codes used to create a racial hierarchy, the norms and practices of Whiteness, and economic and bodily concerns of systemic racism are all prevalent throughout the 28 modules of American History (HMH, 2018). However, the textbook is lacking on the implications and consequences of systemic racism.
Research Question Number Three Through CRT Tenet One

Research question three asks, *How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook American History (2018)?* Although systems of power are included within the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018), they are not specifically defined as such. For example, while the institution of slavery is clearly and consistently confronted, it is never intentionally noted out as a tool of those in power. While race is connected to hierarchical systems of employment, housing, education, and military service, these racially hierarchical systems are not clearly defined as being designed to foster and maintain power, despite bountiful evidence to support that conclusion.

As laws of thermodynamics can be applied to economic systems, social power cannot be created or destroyed (Gonzalez, 2009). As those with power strive to maintain that power, systems are created to maintain a status quo and/or acquire even more power. *American History* (2018) provides copious examples of data entries that could be used to tie together historical narratives of race and power in the intentional creation of a racial hierarchy. To ask whether the discursive attitudes of race have led to the creation of institutional regulations and codes or the inverse of that is true, is to miss another, more likely possibility: the economic and political elite have created racial division throughout America’s history in an effort to refocus angst and consternation from the lower classes toward one another rather than upward (Loewen, 2007). While the most powerful political message in our current racial landscape is that we all want the same opportunities for our children, powerful elites have pushed division because that tactic works well to gain votes, ratings, and maintain power (Haney Lopez, 2017). The textbook, *American History* (HMH, 2018), includes all the elements necessary to present the creation of a
racial hierarchy as a framework for the maintenance and acquisition of power, yet fails to make the historical connections and present the detailed analysis to do so.

**Tenet Two Discussions: Examples of Interest Convergence Within the Textbook**

Interest convergence as a tenet of critical race theory leans heavily upon the notion that people respond to incentives, and even seemingly altruistic motivations are spurred by personal interest (Dur & Tichem, 2015). A major theme within the study of history is why things change over time. As such, the textbook’s framing of people who work for change is the belief that they promoted progress for the greater good of society with a focus on the group of people seen as the benefactors of that change. The theory of interest convergence challenges that notion, as Bell (1980) claims that civil rights advancements happen only when there is a convergence of the interest of the marginalized group and White purveyors of power. There is evidence of interest convergence within the text. Opportunistic actions such as George Washington freeing slaves as it became economically feasible and socially prudent and Franklin Roosevelt extending New Deal opportunities and appointing people of Color to prominent political positions in exchange for the minority vote are examples of the textbook noting the quid pro quo actions of prominent American characters.

Notably the fight for American independence is framed as being rooted in the American spirit of freedom and independence from an oppressive British regime. The textbook centers the fight on the concepts of freedom and liberty while specifically noting the issues of taxation and representation. Nowhere in the textbook is the question asked of why rich landowning American men would want systemic change. The true roots of revolution as landless peasants versus their White feudal masters of both British and American lineage is never undertaken by the textbook. In reality, the American aristocracy, which become known as the founding fathers (George
Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Ben Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison) only joined the fight in order to reframe a grassroots movement of poor versus rich into an American attempt to overthrow British rule (Bailyn, 2017; Loewen et al., 2019: Zinn, 2015). The textbook avoidance of the elements of interest convergence at the heart of the American Revolution works to set the tone for White American leadership fighting for the extension of freedom and liberty to the commoners. As such, the extension of rights and liberties are not consistently refocused and framed through the tenet of interest convergence.

Interest convergence goes beyond the actions of individual leadership, as it can enter the realm of systems of power. Historically, the problem with banning discrimination through political and legal channels is that legal code cannot stem the tide of implicit bias (also known as unconscious bias), where individuals make assumptions and pre-judgements about people based upon a variety of factors, including race (Jolls & Sunstein, 2006). When a history textbook includes civil rights advancements, even within the context of interest convergence, there is a possibility that the entries can be interpreted as permanently fixed or solved issues. A recent study completed at the University of Chicago found that Black sounding names when compared with White sounding names with the exact same resume were 50% less likely to get a call back from prospective employers (Bertrand et al., 2005). That is to say, discrimination within hiring is still a fixture within the American workplace. Civil rights advancements should be explicitly framed to consider the historical timeline up to today, unintended consequences and implications, and interest convergence. While examples of interest convergence permeate the textbook, the phrase itself is never used and the reader is left making the direct connections on their own. While a classroom analysis of history through the textbook would uncover examples of interest convergence (though never clearly labeled as such), there is a lack of clear connection.
between the motivating factors of historic actions of rich White men to cede power when their interests are at stake, and that of modern people in power. In short, interest convergence is not exemplified by the textbook as systemic.

A clear example of the systemic nature of interest convergence, or White power structures ceding power only when the interests of marginalized groups coincided with their interests, would be the acceptance of people of Color into the music industry. The contributions of Black and Brown culture, people, and innovations in American music are deep, plentiful, and trail blazing. There is a history of Black music being accepted by White America only once it has passed through the filters of Whiteness (Ogbu, 2004). Toned down lyrics and the introduction of rock ‘n roll by White musicians to the masses helped ease a well-established Black sound onto White airwaves and into White record shops (Aswell, 2010). History is also thick with White theft, exploitation, and profiting from Black musicians in many genres of American music (Morris, 2015). While both White and Black musicians are mentioned within the textbook, there is no specific mention of White control and profit of Black music within the drive for American mainstream acceptance of the latter groups music.

The fact that there is no specific mention of the term interest convergence within the textbook is problematic. By choosing to omit the term interest convergence, the text sets up classroom discussions of change to work as previously discussed: as false narratives of altruistic change. As such, underlying motivations of profit and political clout in the past are tougher to see in the present as they have not been established as patterns of the past.

**Research Question Number One Through CRT Tenet Two**

The first research question asked, *How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook American History (2018).* People, events, and ideas within the
textbook are connected to the racial framework of interest convergence. People in the text are demonstrated to have acted in response to incentives as civil rights initiatives were pushed in the realms of politics, economics, cultural norms, and social justice. People of Color were incentivized to pursue advancements within those realms as they sought to challenge and change the status quo. White individuals working within White systems of power were incentivized to push for those same advancements when their economic and/or political interests converged with those of people of Color.

This is not to say that racial advancements or fights for social justice have ever been easy or that a consensus was easily won. Rather fragments of society often fought against the surge of civil rights initiatives. As the people at the center of these ideologically inspired events have clashed over time, it has been White institutions, incentivized by those changes, that have pushed these movements into change inducing eras.

**Research Question Number Two Through CRT Tenet Two**

Research question two asked, *How do narratives in the textbook American History (2018) embrace or avoid the concept of Critical Race Theory.* As individuals working for or against racial progress are represented as working in correlation with their interests, a key tenet of Critical Race Theory emerges. Interest convergence, introduced to the world of academia by Derrick Bell in 1980, has become a cornerstone of Critical Race Theory. He centered his argument around the landmark 1954 Supreme Court Case of *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka.* Bell argues that the 9-0 Supreme Court ruling came as a result of not only the pursuit by the NAACP for the integration of American public schools, but also the US government’s interest in the improvement of worldwide public approval in the midst of the Cold War.

Although the case is broken down in the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018), the text does
not make the connection between the case and Bell’s theory of interest convergence. The textbook provides numerous potential examples (such as George Washington’s freeing of slaves, pre-Civil War Republican party platforms, New Deal era policies, and 20th century suburban integration) of interest convergence, yet leaves it to the reader to make the connection between the civil rights advancements and the convergence of interests of White influential groups and people of Color.

As such, the textbook both avoids and embraces the CRT tenet of interest convergence. With dozens of indirect examples, the text surely takes up the concept of interest convergence. However, the tenet of interest convergence is also avoided as it is never directly quoted in the textbook’s 1329 pages of content. This avoidance continues the model demonstrated within institutionalized racism, as described in tenet one.

**Research Question Number Three Through CRT Tenet Two**

The third research question asked *How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook American History (2018).* As noted in tenet one of Critical Race Theory, power has been amassed and concentrated toward the top of a series of racially hierarchical institutions. The textbook describes many of these systems of racism throughout its 28 modules. The CRT tenet of interest convergence argues that power is never voluntarily given up. Rather, power is given up when there are political, economic, or social gains to be made on the side of the White holders of that power. The creation of race, a concept that will be investigated further in tenet three, suggests meaning is given to assigned races. Over time, those meanings have changed, both in terms of who is considered White and reaps the benefits thereof and who else may receive benefits previously preserved for those individuals and groups considered White.
The textbook maintains systems of power in American history by not directly describing and challenging these institutions and the interest convergence that has led to gradual redistribution of economic, political, and social capital. However, the text also challenges these systems of power by providing the ingredients in their creation and indirectly providing the interest convergence behind the racially collaborative efforts to critique and destabilize these racially hierarchical institutions of American power. Through two tenets of Critical Race Theory as framed within the textbook *American History* (2018), a pattern is emerging. Components of CRT are exemplified in indirect ways, yet the absence of direct CRT connections leave the reader less likely to be able to find the racialized examples of the past in the conversations of today. The CRT tenet of race as a social construct will provide more insight on this pattern.

**Tenet Three Discussions: Examples of Race as a Social Construct Within the Textbook**

The question that has sparked the most consistent classroom discussion throughout my years as an educator has been the question of what is race. I circulated two photographs of mixed-race children from 1863 New Orleans. One picture (see Figure 1) includes what appears to be a White girl named Rosa (Kimball, ca. 1863), arms linked with what appears to be a Black boy named Isaac. The other picture (see Figure 2) appears to show three White children reading with a Black man (Paxon, ca. 1864).
Figure 1

*Isaac & Rosa, Slave Children from New Orleans*

![Isaac & Rosa, Slave Children from New Orleans](image1)

Figure 2

*Learning Is Wealth. Wilson, Charley, Rebecca & Rosa.*

![Learning Is Wealth. Wilson, Charley, Rebecca & Rosa](image2)
Before circulating the photographs, the writing on the bottom is cut off and the students are asked to describe what is happening in the pictures. Focus inevitably lands on race and students hypothesize what is being demonstrated by White and Black people being shown together. When finding out that all the people shown were considered slaves because they were all considered Black, the students are enticed to think deeper about the meaning of race.

While my classroom curriculum and pedagogy contains opportunities to deeply explore the social creation of race, the textbook comes up lacking even one entry on the changing definitions and meaning of race in America. The terms White and Black are used, yet the questions of who is considered White and why throughout American history is never investigated. Students reading the textbook are thus trained to see race as binary instead of on a continuum. Although who gets to experience the privileges of Whiteness throughout American history appears arbitrary when analyzed through sociological and anthropological lenses, the study of that changing exclusivity ties directly to the understanding of power dynamics in American society. Issues of race in a modern sense are easier to consider, analyze, and discuss when they are laid out more completely in a historical sense.

**Research Question Number One Through CRT Tenet Number Three**

The third research question asks, *How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook American History (2018)?* The textbook American History (2018) describes people as either connecting or clashing based upon their racial groupings. As mentioned in the coding of tenet two, interest convergence plays a major role in whether groups connect or clash. However, these groups first had to be created and meaning given to their existence. Those deemed White are presented as the gatekeepers in determining who has been
accepted into society, politically, economically, and socially. Elements of fear, othering, acceptance, intermixing, and the creation of hierarchy are all exemplified within the textbook.

Although White and non-White are presented as real and meaningful demographic descriptors, they are never presented as social constructs in the textbook. Who is defined as White and who is kept out of that privileged group are not explained in the text. Also problematic is the fact that within its later modules the textbook often generalizes racial groups or euphemizes them into general non-race based names with a disguised undertone of race. They do not take the specific mentions of the White normative culture within the modules that describe western movement into the sections of modern American history. When leaning on such disconnected descriptions of race and White normative culture, readers of the text may have a tough time discerning how inclusion and exclusion in White American society still holds value.

**Research Question Number Two Through CRT Tenet Three**

Research question number two asked *How do narratives in the textbook American History (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of critical race theory?* Once again, neither critical race theory as an intentional framework nor the individual tenet of race as a social construct are intentionally described within the textbook. The text does not explicitly make clear the path to Whiteness and the exclusion of people of Color. However, indirect examples of the pre-established creation of race are present throughout the text. There is no point where the book explains the creation of race as a social construct; instead, its existence is merely implied.

As such, the specific existence of CRT, along with a key tenet of race as a social construct are largely ignored. The lack of race as a social construct appears to be the most detrimental to the connection and understanding of racialized people, events, and ideas throughout American history. Concepts within the anthropological and sociological research
Regarding race are instrumental in the understanding of the frameworks of race and tenets of CRT. To truly understand the racialized systems of hierarchy, interest convergence, racialized storytelling and counter-storytelling, and Whiteness as power, property, and recipients of civil rights legislation, one must understand their relationship to the social construction of race.

**Research Question Number Three Through CRT Tenet Three**

The third research question asks, *How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook American History (2018).* The mindset of race as a biological and naturally established component of human existence is not fully challenged within the textbook *American History* (2018). The social creation of race into a system that gives and takes power depending upon placement on that continuum is one example of those exercising White privilege. It is another utilization of White privilege to allow for the mindset of a racial binary to continue, when race has been clearly established to exist on a continuum, absent of clear racial boundaries.

While some tenets of CRT can be seen as both challenged and maintained by the textbook *American History* (2018), the tenet of race as a social creation cannot. The loose indirect examples cited and coded in this study do not tie closely enough to be established as a challenge to the power established by the creation of race and the subsequent racial hierarchy permeating systems of power in American history. In short, while the text includes historical examples that could be used to explain race as a social construct, the connection is not made.

**Tenet Four Discussions: Examples of Storytelling and Counter-storytelling**

**Within the Textbook**

A critical question to ask at the onset of the introduction of a historical topic is “who’s story is being told?” While the textbook continually includes commentary, this pivotal question
is never asked and the reader is seldom forced to grapple with conflicting perspectives of events. When pressed to consider whose story is being told, students are naturally drawn to consider whose story is being left out, misunderstood, or misrepresented. A source that considers alternative perspectives is often one that contemplates and represents counter-stories.

While southern states during the Civil Rights movement are often framed as pushing back against social, political, and economic advancements for people of Color. In not too uncertain terms, the southern leadership saw the Civil Rights movement as a threat. While the southern pushback is a strong narrative of the textbook, the more hidden and codified language at the federal level is not uncovered by the text as the new era of White racial hierarchy.

The Civil Rights movement had changed the way politicians and the public spoke about race. As exemplified by the infamous Nixon aid John Ehrlichman in his explanation of the true nature of the war on drugs, racial language became subtler and more coded while maintaining the same divisive mechanics of past generations:

You know what this (war on drugs) was really about? The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the anti-war left and black people. You understand what I’m saying? We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing them heavily, we could disrupt these communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them every night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did. (Abu-Jamal, 2016)

Lee Atwater, a key Republican strategist of the time, explained the coded language of the Southern Strategy in an uncovered 1981 interview:

You start out in 1954 by saying, “Nigger, nigger, nigger.” By 1968 you can’t say “nigger”—that hurts you, backfires. So you say stuff like, uh, forced busing, states’ rights, and all that stuff, and you’re getting so abstract. Now, you’re talking about cutting taxes, and all these things you’re talking about are totally economic things and a byproduct of them is, blacks get hurt worse than whites.… “We want to cut this,” is much more abstract than even the busing thing, uh, and a hell of a lot more abstract than “Nigger, nigger.” (Inwood, 2015)
While the Southern Strategy is mentioned in the textbook, the narrative of the strategy is one of a simple political recruitment strategy centering on the frustration and unhappiness of southern conservative voters with liberal federal policies and Supreme Court rulings. A more powerful and acute counterstory would include the true motivations of a White led and supported political party in trying to maintain racial hierarchy through division and fear mongering in a new era of racially coded political language. The unraveling of this historical development of coded language in the maintenance of racial division serves as an example of counter-stories that would shed light on modern discussions of race, division, power, and politics.

**Research Question Number One Through CRT Tenet Four**

The first research question asked *How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook American History (2018)?* Although various races are included and their differences are described within the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018), there is a relatively unified and singular voice in regards to the rhetoric of Americanized clichés. Passages of American values, American character, and the American dream are portrayed as singular and collective at the same time. The textbook is most specific in demonstrating the White American narrative in its descriptions of 19th century westward movement of people and culture. It is in these passages that the textbook is the most real and authentic in its descriptions of a White normalizing of American culture. Although White leaders and dominant Eurocentric ideas are described early in the textbook, they are not described as specifically connected to the development or continuation of White normative culture.

As an idealized racially collective American narrative unravels throughout the textbook, the harmonious collective story conflicts with the actual histories of racial oppression, racial division, and racialized hierarchies. Readers of the textbook are confronted with specific
examples of racial angst and animosity alongside an overtone of harmony and unity. The hidden messages of patriotism are not broken down within the text into the nuanced complexities of race or the specific privileges of Whiteness.

**Research Question Number Two Through CRT Tenet Four**

Research question two asked *How do narratives in the textbook American History (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of Critical Race Theory.* While specific counter-stories to prominent narratives can be identified throughout the textbook, there are prominent narratives that tell a story of White normative culture, White heroism, and collective action in response to White concerns. While concerns of people of Color are represented by the textbook as part of a racial collective during tough times for mainstream White America, their struggles are often demonstrated as a hindrance or source of frustration by White America when they do not coincide with the larger narrative of the times. Time periods are represented as particularly “good” or “bad” depending upon how they impact White America. While this narrative is important to unpack, the textbook does not intentionally create a counter-story.

The work of CRT allows the dominant voices, narratives, stories, and storytellers of the past to be held responsible for the exclusion of marginalized peoples. Acknowledging the perspectives of the Taino Indians during their exploitation and enslavement by Columbus and his men, for example, demonstrates the value that the textbook places on counter-stories. However, too often these counter stories are missing within the text and multiple perspectives are ignored or only briefly mentioned. To continuously include questions and answers of whose story is being told would make the intentions of the CRT framework a reality for readers of the textbook.
Research Question Number Three Through CRT Tenet Four

The third research question asked *How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook American History (2018)*. It is important to investigate what is implied by the narratives established through the textbook’s storytelling. Why does it fail to mention race explicitly in sections where race is obvious to historic connections? The textbook is clear and concise in its delivery when examining the power of White culture in the American push through the West. However, by the 1980s the coverage of racial groups and racialized views of political interest groups boiled down to euphemisms and generalities within the text. Is it because race was too sensitive a topic by the 1980s? Is it because the voices in power were not taking race on directly? Is it because the textbook is a megaphone for the voices in power? Is it because the author’s don’t know how?

The dynamics of power woven into the telling of history should be made clear and intentional within a textbook looking to drive modern day understanding of complex issues such as race. When a textbook does not make clear the perspectives of their storytelling, readers can be left with impressions that certain peoples’ histories are more important than others. While questions of perspective and counter-stories can be supplemented through other avenues of curriculum and pedagogy, the tendency of history teachers to lean on the classroom text gives the position of these textbook perspectives even more power.

**Tenet Five Discussions: Examples of Whiteness as Power, Property, and Recipients of Civil Rights Legislation Within the Textbook**

In keeping with the trend of CRT tenets established within the textbook, but not specifically linked through intentional descriptions, Whiteness is continuously exemplified to provide entry into positions of political, social, and economic power. Those deemed White are
shown to be recipients of rights not afforded to people of Color, from the founding ideologies and documents of the country to more recent American legislation and Supreme Court decisions. The CRT tenet of Whiteness as power, privilege, and recipients of civil rights legislation within the textbook works well to tie together the tenets of interest convergence and racism as normal and systemic. The ability of White America to establish exclusionary hierarchical systems, and only change them when their interests are at play, are continual examples of the power of Whiteness.

**Research Question Number One Through CRT Tenet Five**

The first research question asked *How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook American History (2018).* Race is alluded to throughout the textbook as access to and the exercise of power. This CRT tenet ties together the three main research questions of this critical analysis of the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018), which pertain to race, power, and Critical Race Theory frameworks. Within the text the European ideology of private land ownership is depicted as clashing with that of Indigenous Americans. While the idea of land ownership was new to North America, it set the precedent for exclusionary legal powers saved for White landowners. While not specifically stated within the textbook, European exclusivity is demonstrated to have transitioned into White American dominance on a racial hierarchy.

As historical events and ideas unfold throughout the textbook, there is an overtone of racial implications for those developments. While race is not always woven into the conversation, it is established early and strongly enough by the textbook as to imply meaning throughout. It is noteworthy that the textbook makes mention of modern day economic, social, and political disadvantages of people of Color as connected to historical patterns of
discrimination, while failing to note the advantages gained by White Americans through those same systemic patterns.

**Research Question Number Two Through CRT Tenet Five**

Research question two asked *How do narratives in the textbook American History (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of Critical Race Theory.* Unfortunately for readers, the textbook’s failure to include deliberate analysis of race—an omission noted in CRT tenet three (examples of race as a social construction)—does not coincide with the continual connection of Whiteness and power. The textbook lacks any type of figurative key or filter to establish who qualifies as White throughout the text. In reality, the qualifiers of Whiteness have changed throughout American history, along with their access to privilege. The textbook categorizes and gives meaning to groups of people by race, a categorization that becomes more euphemized in terms of White representation toward more modern times. White groups and groups of Color alike are represented in their relationship with access to power. Individuals, however, receive a different treatment in this relationship. Black individuals are frequently described as being denied access to political, social, and economic systems of power, while White individuals are represented as simply operating within those systems.

**Research Question Number Three Through CRT Tenet Five**

Research question three asked *How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook American History (2018).* The textbook demonstrates themes of Whiteness as property through the material theories of race connected to bodily and economic concerns. From the European ideology of private ownership of land to the self-proclaimed validity of Whiteness to annex land, remove people of Color, and claim resources the transfer of power to American Whiteness holds true and steady throughout the early sections of the
textbook. The textbook demonstrates themes of Whiteness as power through the discursive theories of race connected to attitudes and approaches of White dominant culture. The establishment of the White norm, protection from White punishment, and the power to deny and withhold rights, services, and personhood from people of color is demonstrated throughout the text. The textbook demonstrates themes of Whiteness as recipients of civil rights legislation through the institutional theories of race connected to regulations and codes. Instances of Whiteness as gatekeepers of privilege, Supreme Court rulings emphasizing the racial limits of the Constitution, and White backlash to civil rights advancements are exemplified throughout the textbook.

Summary

Chapter V has been used to provide major themes from the study of the textbook *American History* (2018). Discussion served to highlight major findings from a big picture perspective of the detailed and nuanced study. Chapter VI will provide a culminating set of findings, recommendations, and future research.
CHAPTER VI: KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The root of this study, like many investigations of humanity over time, stems from a continuum of questions. What is race? How has race impacted American history? How has race influenced the understanding of American history? How has the understanding of race changed and who has influenced that change? These are just a few of the countless questions that guided the development of my inquiry into race and power as they connect to American education and, specifically, the *American History* textbook. Over the course of preliminary research and discussion, the lists of questions were narrowed down to these three pivotal research questions:

1. How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race described in the textbook *American History* (2018)?

2. How do narratives in the textbook *American History* (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of critical race theory?

3. How are the narratives of systems of power challenged or maintained within the textbook *American History* (2018)?

These became the questions through which all subsequent research, thought, discussion, coding, editing, and reflection passed through while they remained the catalyst for the tasks within the process. Upon reflecting back on the project as a whole, it is the questions and the process of questioning that provides a link between my teaching, my research, my findings, my recommendations, and my plans for future investigations.

**Inquiry in the Classroom**

Throughout my years as a practitioner of secondary American history, I have remained true to my initial avoidance of momentary memorization of historical twigs of information. I have embraced teaching techniques and pedagogical incentives that have tied to what I believe
will serve students well in the long run: inquiry, investigation, analysis, synthesis, cooperation, and problem solving. Students are reminded that the content is temporary, but the skills we use will be added to their repertoire of skills to be used in whatever career fields they choose. One of the most consistent points of emphasis in my classroom is working to question well. We promote the analysis of great questions in history, in the modern world, in our classroom curriculum, and in their own individual investigations.

Each student in my classes is guided through a project process that prompts them to choose a topic to investigate over an allotted historical time period. They must compile resources in order to create an annotated bibliography of at least ten sources. From there, students journal-write in order to make connections within the research, locate possible gaps in their research, and work toward an essential question. Their essential question leads them to the creation of supporting questions and more specific follow-up research. From there, a claim is created and supported with evidence. This claim and evidence are demonstrated within their artifact—a project of their choosing that best fits their topic, their claim, their evidence, their skills, and their curiosities.

This dissertation process took similar steps to what I expect of my students, from initial interests and curiosities, to the development of research questions and investigatory techniques, to the defense of the claim through supported evidence. The expected outcomes in each case includes the development of a new understanding of both the topic and the researcher's own thought process. Metacognitive thinking is a direct result of the process of analysis, synthesis, creation, and reflection.
Findings and Conclusions

The process of dissertation writing occurred alongside the evolution of my pedagogical and curricular development. As I was processing the study, I was simultaneously processing how the lessons and resulting paradigm shifts were impacting my classroom. Due to the singular, and often Eurocentric narrative of the textbook, I have never handed out textbooks to students and seldom ever used them as a resource. However, one of my key takeaways from this study is the utility of the textbook as a tool for classroom analysis. The methodology of coding Critical Race Theory tenets within the textbook and pulling out textual data and real world implications is but one of a myriad of possibilities within the analysis of American history textbooks. As my classes already use historiography as a baseline for historical discussion and interpretation within the classroom, the questions of who is being represented, how they are being represented, and what stories are being told work to seamlessly tie historiographical techniques to textbook analysis.

Any authentic study opens the researcher up to the possibility that the assumptions of their worldview were not as realistic as they might have assumed. In the case of my study, I began with the assumption that CRT tenets would most likely be overwhelmingly lacking and that steps would need to be taken to incorporate critical race theory frameworks into the teaching of American history through textbooks. While steps are indeed needed, they are not the big jump type of inclusions that I had envisioned. Instead, I uncovered hundreds of data entries suggesting the racial understandings entwined within the tenets of Critical Race Theory.

Within the textbook, the material is present to be able to make specific connections to these CRT tenets, yet the textbook does not take the steps to layout, unfold, or explain those concepts and connections. There are textual data entries that work as evidence of normalized systemic racism in America, yet no explanation of a created racial divide as a purposeful tool of
the elite is included. There are textual data entries that work as evidence of interest convergence as a catalyst for change, yet no direct explanation of how civil rights advancements sprang from advantageous situations for White interest groups. There are textual data entries that work as evidence of examples of storytelling and counter-storytelling, yet no delineation between the two in terms of the isolation of problematic narratives is provided. There are textual data entries that work as evidence of Whiteness as power, property, and recipients of civil rights legislation, yet no direct connection between those benefits and the ever-present meaning of White privilege in America is provided.

There are textual data entries that exemplify race as a social construct, yet no attempt to define race or the changing qualifiers of Whiteness is presented. Most impactful in its absence is any meaningful definition of race in general or of specific races mentioned throughout. Race is never defined as a social creation or placed on a continuum, perhaps because it has so often been treated and understood (mistakenly) as a binary concept. Black or White has meant so much in American history in terms of rights, property, and access that its either/or categorization has seemed inevitable. Thus, it is up to influential purveyors of historical understanding, including and highlighted by American history textbooks, to take specific and intentional steps to explore and analyze the history of race in America.

Another noteworthy takeaway from this study are the steps that the textbook takes to protect the legacy of “American heroes”. While the text takes steps to note flaws of iconic figures such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt, the trend was to place their foibles after their accomplishments in the chronology of the textbook. In doing so, the positive attributes of these figures served as a buffer against the negative components of their characters and resumes.
The delicate handling of historic heroes by the textbook extends to more recent political eras in terms of language surrounding race, power, and politics. While early textbook chapters referred directly to race in general or the race of specific groups, by module 26 (Transitions and Conservatism) the intentional mention of race within discussions of such policies as affirmative action and entitlement spending became muted through labels such as “particular groups” (HMM, 2018, p. 1192), “popular view” (HMH, 2018, p, 1184), and “many taxpayers” (HMH, 2018, p. 1192). To understand the realities of race at the root of these modern issues, an American history teacher would be well-served by a classroom analysis of the textbook similar to this study.

**Implications for Practitioners, Students, & Textbook Authors**

While textbook publishers may be apprehensive about the political nature of including specific and intentional concepts of Critical Race Theory, educators may use this study as a rational and objective way to incorporate racial analysis within their American history curriculum and pedagogy. Teachers should understand their role in developing rational respectful dialogue surrounding difficult topics. Now more than ever, Americans are consuming content that not only fits their own ideology, but that builds animosity between sides and preys upon social and political division. As one of the ever-extending jobs of an American educator, teachers can be productive creators of empathetic and understanding interpersonal dialogue through individual and collective analysis of the textbook.

One of the main techniques recommended for teachers of textbook analysis is the comparison of the textbook to other sources. Whether that source is another textbook; a book written by an expert within a field; or a scholarly article, journal, or chapter, the placing of the textbook against another textual source provides fodder for comparison, conversation, coding,
analysis, and reflection. The use and constant comparison of two distinctly different textbooks would be of particular benefit when stressing the subjective nature of seemingly objective sources. Two textbooks from different parts of the world would demonstrate the unique lenses through which those societies view the past. Two textbooks from different parts of the United States might indicate contradictory understandings of the historical past and divided present within the same country. Two textbooks from different time periods might highlight distinct issues or convey different narratives depending upon the political and social mood of that era.

Within the process of this comparative analysis, students would develop a deeper understanding of the lens of the textbook, the vast dimensions of historiography, a deeper appreciation of the topic at hand, and techniques for their own independent investigations. To go beyond the basic acceptance of the American history textbook is a goal all teachers should have for their students.

Students of color may read a Eurocentric textbook and internalize the narratives surrounding “might makes right”. The textbook includes explicit facts and stories about people, places, things, and ideas, yet it also shapes an implicit understanding of identity shaping concepts such as race, power, and wealth. Each time something new is learned, there is a shift in identity.

This study sheds light not only on ways in which race and power are represented in the textbook American History (HMH, 2018), it should also be read as a way to reveal how student identities are being shaped. The study of history is a way for students to understand the present through the past. When historical implications are not clearly linked in terms of race, power, and wealth, it is left for the reader to make these connections on their own.

Writers of textbooks cannot include everything in American history. They have to be selective when determining what to include and what to leave out. They are certainly in an unenviable position in making these decisions, as the balancing act of importance is highly
subjective, even for experts within a field. While the decisions of textbook authors is difficult, they would be well served to complete comparative analysis with experts in multiple disciplines as they craft the narratives and set the connective timelines for their text. Doing so would reveal glaring omissions, such as acknowledgement of the socially constructed binary of race and the fluid recognition and access granted to Whiteness. Similar comparisons to empirical data and scholarly tenets within other fields could help uncover gaps and create opportunities for counter stories within the telling of American history.

**Implications for Future Research**

While this study focused upon the textual descriptions of race and power within the textbook, the obvious next step to build upon these findings would be a visual analysis of the same textbook, American History (HMH, 2018). Because the part of the brain that is responsible for decision making does not understand language (Sinek, 2009), visuals are often very powerful in propaganda campaigns, advertising, and campaigning. While the modern part of the brain understands language (and that language drives emotion), it is the ancient part of the brain, the part that houses emotion, that houses decision making (Sinek, 2009). The emotional power of imagery is captured within history books across time and place. A study similar to the coding of the textual analysis of the tenets of Critical Race Theory within the textbook could place the visuals within the textbook through the same coding process. Research questions would look very similar and yet may yield different or supplementary results:

1. How are the people, events, and ideas connected to race demonstrated through visuals in the textbook *American History* (2018)?

2. How do visuals within the textbook *American History* (2018) embrace or avoid the concepts of critical race theory?
3. How are the narratives of systems of power conveyed or avoided through visuals within the textbook *American History* (2018)?

By tracking, coding, and analyzing the visuals within the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018), one could attempt to link the concepts within these potential research questions to the findings of this textual analysis. Just as singular Eurocentric textual narratives are often absorbed by students without question, so too are visual narratives. As such, analysis to uncover the visual denotations within the textbook would be beneficial and provide additional layers of meaning to this current study. While not the focal point of this current study, the reading and coding of 1329 pages of text within *American History* (HMH, 2018) provided opportunities to absorb various components of the textbook. My internal list of visuals noted within the textbook included paintings, photographs, propaganda posters, campaign broadsides, political cartoons, advertisements, maps, graphs, charts, tables, graphic organizers, and links to videos. Each of these visual elements not only supplements the textual information, but adds stand-alone value as meaning is given to each selected image. Every visual within a text depicts that person, place, item, event, or idea in a particular light; a study to categorize, code, and analyze those depictions seems to be a natural extension of this study.

In addition to the analysis of visuals within the textbook, the analysis of the questions asked within the text would also serve as informative supplemental data in the ongoing effort to better understand the lens and positionality of the textbook *American History* (HMH, 2018). Each of the 28 modules contains an introductory essential question that sets the course for the development of the chapter. Intended emphasis and implied meaning are often hidden within questions, and the textbook questions are no different. Each module consists of subsections titled “lessons”, with guiding questions at the conclusion of each. Readers are asked to evaluate, draw
conclusions, form opinions, make inferences, form generalizations, analyze causes and effects, and more. In harmony with the textual analysis of this study and the suggested visual analysis of future studies, an analysis of textbook questions could work to uncover the subjective nature and implications of the seemingly objective questions asked throughout the 28 modules of the text.

In an age of seemingly endless resources, researchers are encouraged to put more prominent online curriculum through the same rigorous process of textual analysis. Comparative analysis of online resources would provide data for school administrators, curriculum councils, and educators to better understand the attributes and deficits of online texts and resources as compared to traditional textbooks.

The investigations of race and power in the American social studies curriculum should extend beyond online and physical textbooks. The elements of propaganda, caste stabilization, and private economic control are important historical components of the hidden curriculum of the public education system. An informative focus would be the role of social studies teacher within this power apparatus. American history teachers often find themselves in the precarious position of being purveyors of or challengers to notions of American nationalism and Eurocentric narratives. Insight would be gained through the accumulation of interviews of social studies teachers in a quest to uncover the connection between their education, their political/historical ideology, and their curriculum and pedagogy.

Social voices, mainstream media operatives, and policy makers are suddenly (or so it seems) examining teachers' self-concepts, their value systems, and the circumstances of the infusion of their identities into their curriculum. As a result, research that focuses on informal, person-oriented genres such as biography, autobiography, life history, narrative and anecdote of educators have become more necessary. Identity should not be seen as a stable entity—
something that people have—but as something that they use to justify, explain and make sense of themselves in relation to other people, and to the contexts in which they operate. Autobiographical accounts knit together the disparate dimensions of teachers' lives—curriculum, career, home life, pedagogy—in ways that are informative to the teaching of concepts such as race in America.

Photo elicitation, open-ended surveys, and in-depth interviews with high school social studies teachers, would uncover the connection between their education, their ideology, and their curriculum in order to examine the cyclical effects of social studies education. Productive questions within the field include:

1. How do social studies teachers develop their political and historical ideology?
2. How do social studies teachers develop their curriculum and pedagogy?
3. What is the connection between social studies teachers’ personal ideology and their curriculum?

The importance of questioning and the creation of productive questions increases in importance with every human technological advancement which makes information more readily available. It has been argued that knowledge is obsolete, as information access has become ubiquitous. What may never become obsolete is human curiosity and our never ending source of inquiry. The most pressing and timely studies within modern day education are those that focus on curiosities within history, education, race, and power, and continue to move the field forward.
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