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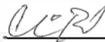
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## Dedication.

This thesis is dedicated to all those who remain trapped within the confines of poverty. Who can never seem to find the traction needed to escape their harsh realities. This is for those who have dreams but can never seem to find a way to obtain them. Listen to me, never ever give up! Keep fighting, always putting one foot in front of the other. Despite everything in your life, never surrender your dreams—hold the vision. You are strong and you belong to be everywhere that you want to be. Just keep going you're getting closer. Trust me, you will win if you don't quit. Life is a fight for territory, and once you stop fighting for what you want, what you don't want will automatically take over.

I love you!

All hustle no luck!  
The Marathon Continues

Power to the People  
Sí se puede y Sí se pudo

## Abstract.

My study is a critical analysis of the reproduction of structural oppression within contemporary high school Social Studies and Sociology. The purpose of my critical analysis was to identify whether or not classroom content within Social Studies and Sociology reproduced various modes of oppression through the process of covert and overt discriminatory practices. The significance of my study is reflective of the growing diverse student population to which represents intersecting social identities that may fall victim to multiple modes of discrimination and oppression. My study is theoretically informed by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva's Color-Blind Racism (CBR), Gloria Ladson-Billings Critical Race Theory (CRT), Kimberle Williams-Crenshaw's Intersectionality, and Herbert Blumer's theoretical concept of Symbolic Interactionism.

Utilizing a mix methods approach of quantitative content analysis and qualitative discourse analysis, I conducted a comparative study in which I examined (2) Social Studies U.S. History Classes and (1) Sociology Class, all three from high schools within the City of San Diego. To answer my research question, "does high school coursework within Social Studies and Sociology challenge or reproduce conditions of inequality?", I coded a combined total of 2,124 documents representing curriculum, textbooks, daily assignments, PowerPoint presentations and visual images. From my quantitative and qualitative analysis of classroom content I was able to identify numerous examples of how current Social Studies and Sociology reproduce multiple modes of oppression, through the construction of heteronormativity, colorblind racist and overt racist ideology, and the practice of exclusion. My study is just a small glimpse of the reproduction of white eurocentric colonialism that without a critical lens operates covertly, maintaining power and privileges for heteronormative men while reproducing various modes of oppression for marginalized groups.

## Acknowledgements.

The more mature I have become the more I have realized that I do not need you to like me for me to love you. I know the significance you have all made in my life and for that I am forever grateful.

As much as I am going to thank myself, there is no way I accomplished this life changing experience alone. When I cried, when I was lost, there was always people there to lift me up. When I wanted to give up on academia and return back to the comfort of society there was always people supporting me, encouraging me to keep going—that I belonged. This is where I thank them.

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Yomira, what a blessing you have been in my life. You were just this long-haired Chicana who sat across from me in Dr. Glover's class who just so happened to insult my intelligence. I forget what you had asked me, but I remember how annoyed you made me feel. Then next thing I know we became inseparable. The best of everything, and I know without a doubt I would not have accomplished this behemoth of a task without you. You told me to sign up for all type of CSUSM student leadership councils and I did. You believed in me more than I believed in myself. You placed me in front of California State Representatives, Council womxn and men, positions in which I would never have imagined I would be in. Just such an amazing womxn and I am so proud of you and I hope that I can continue to be the person you inspire me to be. I love you!

My big brother Martin Leyva. A giant, a legend of society. I am forever grateful to be in the same spaces as you. To learn from you, to watch your energy inspire others is just an amazing process to experience. I love you so so much because you remind me of home, where all the underdogs struggle to gain agency in hyper-surveilled and criminalized spaces. You have

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And how can I forget myself! My life has been a box office movie and that is not self-proclaimed. I have survived so much; the Marines, Depression, escaped incarceration, escaped death, all to be here at this very moment. Although I couldn’t have done this without everyone’s help, I have to acknowledge that I was also alone. Alone many—many days and nights, watching the pain and tears fall from my face, reflecting on the path God has chosen for me. I was set on a path, the youngest of four, at the age of 17 to venture the world all by myself, first from 6,504 miles to 2,622 miles away. Survived it all, and now the first of my family to graduate college with my Masters. I am resilient, fearless, and a leader. I am a Lonewolf, an underdog and I will not be denied. I am the chosen one—I am unstoppable! MASHALLAH!

## Introduction.

After a long day of kindergarten, a young Mexican five-year-old girl went home to her father and asked him a question:

“Daddy am I black?” Puzzled and confused her father replied, “What do you mean are you Black?” She responded, “My friends at school said I was Black and laughed. Is it okay to be Black?” Her father, my co-worker, told his daughter, “Of course it's okay to be Black, but baby you are not, you are Mexican—a Brown beautiful little girl.” She responded with an innocent reply by saying “ok.” My co-worker, a CSUSM alum with a BA in Sociology informed me that he strongly refrains from teaching his children to hate people, under any circumstances. He told me those kids at school are teaching his daughter this.

\*\*\*

As a Black man, and—father of three, despite the sadness and hurt of being reminded of my racialized subordinate status, I think about this scenario as a teachable moment. I think about how these little people learn. I think about my own children and how they articulate the social world around them. I think about how the world makes them feel about themselves, about each other, and about me. Why does the world hate me, why do I hate myself, sometimes my own people? I was raised with a predetermined idea of who I would grow up to be. A product of my environment—not a successful ball player, but a drug dealer with a 9-to-5 job, finding ways to informally supplement income in order to survive in a torn impoverished community. As I critically reflect on my life with my polished sociological lens, I would like to acknowledge my adolescent education for symbolically reinforcing the racialized social conditions of America’s past. It was in those years, just like the moment within that intelligent little girl’s life that I

learned to internalize all the negative stereotypes and images about myself as a Black person. It was in those educational institutions where my peers reinforced the trans generational trauma of slavery that reminded me subconsciously about my place within this world. It was in high school—under the hyper surveillance and criminalization of white authoritative figures—where I felt hopeless, deprived of a dream, static of the idea of seeing my dreams as an architect fail to come true because the world around me made it seem impossible.

I am grateful for the relationships that I developed with peers and mentors while going through the K-12 educational system, but as I admire their efforts in helping cultivate me into the person that I am today I must take a critical stance in deconstructing the institutional power of our educational system. We must acknowledge that our K-12 educational system is situated within a banking theoretical framework (Freire [1970] 2016), making knowledge strictly about reciting information while simultaneously ignoring how students live (hooks 1994). Specifically, the educational paradigms of social studies and sociology curricula, because it is through both educational philosophies that socialize young people in learning about themselves and the world (ASA 2019; NCSS 2017).

### Statement of the Problem.

The above narrative represents the lived experiences of many Black and Brown children who share similar experiences as myself growing up. It is a reminder of how people see race, how our youth are taught race and racism, and how the institution of education, specifically within the K-12 system reinforces the racial hierarchy by ignoring honest historical events and dialogue. Based on my own personal experiences as a scholar, father, and Black man, that yes it is true that the institution of racialized slavery is dead in this country, but with its death—gave birth to a new system of power that operates just as evil and moves covertly. As we seek to

alleviate these social issues, we must think critically about how to deconstruct the strong racialized and oppressive ideologies that have maintained the subordinate status for people of color. To think that the maintenance of whiteness within education is a thing of the past is a naive concept. The problem lies within the structural power and societal influence of the legacy of eurocentric colonialism and its extension within educational institutions.

Within civil society, the normative standard is that we send youth from marginalized communities to schools where they sit in history classes dedicated in reciting false narratives, misrepresenting the history of the people just to reinforce nationalism and good citizenship. By doing so we reinforce various modes of ethnocentrism and white hegemony, alienating and excluding the social contributions of people of color. Historian and Sociologist James W. Loewen does an exceptional job illustrating this covert process of blind patriotism in his book titled “Lies my teacher told me” (Loewen [1995] 2007). According to Loewen, US History is an indoctrinating process, simultaneously teaching from an optimistic approach through an historical proud narrative of America’s emotional rollercoaster—ending in triumph. Loewen argues “While there is nothing wrong with optimism, it can be something of a burden for students of color, children of working-class parents, girls who notice the dearth of female historical figures, or members of any group that has not achieved socioeconomic success” ([1995] 2007:6).

Conventional wisdom argues that the burden for these marginalized students is a result of the educational disparity within curriculum (hooks 1994; Loewen [1995] 2007). The most recent disparities within the K-12 education system embodies the racial charge against ethnic and cultural studies. In 2017, U.S. District Judge A. Wallace Tashima federally denied the Arizona State ban of a Mexican American studies program for K-12 students, critically recognizing the

ban to be racially motivated and unconstitutional (Deppenbrock 2017). Furthermore, this highlights the maintenance of whiteness within the K-12 educational system, which is found in classroom textbooks.

The State of Texas has repeatedly encountered publishing issues that are a result of reinforced racialized discourse. In 2015, publishing mega company McGraw-Hill Education published history textbooks in which they described the slave trade as “patterns of immigration... [bringing] millions of workers from Africa to the southern United States to work on agricultural plantations” (Isensee 2015). In 2016, publishing company Momentum Instruction was publicly criticized for reinforcing negative stereotypes of the Mexican community, reinforcing racialized stereotypes, identifying them as being lazy (Isensee 2015). Not only is there a history of misrepresentation of culture and history for people of color, but I would also argue that there is a misrepresentation of gender, sexuality, and religion in reference to social equity and inclusion. My task as a sociologist as it relates to the K-12 educational system, is to carry on the legacy of informing the public, by highlighting that “neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both” (Zevallos 2018). With that being said, we must acknowledge our mistakes, approach this historical discrepancy with honesty in an attempt to save the lives of our children.

### Research Question.

Given the current state of racialized and other oppressive discourse, this project will examine the delivery and production of knowledge as it relates to facts, concepts, theories, and principles specific to the learning and teaching of societal inclusion through class related content.

Specifically, within the high school courses of social studies and sociology. For example, I want to understand how classroom content such as curriculum, daily assignments, textbooks, handouts, and multimedia influences the process of deconstructing white supremacy. To further my analysis, my research question is: does high school coursework within social studies and sociology challenge or reproduce conditions of inequality? If yes, then how so? Does one “social studies/sociology” reproduce these oppressive conditions more than the other? If so, how? I will utilize these specific questions to help guide my study.

## Theory.

My research is theoretically informed by the sociological influences of Gloria Ladson-Billings “Critical Race Theory” (CRT), Eduardo Bonilla-Silva’s “Color-Blind Racism” (CBR), and Kimberle Williams Crenshaw’s “Intersectionality”, and Herbert Blumer’s “Symbolic Interactionism” (Ladson-Billings 1995; Silva 2018; Williams 1994; Blumer 1969). All four have a very significant impact with the societal inclusion of marginalized communities, especially within political spaces like education, which has historically been a space that reproduces oppressive social conditions for people of color.

Deriving from Critical Legal Scholarship, Gloria Ladson-Billings describes the importance of CRT within the institution of education in order to deconstruct dominant Eurocentric colonial narratives in an effort to create a critical curriculum that emphasizes equal, equitable, and just education for all American students, especially students of color (Ladson-Billings 1995). CRT emphasizes the arranged differences between white speakers and racialized others because of the historical existence of a system of white supremacy (Preston 2009). Ladson-Billings argues that because the racial hierarchy is represented in all structural spaces of society—with whites historically maintaining the dominant status, whites reach the conclusion

that their whiteness holds more meaning and value because of a historically inherited possessive investment in whiteness in which whites seek to maximize (Preston 2009). In reference to education, such beliefs have inspired a range of studies that examine how whites behave “in racially oppressive ways to increase their advantage in various educational arenas” (Preston 2009:8). Therefore, the significance of CRT operates as an important intellectual and social tool in deconstructing dominant narratives while simultaneously reinforcing social and human agency (Ladson-Billings 1998). School curricula and content has a history of silencing the voices and perspectives of marginalized populations, which is why my analysis of knowledge derives from a critical race lens which views school curricula as an expression of symbolic power for the maintenance of white privilege (Ladson-Billings 2014). Given the current state of societal issues, my analysis will employ a Critical Race Theoretical framework to the delivery and production of knowledge as it relates to facts, concepts, theories, and principles specific to the learning and teaching of societal inclusion through class related content mediums and materials.

To combat racialized and oppressive discourse within high school curricula and classroom content, contemporary sociological concepts like Eduardo Bonilla-Silva’s Color-Blind Racism (CBR) provides a critical perspective to issues of discourse and language as it relates to social exclusion, colonial dominant narratives, and white supremacist ideology. Bonilla- Silva argues that white hegemonic discourse reproduces color blind racist ideology in which whites believe that if Blacks and other disenfranchised communities would just stop thinking about past struggles, work hard, and complain less; that all Americans regardless of race, religion, gender, sexuality, and socio-economic status would live in an accessible inclusive and equitable society (Bonilla-Silva 2010). Bonilla-Silva’s work is significant for the critical analysis of race, especially for analyzing institutions like education that have a history of reproducing racialized

narratives and oppressive conditions for people of color. As a critical pedagogy to deconstruct oppressive discourse and divisive narratives within high school education, from a Color-Blind theoretical framework, Sociology taught at the high school level can operate as a constructive method in introducing students to social concepts like CBR that help reduce social disparities related to race (Amurabi 2012).

As a leading intellectual in critical race scholarship, Kimberle Crenshaw's theoretical concept of "Intersectionality" acknowledges the various ways structural and institutional power operate against the multiple socio-political identities of an individual, specifically womxn of color. Although race has been at the center of discrimination, it is no longer the central factor determining the life chances for people of color (Silva 2018). Crenshaw argues that "the way we imagine discrimination or disempowerment often is more complicated for people who are subjected to multiple forms of exclusion. The good news is that intersectionality allows us to see it" (Miller 2017). As an institution of social control, education has a direct influence on socializing-assimilating young people into the process of reproducing cultural and sociopolitical norms. With that being said, these young people all have to navigate through the social divisions of race, gender, sexuality, nationality, and class and other dimensions of positionality to which categorically place them within social hierarchies-that create institutional disadvantages.

Symbolic Interactionism a term coined by Herbert Blumer, a student of social scientist George Herbert Mead, cultivated symbolic interactionism as a theoretical framework that would further develop the entirety of the perspective and influence the department known as the "Chicago School" (Applerouth & Edles 2012). The Chicago School, pioneers of empirical research, analyzed how social actors negotiated everyday life through meanings of interaction and interpretation. The term interpretation "entails constructing the meaning of objects or

another's actions, for meanings is not “released” by, or inherent in, things or the actions themselves. It is on the basis of one’s interpretation or definition that one then responds to her physical and social surroundings” (2012:465). Blumer’s perception of symbolic interaction is founded on three key principles. First, social actors act accordingly to things based on the symbolic meaning they have for them. These things may represent everything that the social actor “may note in his [or her] world--physical objects, such as trees or chairs; or other human beings, such as friends or enemies; institutions, such as school or government” (2012:465). Second, the meaning of things is derived from the social interaction between others. Therefore, “symbolic interactionists are often less concerned with the objective structure than with subjective meaning” (Carter & Fuller 2015). Finally, these meanings are constructed by an interpretive process utilized by the experiences the social actor encounters (2012:465). Blumer’s theoretical framework plays a critical role in helping me conduct a comparative content analysis of the social world symbolically as it is portrayed in Social Studies U.S. History Class A, Class B, and Sociology.

### Literature Review.

In our efforts as educators to build a more inclusive society, we must acknowledge how our educational system plays a role in administering a curriculum that includes and celebrates everyone as contributing societal members. For our youth, the task of our Social Sciences curricula is vital because of its duty to teach history and civic competence through citizenship education in an attempt to promote an inclusive democratic society (NCSS 2010). Citizenship education is the process of “educating children, from early childhood, to become clear-thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society. Citizenship education

provides a knowledge base of the nation's institutions, and also an awareness that the rule of law applies to social and human relationships" (Unesco 1998).

This literature review provides context of the foundations of Social Studies and Sociology courses within the high school setting. In addition, I address the previous literature done within classroom for Social Studies and Sociology, highlighting the content that is utilized to teach the course. This section ends with an overview of the limited research that exists.

## Social Studies.

In the struggle for social justice and equitable education, Ronald W. Evans, a leading scholar on Social Studies history and curriculum highlights the complex issues regarding the state of Social Studies curriculum. In his book titled "The Social Studies Wars: what should we teach the children?" Evans describes The War as a war over perspective and content which consists of a power struggle between a variety of educational reformers who operate with different socio-political agendas (Evans 2004). These educational reformers operate with their own pedagogical practices, philosophies, and beliefs—all to which, each group individually feel they should lead the American Social Studies curriculum.

The key groups Evans identify are as follows: Traditional Historians who advocate for the standard of social studies content to operate from a historical lens. "Mandarins" advocate for the totality of Social Studies as a science, Social Efficiency educators push for a more controlled and efficient society, Social Meliorists who push for the development of students to become reflective thinkers that contribute to the improvement of society, and lastly, Social Reconstructionist who envision Social Studies to be the leading influencer in transforming American society (Evans 2004). The book's significance is not solely about its descriptive detail of Social Studies reform camps, but its significance lies deep within its analysis on how this

historical camp conflict negatively impacts the potential of a reflexive curriculum for young students.

The negative impact on curriculum and students derive from the struggle of the various camps to maintain a consistent method of cultivating young people into good citizens (Evans 2004). The key as it relates to my research study on divisive narratives and content, is the consistent change with Social Studies curriculum. Throughout the history of Social Studies curriculum, each reform group has individually maintained influence over the curriculum of American Social Studies. As Evans highlights, Traditionalist believe Social Studies textbooks and curriculum should excessively prioritize the historical tradition of patriotism as a means of creating citizenship. In contrast, Meliorist recommend a citizenship curriculum that emphasizes counter-socialization by focusing on social issues and informed decision making (Evans 2004).

Education reformer Harold Rugg was one of the first educators who acknowledged the role of social sciences, specifically the role of Social Studies in institutionalizing our youth into a society that has a tradition of extending its patriotic capitalistic conservative values. His intent was to establish a critical pedagogy that was transformative in reference to teaching social justice (Totten & Pedersen 2007). Rugg's believed that a unified collaborative curriculum of Social Studies and history would be a more effective pedagogical practice if the focus shifted to more persisting social issues (Totten & Pedersen 2007). In addressing his perspective at Columbia University, Teachers College (1921), Ruggs detailed his Social Studies curriculum philosophy in a manner that minimized the traditional influence of history, geography, and civics. Ruggs emphasized the value of incorporating a pedagogy that reflected the problems and issues of contemporary society. If we acknowledge today's social climate, a contemporary understanding of social problems would incorporate the existing exclusionary practices of sexuality and gender

politics, issues of immigration, wage and class disparities, and of course the never-ending issues of race.

Most recently, a qualitative study was conducted to examine the practice of human rights education within New York State's public-school Social Studies curriculum. A common theme was identified amongst student participants who were interviewed. During the study, students indicated that although they were thrilled that the State implemented a curriculum that emphasized human rights, many students believed that the curriculum was still ineffective because the content remained historical, lacking the oppressive experiences of contemporary society (Gradwell & Rodeheaver 2015). New York's qualitative study reflects the historical and national problem that social reformers Ruggs and Evans highlighted in their previous studies.

## Sociology.

The task of Sociology has been no different academically than the task of Social Studies. Both have designed standards to meet the needs of our youth. However, high school Sociology standards differ in terms in areas of interest and influence. According to the national standards of the American Sociology Association (ASA), high school sociology is separated into four domains as follows: (1) Sociological Perspective and Methods of Inquiry, (2) Social Structure, Culture, Institutions, and Society, (3) Social Relationships, Self-Groups, and Socialization, (4) Stratification and Inequality. The intent of Sociology's learning domains is to provide a reflexive education that can help students critically think about themselves, and the world they live in (ASA 2019). Despite the standards, Sociology's influence has had its ups and downs. According to my analysis of literature, many Sociologists discovered three themes that plagued the state of

high school sociology; sociological content, textbook difficulty, and inadequate training for high school sociology teachers.

The general content of sociology has been a historical challenge for education and social reformers involved in the implementation process of high school sociology. The maturity of the student became a priority in relation to the implementation process because it was important to school administrators to ensure that the student could handle the complexity of sociological theory and concepts. Sociologists and education reformer Read Bain conducted a 1924 study in the state of Washington to evaluate high school Sociology. During his analysis, Bain reflected on the conflict of the immature student stating that “when [the student] attention is centered on “problems,” [the student] will very likely get a distorted view of society, which may remain with [the student for] all his life” (Bain 1926).

Sociology and student maturity were not an isolated issue within American education. Greek sociologist Foteini Kougioumoutzaki conducted a study about the conditions of Greek high school Sociology. Kougioumoutzaki research concluded that indeed student maturity was a major obstacle within the implementation process (Kougioumoutzaki 2007). Kougioumoutzaki also identified a larger issue by highlighting Greece educational administrators. Greek school administrators acknowledged the influence of Sociological content on an individual and feared that Sociology would have the ability to cultivate revolutionary ideology instead of making their high school senior’s good citizens (Kougioumoutzaki 2007). Greek education administrators realized the societal influence that Sociology had on citizens, acknowledging the resistance power Sociology had on deconstructing the power of the ruling class, on oppression, and social control.

Despite the negative implications on Sociological content, sociologists Donald T. Matlock and Alvin P. Short conducted a 1981 quantitative comparative research in the state of Texas on first year college students who had taken a high school Sociology course compared to first year college students who did not (Matlock & Short 1983). Matlock and Short concluded that the first-year college student that had participated in a high school Sociology was able to retain and complete a college Sociology courses more successfully than the college student that did not take high school Sociology (Matlock & Short 1983). The exposure to Sociology content during their junior and senior years in high school was an effective process that allowed high school students to successfully transition as college students. Matlock and Short's study was a positive indication that in reference to student maturity, Sociology was not problematic in its complexity, but was a very capable discipline for young students to articulate.

Based on the literature, the second biggest concern was the selection process of the sociology textbook. Textbook selection has always been an issue of concern for both educators in Social Studies and Sociology. Sociologists Leonard Kercher conducted two quantitative studies to investigate high school sociology in the state of Michigan in 1931 and 1936 (Kercher 1938). The method of both studies was in the form of questionnaires', which produced replies from a total of 256 Michigan state schools. The data showed that textbook issues were the biggest concern within Kercher's study. Even when the textbooks were viewed as suitable amongst the faculty, the data revealed a wide range of variation as to which textbooks were being used. Kercher's research highlighted that the variety of Sociology textbooks was due to an issue of relevance because the textbook was either too old or too elementary for high school students (Kercher 1938).

In sociologist Stanley Grupp's review of high school sociology, Grupp was able to identify three textbooks that were suited for college students but were implemented into the high school curriculum. Based on Grupp's analysis, Sociology books were inconsistent with the application of Sociological constructs. Therefore, making the textbooks inadequate for proper usage, reinforcing the negative belief that Sociology as a discipline was too broad and sophisticated for K-12 students to understand (Grupp 1963).

The history of high school sociology shows that not only has the issue been discussed, but that there have been numerous attempts to institutionalize Sociology within the high school curriculum. As a counter narrative to discriminatory discourse and social inequality, Sociology operates as a reflective pedagogy that incorporates cultural perspectives while critically analyzing structural power relationships. In a 1998 qualitative study conducted in the State of New York, researchers examined feedback provided by participating high school sociology teachers in an attempt to identify current trends related to course requirements, teaching pedagogies, and subjects covered (Lashbrook 2001). The results of the study informed the researchers that high school sociology teachers were more likely to refrain from utilizing a lectured style teaching method by incorporating classroom discussions. Most recently, this approach has been successfully adopted in numerous academic spaces outside the United States. For example, in Buenos Aires, social reformers strongly urged a curriculum that promoted a reflexive education with an emphasis in societal inclusion and was successful with its implementation (Pereyra & Pontremoli 2012).

### Symbolic Interactionism.

Symbolic interaction is a social perspective that gained social significance under the development of Herbert Blumer, a student and interpreter of George Herbert Mead. Under their

influence, symbolic interaction became a valuable theoretical framework to analyze the social. The theory gained popularity and later cultivated the scholarship of Charles Horton Cooley, William Isaac Thomas, Erving Goffman, and Arlie Hochschild. The basis of symbolic interactionism is to analyze the relationship between things within the social world, which include; the self, the other, material items like; cars, stop signs, colors within traffic lights, to institutions. These objects obtain their meanings from the social actors, therefore symbolic interaction is a practice of interpretation (Askan et al. 2009). Many social scientists have incorporated the theoretical framework of symbolic interaction into their studies to address how symbolic meanings of things play a role in the social world.

From a methodological approach, an argument has been made that symbolic interaction is best suited to be applied to qualitative studies because in theory the only way to study human behavior is to have intimate interaction with others. Blumer argues, through a qualitative approach to symbolic interaction, interaction and observation a greater provides a greater analysis in defining concepts and understanding human behavior (Carter & Fuller 2015). Although a qualitative approach may appear to be the standard to incorporating symbolic interactionism into studies, Manford Kuhn (1964) utilized a positivist approach to study the relationship between the self and the social (2015). A positivist method is a quantitative approach that requires scientific evidence such as experiments and statistics, to reveal a true nature of how society operates (Thompson 2015). Kuhn developed a test to conduct his quantitative study called the “Twenty Statements Test” (TST) that analyzed the question “Who Am I?” (2015). Kahn believed that the responses to this specific question would provide a standardized examination of an individual’s self-attitudes and an structuring of identities as they emerge from the symbolic interaction with others. As a result, Kuhn’s study contributed to

research addressing “the problematic nature of coordinated social action as well as meanings as responses to interaction” (2015).

Sociologist Sheldon Stryker (1980) a scholar of symbolic interactionism, emphasized that the meanings of things and interaction supplied stable patterns that create and reinforce social structures (2015). Through the operationalization of variables, Stryker expanded Herbert Meads general assumptions by conducting an empirical test of the relationship between symbolic meaning and social relationships. Stryker’s approach to symbolic interaction was aimed to identify how meaning and interaction are situated by various levels of social structures (2015). Stryker’s approach to structural influence of the self, implicates the process of socialization as a reflexive praxis to which individuals see themselves. Furthermore, Stryker argues that “in every situation, individuals identify themselves and others in the context of the social structure” (2015).

Multiple studies have utilized symbolic interaction as a primary theory to produce studies, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Barney Glaser and Anslem Strauss (1964) utilized this scholarship to analyze how social interaction is dependent upon the varying degree of different structures, members awareness, and methods of be aware; specifically, between nurses in hospitals and patients. Richard S. Brooks (1969) examined the relationship between the self and political ideology, discovering that one’s identity is base on their political orientation (2015). Sheldon Stryker’s (1957) study on the role-taking, to understand the differing roles of family members and their assignments. Howard Becker’s (1953) symbolic interactionist approach to understanding the social construction of the marijuana user; William R. Rosengren (1961) study to identify how the meaning of the self-changed over time ; and Erving Goffman’s (1959, 1961)

examination of impression management to understand how individual's present themselves to others (2015).

The literature within both Social Studies and Sociology highlights how curriculum has been formatted for a number of years. Educators throughout the years have had different methods to implement change within the classroom whether it be liberal or conservative views, textbooks, or class content, youth are subject to material that may not always positively represent them. Therefore, reinforcing white supremacist ideologies and/or color-blind racism. Whereas high school Sociology courses may further peak youth's interests because it is content related to their identity formation. Although research states how high school Sociology is difficult to execute due to limitations of content, textbook, and inadequate training by teachers, it is continues to be offered. My research uses a critical and socially conscious approach to highlight the content within Social Studies and Sociology.

Symbolic interaction provides a theoretical framework to the study of how individuals define meaning to themselves and everything within the social. The significance of literature is to illustrate the many way's symbolic interaction has contributed to the scholarship of the social world. In my content analysis study of Social Studies and Sociology, symbolic interaction will be utilized as a primary framework to understand how power and oppression is maintained through discourse. Discourse is defined as a "category which designates the broadly semiotic (signs and symbols) [author edit] elements of social life (language, but also visual semiosis, 'body language' etc.)" (Fairclough 2012).

## Methodology.

My methodology consisted of a quantitative and qualitative comparative content analysis between high school coursework in Social Studies and Sociology. I examined their current state of content as it related to social exclusion, and the promotion of social inclusion and equity. Utilizing three local San Diego high schools as my unit of analysis to investigate classroom content, I searched for the covert and overt discourse associated with the discourse that reinforces the societal exclusion of intersecting social constructs. By critically looking at discourse, I intended to understand how high school Social Studies and Sociology curriculum and classroom content such as; syllabi, daily assignments, textbooks, handouts, class assignments/assessments, multimedia content, lesson plans, and other course materials influence the process of deconstructing dominant narratives related to color-blind racist ideology, heteronormative, and white hegemonic discourse. My quantitative research involved the practice of numerically identifying the repetition of visual contextual meaning of social constructs that perpetuate social inequalities.

I initially chose content analysis as a primary method over discourse analysis because while both may overlap in terms of identifying the symbolic meaning of social life, content analysis specifically targets content consistency and stability. On the other hand, content refers to “words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any transmitted messages. Text is anything written, visual, or spoken that serves as a medium for communication” (Neuman 1997:272). Discourse analysis, on the other hand, “highlights the precarious nature of meaning, the relationship between text and context, and focuses on exploring its shifting and contested nature” (Herra & Braumoeller 2004). Discourse analysis derives from a social constructivist standpoint and analyzes text to identify meaning and how meaning is then conceptualized in the

social (Phillips & Hardy 2002). Content analysis acknowledges this social constructivist standpoint but concentrates on the consistency of these meanings for counting and coding, and yields repeatable, precise results about the text. Content analysis uses “objective and systematic counting and recording procedures to produce a quantitative description of the symbolic content in a text” (Neuman 1997:273). Although, content analysis was a method that I felt had a greater chance of answering my primary research question, I ended up incorporating discourse analysis because I started to identify meaningful themes within the text that reproduced ideas and objects reflecting a constructed reality of the social world. Therefore, my research became a mixed methods study; utilizing both quantitative content analysis and qualitative discourse analysis to provide me a methodological framework to best reveal the latent and manifested symbolic messages and meanings that derive from covert heteronormative, color blind racist, and eurocentric colonial ideology, text that is difficult to see by the casual reader.

Manifest refers to the coding of visual—surface level text that is readable (Neuman 1997). About manifest coding, as a quantitative researcher, my process required that I count the number of times I visually see a word, image, or phrase that relates to my research question and coding themes. Latent refers to the coding of text that is not visual, but underlying and implicit (Neuman 1997). Latent coding relies on the researcher’s knowledge of the studied content, using said knowledge to qualitatively interpret the social meaning of the text and determine whether or not the text is connected to the research. Neuman (1997) argues that if both latent and manifest coding are used simultaneously, than the final research results are strengthened (Neuman 1997).

My quantitative and qualitative study began by conducting an online search locating public and non-public high schools within San Diego County that offered Social Studies and Sociology courses. I needed to determine whether or not the curricula and classroom content for

both Social Studies and Sociology was accessible to the public. This was a very important aspect of my data collection process because if curricula and classroom content were accessible to the public, the accessibility of information would decrease the likelihood of me not acquiring the data for my study due to unresponded emails by high school staff. Also, with the ability to download accessible curricula and classroom content, I was able to minimize risk related to the IRB process.

If the curricula and classroom content were not accessible to the public, my second approach to gaining access to my data was to reach out to school personnel via email, identifying myself as a CSUSM Sociology graduate student requesting social research assistance. I conducted an online search of 27 high schools within San Diego County, in which I collected a sample of 70 teachers that offered Social Studies and Sociology courses to establish a contact list. Due to this method of online searching, I encountered a limitation of my online search in regards to access because of a lack of teacher directory information in conjunction with teaching Social Studies and Sociology. Without this encounter, I was anticipating a contact list of at least 100 Social Studies and Sociology due to San Diego's vast geographical space and expanding school district.

To contact my original sample size of 70 San Diego high school Social Studies and Sociology instructors, I sent my request for research assistance via email. Within my sample size of 70 high school teachers I was only able to identify four teachers that offered Sociology classes. From the four teachers that offered Sociology, two responded, and only one provided me access to their Sociology classroom content and curriculum. For confidentiality purposes I refer to this teacher and her class as Sociology Class. Sociology Class had a generous amount of data that fully represented the ASA's National Standards for High School Sociology (2013) to

which Sociology Class shared with me on a Google drive. Sociology Class curriculum and classroom content was not only accessible but also easy to navigate. Sociology Class shared drive was situated into seven folders, each with different areas of study (1) Sociological Imagination (2) Social Construction of Reality (3) Economic Inequality & Social Stratification (4) Intersectionality (5) Institutions (6) Blog Files (7) Years Past.

From the sample size of 70, the remaining 66 Social Studies teachers were also sent emails asking for consent of the classroom content and curriculum. From the 66 that I submitted emails to, 17 responded, providing me access to their content by providing me titles of textbooks and reading materials. Many of the Social Studies classes were specific to World History in which I chose to omit from my study because World History did not fit my desired research goal. My desired research goal was to identify whether or not high school classroom content reproduced social inequality within the United States. World History challenged my initial intent because I wanted my study to be specific to U.S. History and American culture.

After deciding to omit World History from my study I was left with five San Diego high schools that offered U.S. History classes. From my list of five, I identified two U.S. History textbooks that were required reading material for San Diego high school students, both to which I used for my analysis. For my study, I refer to this class as U.S. History Class A (Class A), and the name of the textbook was titled “The Americans: Reconstruction through the 21st Century” (Danzer et al. 2006) which I had access to on the instructor’s online school website. The second class that I incorporated within my study I referred to as U.S. History Class B (Class B) and the name of the textbook that was used by this class was titled “The American Pageant” (Kennedy, Cohen & Bailey 2006) in which I purchased the hard copy online from Amazon. Class B also had online content such as readings, power points, and study guides that I also used to analyze

for my study. For my research, my final unit of analysis was U.S. History Class A, U.S. History Class B, and Sociology Class.

## Coding.

After gaining access to high school Social Studies and Sociology curricula and class content, I began my research process of coding and analyzing data. I coded the accessible content—based on the theoretical framework of social stratification and social construction. My themes for coding analysis derived from the internalized symbolic perceptions of the self and the social, as they both situate us into different social hierarchies that maintain different systems of power (Ferguson 2013).

As a method to strategically create categories for coding under the pretense of social stratification and construction, I utilized the social constructs of race, gender, deviance, and family to determine how all four socially organize privilege, power, and oppression within educational paradigms of Social Studies and Sociology. The convergence of these social categories and my intent of these themes were significant to my study, and most importantly, to the students because it is them who are subjected and assimilated into the oppressive and omissive reality of American history and culture. These themes highlight the ways the institutional power of education operates against marginalized communities that have various intersecting socio-political identities.

For my comparative content and discourse analysis, I began my coding process by establishing a codebook and a coding procedure to provide a set of rules to help me properly identify my research variables of race, gender, name, family, and deviance. With this set of

variables, I applied this information to Google excel spreadsheet. From there, I created a total of six separate excel spreadsheets, two per class. For each class, I created a codebook titled “Names” to list names, gender, and race; and the second codebook I titled “Images” to record visual images of deviance (guns) by race, family by race, and family by heteronormativity to reflect gender. My process was a line by line, page by page process in which I began by collecting the names first from the online documents of each class within my study.

The first class I coded for data was Class A. I went on Class A’s website, opened the online textbook titled “The Americans: Reconstruction through the 21st Century” (Danzer et al. 2006) and began with the first page. From there I began looking for variables to input into my “Names” codebook. When I found a name within the online textbook, I transferred the name to Google to conduct a race and gender identification check to ensure the name first matched with the online U.S. History textbook, and second to investigate the historical figure race and gender. To properly identify the historical figure race and gender I utilized multiple sources to cross reference information. The sources I utilized within my method were; Whitehouse.gov, biography.com, history.com, britannica.com, and pbs.org. Once I confirmed the historical figure, I placed the figure onto my spreadsheet by name, race, and gender. I would repeat this process line by line, page by page until I finished the entire class content. Once I compiled my list for Class A, I then moved on to Class B and then Sociology Class repeating my coding process to ensure I did not miss anyone.

For my name variable, my list consisted of historical figures that were placed within the text. I did not record the authors of the provided class content. Only the historical figures that were in the actual text. When I refer to a historical figure, I am referring to any person who is placed within the text of class content, regardless of historical significance. Furthermore, this

person could be an author of a book within the text, a lawyer who presented an historical case, or a firefighter who saved someone from a burning building. For example, if Native American leader Chief Looking Glass of eastern Oregon had a child that was listed within the text, that child would be identified by my online coding process and then placed into the variable category that identifies with that child. I preferred to conduct my study this way to provide agency to marginalized people who are denied reflexive historical content and narratives.

The content of my study that I coded was provided by class textbooks, class handouts in the form of study guides and readings, and from PowerPoint presentations; all accessible on each of the participating classes website. The total content coded to produce the findings of my study were 1, 951 pages of two U.S. History textbooks, 60 PowerPoint slides, and 113 combined class documents which represented curriculum, syllabi, daily assignments, textbooks, handouts, class assignments/assessments, multimedia content, lesson plans, and other course materials related to my variables specified coded themes with the first being race gender, family, sexuality, and deviance. I intend to utilize these isolating social categories collectively to determine whether or not these social categories work in conjunction with one another, or if they operate individually to reinforce social inequalities. Because I am seeking to find categorical trends within the literature and content presented to high school students, I used the following as guiding questions during my analysis:

1. What is the social and political identity and affiliation of the author(s) within the presented materials?
2. What is the social and political identity and affiliation of the historical figures within the textbook and their significance?
3. Demographically, how is class content about race, and gender situated?

4. What social significance did the historical figures have in reference to deviance?
5. How are families situated within the social construct of gender and race?
6. How are people of color portrayed in comparison to whites?
7. Are people of color visualized and represented as the poor?
8. Are they represented as being educated in comparison to whites?
9. In terms of class representation, which races represent the normative standard of white-collar dress and who represents the blue-collar working class?
10. In terms of gender, how many times are males talked about in comparison to females, and when gender is visualized what race, how is class, and sexuality is visually represented with them?

All of these guiding questions I recorded quantifiable to help me interpret the data to determine whether or not contemporary high school content reproduced conditions of inequality. I did not use any coding technology to assist with the coding process, only excel to organize my data for code book purposes.

#### Limitations.

During the coding process on the variable of family, which was a visual analysis; based on the images within my content analysis I could not determine the race or ethnicity of the individuals within the images. To avoid misrepresenting communities of color specifically Latinx and Hispanic communities I refrained from adding them into my family section. The reason for doing so was based on the concept of racial ambiguity which refers to the “process to which the potential other cannot be classified according to one’s existing notions of racial

organization” (James & Tucker 2003). Based on the color of the individuals skin complexion and lack of documented description, I could not determine if the people represented within the images relevant to the variable of family were white, Latinx or Hispanic.

#### Reflexivity.

My positionality within my study is reflective of my socio-political identity as a Black man who has experienced the oppressive structural conditions of overt and covert racism. I was raised in a poor working-class community that experienced hyper-surveillance and hyper-criminalization of regulated State agencies. I graduated from a public school that lacked critical pedagogies that reflect the student population. The themes of my research reflect my positionality as a Black man and as a father of two intelligent little girls and one charismatic little boy. Their lives are dependent upon my success and failure as a human being and I have a responsibility to help them navigate America safely and deconstruct the eurocentric colonial narratives that reinforce color blind ideology and systemic oppression.

My knowledge and experience pertaining to the social world is always situated around the idea of what it means to be Black in America; symbolically, the power of Blackness and the fear it ignites in those who operate to oppress Black power. I think about my son Harlem while simultaneously thinking about Trayvon Martin (2014). I fear for my son’s life, I fear that one day he may be running down a street—to free his mind, to only be criminalized and then murdered by racism like Ahmaud Arbery (2020). I debate everyday whether to raise my little girls to be strong and resilient like Assata Shakur, only to be faced with the reality that their strong voices could be permanently silenced like the State did with Sandra Bland (2015).

The reality is—is that being Black in America is a generational traumatic experience which is shared and situated by the traumatic experiences of other Black people. My children will grow up—internalize and gauge their own fates by the horrific experiences of other Black men and womxn who have lost their lives because of racialized rhetoric and white supremacist State sanctioned terrorism. Why is the normative narrative of deviance and criminality associated with Black people? Where in America is it safe for my children to live life unapologetically? When in America will it ever be okay to be Black?

### Findings.

My findings encompass a wide range of social themes that reinforce power and oppression within society. These themes reflect the power and influence of dominant narratives that perpetuate racial, gender, and sexual inequality within American culture. Situated by a comparative content analysis of U.S. History: Class A, Class B, and Sociology Class, my findings highlight the many way's color-blind ideology remain hidden within the contemporary high school curriculum. Due to this hidden discourse, the social strata remains intact, providing privileges for those who identify with the socio-political as race, gender, and sexuality.

### Presence & Absence.

The first thing that I looked at was the acknowledgment of race, specifically, to identify how race was organized within class content. Was there a disparity regarding race, if so, how? What exactly did the disparity look like within a quantitative framework? I established this examination by utilizing the names within the text of my units of analysis. After completing my examination, I was able to see the racial disparity within Class A, Class B, and Sociology Class

that influenced my research question. Due to my limited access to class curriculum and content, I recorded the two history classes together, separate from Sociology Class.

I discovered my data by going page by page, hard copy textbook, and online; accounting for every name that was listed historically. Without duplicating names; accounting for both U.S. History classes, I recorded a total of 1,198 names (*see Table 1*). To produce my list of 1,198 names I went page by page, recording every name that was visually listed within the provided textbooks and class online content of Class A and Class B and added it to an excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet was organized by race and gender. To determine the separate categories of race and gender of each historical individual, I utilized Google to conduct an identification process to which I was able to cross—reference with other online sources.

While recording and analyzing the names within Class A and Class B, the first disparity that emerged was race. Of the 1,198 total names mentioned in Class A and Class B, whites accounted for 81%, and people of color accounted for 19%. Of the people of color, Black and African American people accounted for 11%, Native Americans accounted for 2%, Latinx and Hispanics accounted for 3%, and other people of color who I have identified to represent Asian Pacific Islander, Desi, and subaltern regions counted for the remaining 3% of the names listed (*see Table 1*).

*Table 1*

<b>SOCIAL STUDIES CLASS</b>	<b>WHITE (%)</b>	<b>BLACK (%)</b>	<b>LATINX/HISPANIC (%)</b>	<b>NATIVE AMER. (%)</b>	<b>OTHER P.O.C. (%)</b>
<b>US HISTORY CLASS A</b>	0.424	0.081	0.017	0.014	0.013
<b>US HISTORY CLASS B</b>	0.383	0.030	0.010	0.010	0.015
<b>TOTAL (N): 1,198</b>	0.808	0.111	0.027	0.024	0.028

Table 1 highlight a historic issue in reference to societal inclusion and social relevance, specifically as it relates to discourse. In terms of sheer numbers, discourse is dominated by the historical narratives of whites which many have argued reproduces racial social inequalities by not decreasing this discursive gap with the narratives of marginal and colonized people. The numbers implicate an educational framework within Social Studies that is not reflective of the racial and ethnic make-up of America. According to the theoretical framework of critical race theory (Ladson-Billings 2014), the lack of non-white representation reinforces the practice of subtle racism within the institution of education.

An argument can be made that Class A and Class B provides a diverse and inclusive account of U.S. History because people of color are included within the text. The counter argument of omission may garner some truth, but the racial disparity is still significant enough to reproduce colonial narratives that reinforce the othering of marginal people. Also, from a critical race framework the lack of representation denies the marginalized agency—a threat to self-identity and restricts group solidarity. Another argument may reflect the idea that whites dominate historical text because their contributions reflected pre and post slavery conditions (jim crow, civil rights), periods in which they dominated the socio-political spaces here and abroad. This narrative, however, is a falsification of American history and an implication of color-blind racial ideology. According to Bonilla-Silva, “color-blind racism otherizes softly... expressing resentment toward minorities; criticizing their morality, values, and work ethic” (2010:4). By using whites group status during pre and post slavery to explain their historical relevance implies that others should work just as hard, pulling themselves up from their bootstraps.

Gender.

Not only was the historical text eurocentric, but in reference to gender the text was dominated by the narratives of men. Within the 1,198 names listed, men accounted for 87% of the text while womxn accounted for the remaining 13% (see *Table 2 & Figure 1*). The data reflect the historical argument of womxn and the legacy of feminist movements around the world as they fight against the dominant ideas of patriarchy. Black feminist thought scholar Patricia Hills Collins argues that white men have a vested interest in control over the production of knowledge and suppressing the voices of womxn of color. Their invested control to suppress the agency of womxn reinforces their viewpoints as superior to others, ultimately reproducing structural oppression caused by patriarchy (Hills Collins 2000). By omission and suppression, in the context of patriarchy and masculinity, the dominant view becomes so conditioned that the subordinate viewpoint or agency begins to lack value and creditability.

Also, the lack of representation reflects the argument of exclusion by highlighting that “when one voice speaks for another, it is inevitable that the opinions of those who are underrepresented, appropriated, or silenced will be inaccurate to some extent” (Riggins 1997).

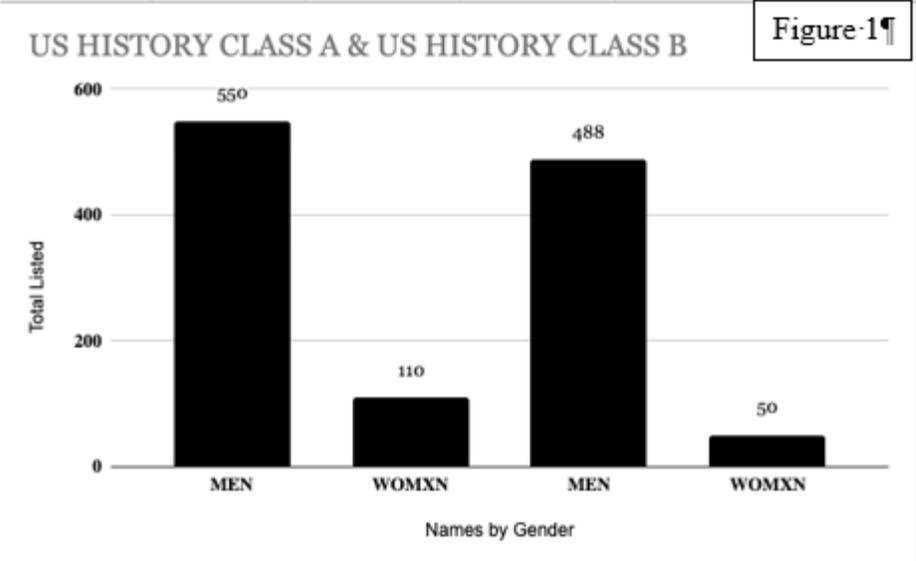
*Table 2*

<u>RACE</u>	<u>US History Class A</u>	<u>US History Class B</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
WHITE MEN	79.8%	86.0%	<b>82.7%</b>
BLACK MEN	12.1%	5.7%	<b>9.1%</b>
LATINX/HISP. MEN	2.9%	2.4%	<b>2.7%</b>
NATIVE AMER. MEN	2.4%	2.2%	<b>2.3%</b>
OTHER MEN O.C.	2.7%	3.4%	<b>3.1%</b>
<b>TOTAL MEN</b>	<b>52.9%</b>	<b>47.0%</b>	<b><u>86.6%</u></b>
<b>WHITE WOMXN</b>	62.7%	80.0%	<b>68.1%</b>

<u>RACE</u>	<u>US History Class A</u>	<u>US History Class B</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<i>BLACK WOMXN</i>	28.1%	16.0%	<b>24.3%</b>
<i>LATINX/HISP WOMXN</i>	4.5%	0.00%	<b>3.1%</b>
<i>NATIVE AMER. WOMXN</i>	3.6%	2.0%	<b>3.1%</b>
<i>OTHER WOMXN O.C.</i>	0.9%	2.0%	<b>1.2%</b>
<i>TOTAL WOMXN</i>	<b>68.7%</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b><u>13.3%</u></b>

Analyzing the U.S. History names listed in Figure 1 and Table 2 revealed gender discrepancies within class curricula and content. Utilizing the same coding method to determine names, I used a Google search to properly identify gender. Absent of gender-neutral names, men accounted for 87% of the combined U.S. History textbook while womxn accounted for 13%.

Class B revealed the largest disparity among the two U.S. History classes in reference to gender with men representing 86% of the historical figures listed, while womxn were poorly represented, accounting for only 9% of the total text.



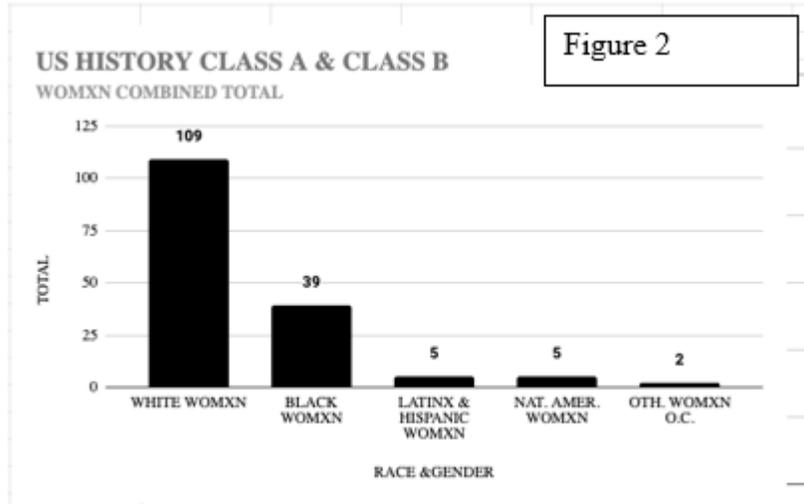
Class A text by gender revealed a 66% gender gap between womxn and men historical figures.

<b><u>RACE &amp; GENDER</u></b>	<b><u>US History Class A</u></b>	<b><u>US History Class B</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>
<b>WHITE MEN</b>	79.8%	86.0%	<b>82.7%</b>
<b>BLACK MEN</b>	12.1%	5.7%	<b>9.1%</b>
<b>LATINX/HISP. MEN</b>	2.9%	2.4%	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>NATIVE AMER. MEN</b>	2.3%	2.2%	<b>2.3%</b>
<b>OTHER MEN O.C.</b>	2.7%	3.4%	<b>3.1%</b>
<b>TOTAL MEN</b>	<b>52.9%</b>	<b>47.0%</b>	<b><u>86.6%</u></b>
<b><i>WHITE WOMXN</i></b>	62.7%	80.0%	<b>68.1%</b>
<b><i>BLACK WOMXN</i></b>	28.1%	16.0%	<b>24.3%</b>
<b><i>LATINX/HISP WOMXN</i></b>	4.5%	0.00%	<b>3.1%</b>
<b><i>NATIVE AMER. WOMXN</i></b>	3.6%	2.0%	<b>3.1%</b>
<b><i>OTHER WOMXN O.C.</i></b>	0.9%	2.0%	<b>1.2%</b>
<b><i>TOTAL WOMXN</i></b>	<b>68.7%</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b><u>13.3%</u></b>

#### Intersection of Gender & Race.

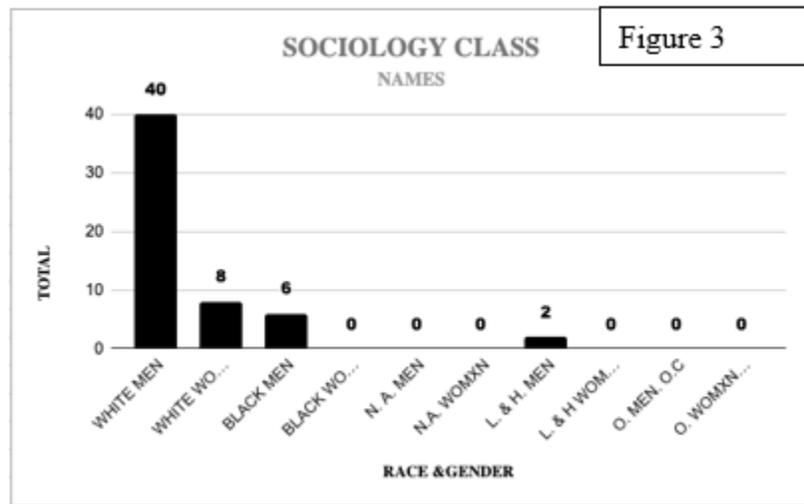
In an attempt to identify multiple modes of oppression within my study, I utilized Kimberle Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality under the context of race and gender because both are primary sites that situate social privilege and oppression (Crenshaw 1991). My analysis of race and gender identified significant gaps that supported the argument that marginalized communities remained significantly excluded from historical narratives within American culture. Between Class A and Class B, combined white men accounted for 83% of the text in comparison to men of color which totaled to 17%. Breaking the 17% down in racial categories, Black men accounted for 9%, Latinx/Hispanic men accounted for 3%, Native American men accounted for 2%, and those I have identified as other accounted for 3% (*see Figure 2*).

There was also a staggering disparity in my analysis of gender and race in regard to womxn as well. White womxn accounted for 68%, while womxn of color accounted for 32%



Categorized by race, Black womxn made up 24% of the text while Latinx and Hispanic womxn accounted for 3%, Native American womxn accounted for 3% and the remaining 1% represent womxn I have categorized as other to represent Asian Pacific Islander, Desi, and subaltern regions (see Figure 3).

Sociology Class shown in figure 4 displays the same societal condition of exclusion by not providing the voices of men and womxn of color.



The omission of discourse related to womxn is extremely surprising and problematic within Sociology Class, a reflection of sociology’s contemporary scholarship, specifically under the ASA’s “Theory and Knowledge” framework which critically analyzes how “feminist, race, and queer perspectives impact our understanding of society and identity; and the cultural and social legacies of colonialism and imperialism”(ASA 2020).

The lack of womxn of color within historic frameworks reinforce a wide critical stance made by many feminist scholars, womxn of color, and indigenous womxn like Michelle M. Jacob, Gloria Anzaldúa, bell hooks, and Patricia Hill Collins. The lack of womxn representation within historic content aids to the eurocentric colonialization of white men and white womxn, neglecting the cultural revitalization of not only Black womxn but indigenous womxn as well. Professor of education studies Michelle M. Jacob illustrates cultural revitalization within her book titled “Yakama Rising” (2013). Jacob argues that literature representing the subjugated other, such as “Yakama Rising” is a response to deconstructing colonialism. Deconstructing colonialism entails the process of challenging the socio-political power of dominant culture. Dominant culture refers to culture that “is one whose values, language, and ways of behaving are imposed on a subordinate culture or cultures through economic or political power. This may be achieved through legal or political suppression of other sets of values and patterns of behavior, or by monopolizing the media of communication” (Oxford 2020). The omission and misrepresentation of race and gender reflected within my study reinforces dominant culture, hence the argument from marginalized scholars who demand to have their culture and voices heard within discourse.

The lack of racial and ethnic representation within the content of Class A and Class B reproduces dominant narratives of colonialism by excluding the voices and cultural traditions of non-white members within American Society. Through the process of omission, the lack of representation of people of color is an example of color-blind politics and I would go further and argue that there is evidence that implicates overt racism.

## The Social Construction of Deviance & Criminality.

Criminality and deviance from the first glance of the word may appear the same, however they are inherently different. Deviance is a diverse term that entices frequent debate from social actors representing all walks of life; from academia, entertainment, journalists, politics, family, and religion (Adler & Adler 2016:2). Deviance is predicated on social acceptance—belief system, the determinant of universal taboos. An example of deviance could be; smoking cigarettes or having tattoos, a subjective rule dependent on one's social, political, and geographical location.

Criminality is less ambiguous, representing the collective consciousness. Criminality is a direct reflection of the social institution of law unlike deviance. Criminality is subjected to the power of the State, bounded by an inherent social contract between the individual and government (Weisheit & Morn 2015:23). In a punishment context, the response to criminality is more severe, given the death penalty, whereas deviance, an individual may be verbally reprimanded or socially othered.

In the eyes of Others “Labeling”.

*“They decried the stigma of race—the condemnation and scorn heaped upon them for no reason other than the color of their skin”*

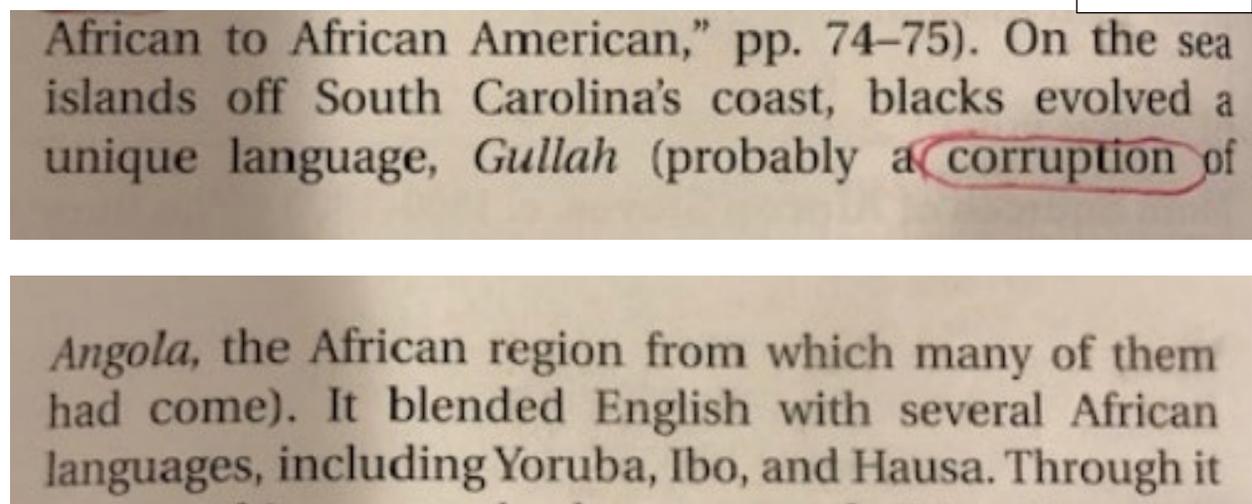
*-Michelle Alexander (2012)*

The social concept of labeling was a theme that emerged during my content comparative analysis of Social Studies, U.S. History, and Sociology. Labeling theory, a derivative of symbolic interactionism, argues that crime and deviance is a socially constructed process, an

internalization of stigmatized identity—highlighting the impact that “defining an individual as a criminal has upon his or her behavior; the meaning of crime to criminals; and the processes by which categories of behavior are defined as crimes” (Rafter & Brown 2011). Social justice advocates argue that through the process of labeling, for many marginalized groups, specifically men of color, have been intensely subjected to the covert racial politics of the United States criminal justice system (Alexander 2012, West 2017, Clear 2007).

During my analysis of Class B, I encountered numerous accounts of terminology which reflects the theoretical framework of labeling and color-blind rhetoric that reinforces the social construction of criminality and deviance of people of color, a narrative that reinforces white supremacy. While narrating the historical significance of African Americans within the textbook utilized by Class B, when referencing the transition of native language to American English dialect (*see Figure 4*), the text states “On the sea islands of South Carolina’s coast, blacks evolved a unique language *Gullah* (**probably** [emphasis added] a **corruption** [emphasis added] of *Angola*, the African region from which many of them had come)”(72).

Figure 4



Social Studies U.S. History Class B Textbook (2006:72)

Why use the term “corruption” to describe a unique language without being sure if the language of the first African American slaves actually derived from Angola? According to Merriam-Webster, two definitions represent deviance and criminality, and only one that reflects linguistics (Merriam-Webster 2020). The linguistical definition of corruption is defined as “a departure from the original or from what is pure or correct” (2020). From a linguistical academic framework, the term corruption displayed in figure 4 is a normalized term widely utilized to describe certain changes within language. A word can be corrupted by the changes in spelling, comprehension, transcription, and hearing which is utilized within this historical context.

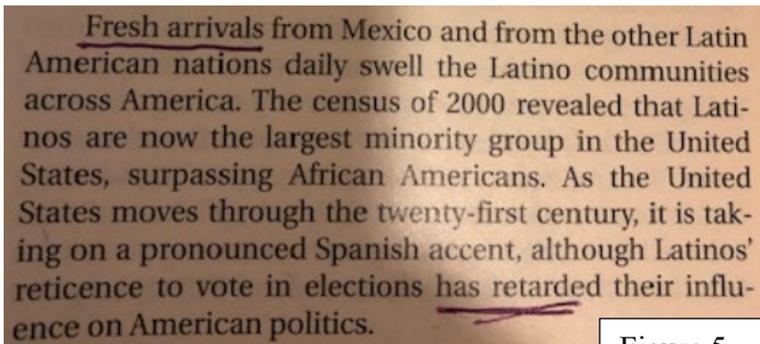
Analyzing this from a critical race framework, young people who experience the K-12 system, especially students of color may not be familiar with linguistics. The lexicon term “corrupted” when first internalized does not reflect linguistical education, the term reflects deviance. The term corruption utilized within linguistics, reflects bourgeoisie culture and represents the social and cultural capital of whites who have maintained power over the production of knowledge and have greater access to higher education. With that said, this is an example of colonial discourse that perpetuate racial inequality within the educational system because linguistics is not a universal study for marginalized students. As a result, the lack of knowledge with linguistics education for students of color reproduces systemic oppression within the K-12 system through the process of hidden and misleading messages.

For discourse to be more reflexive and responsible, I would suggest incorporating an alternative term used in conjunction with corruption. I would suggest using a term like alteration, a term that is not difficult to operationalize, a term that does not criminalize an entire group, a group that historically lacks power. Also, why utilize the term “probably” (*see Figure 4*) which is an expression of uncertainty, and connect the term with corruption? Utilizing my social

position as a Black man, a social identity historically assumed to be deviant; I contend that the utilization of both “probably” and “corruption” reinforces color-blind discourse, ultimately perpetuating the stigma and criminalization of Black men and reproducing the narrative that killed Trayvon Martin (2012) and Ahmaud Arbery (2020).

To further my analysis, the term “retarded” (*see Figure 5*) was associated with Latinx and Hispanic people (2006:1025). To identify any semantical significance within a linguistical

framework, the term “retarded” is a pejorative term which is used in a negative connotation that means to depreciate (Merriam-Webster 2020). Again, the utilization of



Fresh arrivals from Mexico and from the other Latin American nations daily swell the Latino communities across America. The census of 2000 revealed that Latinos are now the largest minority group in the United States, surpassing African Americans. As the United States moves through the twenty-first century, it is taking on a pronounced Spanish accent, although Latinos' reticence to vote in elections has retarded their influence on American politics.

Figure 5

linguistics is poorly applied within a historical context to illustrate the social and political significance of Latinx and Hispanic people. A marginalized group that continues to be impacted by white supremacist rhetoric and threatened by State enforced violence.

Furthermore, during the description of “Bunker Hill and Hessian Hirelings” (141), a battle during the siege of Boston that took place in June of 1775, colonists seized Bunker Hill from the British. As a response to foreign nationals, more specifically, German soldiers were hired by King George III to defend his socio-political agenda in opposition to American colonial power to which they were described as butchers. The connotation of a butcher in conjunction with foreign national regardless of skin color is an implication of the language and politics of colonial exclusion by othering foreigners in a less than humane fashion. Also, within the text (*see Figure 6*), acts of domestic terrorism implicated the foreign other while on the contrary omitted the racial identity of white domestic terrorist (*see Figure 6*). Islamic extremist was

described as the perpetrators of the Boston Marathon (2013) while the identity of the perpetrator of the racially motivated mass shooting of nine Black people attending a South Carolina church service (*see figure 7*) was omitted from the text. The perpetrator of the Charleston church mass shooting was a white supremacist named Dylann Roof. By this specific omission of white violence in the context of terrorism, the deviant nature of the foreign other is reproduced while the character blemish of whiteness is concealed.

**Terrorism** The fear of home-grown terrorism proved real when two self-radicalized brothers set off two bombs at the finish line of the Boston Marathon, killing 3 people and injuring more than 250 others. Both brothers were motivated by extremist Islamic beliefs. Intelligence and police efforts continued to stop dozens of possible attacks in the United States, but the Boston bombing and further attacks on police and military personnel proved how difficult it was to prevent such attacks by isolated individuals. Efforts to prevent terrorism sometimes clashed with civil liberties and human rights.

Figure 6

**Gun Violence** The mass shootings of 26 children and teachers in Connecticut, 9 African-Americans in a South Carolina church, and others sparked more debates over guns. President Obama's proposals to tighten gun laws and background checks to keep guns out of the hands of people with mental health problems went nowhere in Congress because of opposition from the gun lobby.

A different kind of gun violence came to public attention because of a series of shootings of unarmed black youths by police. Across the country, people demanded reforms in police procedures.

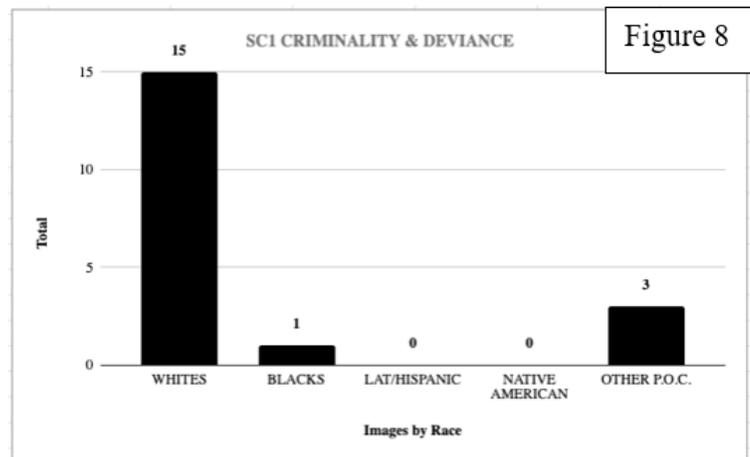
Figure 7

The concealment and insulation of white's societal wrongdoing within this context is how whites maintain power and status within the social hierarchy which as a result is an act of overt racism (Loewen 2007)

Also, within both textbooks utilized by U.S. History Class A and Class B, whites who participate in deviance are identified within the text as dissenters, jeering crowds, and colonialists. In addition, the term "ghetto" and "ghettos" were used to identify Black communities. The term ghetto was a phrase that initially represented the living spaces of a

residential Jewish community of Chicago in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Diner 1998). Over time, due to systemic racism within the U.S. housing market, ghettos became dehumanized residential spaces occupied by poor people of color, reinforcing the social construct of the Black criminal. My findings within U.S. History Class A and Class B is a strong illustration of the “language and politics of exclusion” (Riggins 1997), highlighting the eurocentric construction of the other. By the politics of exclusion, the other is diminished, elevating the status of the colonializer—victimizer to unapologetically seize power while minimizing the complicated emotions of guilt and shame (1997).

Sociology Class takes a very different approach to the social construction of deviance and criminality. As stated before, race has always been associated with crime, and Blacks have historically been that face,



however, Sociology Class does not perpetuate this narrative, with whites visually representing 79% of the images (*see Figure 8*) connected to deviance and criminality. Surprisingly, Blacks are only represented in one image (*see Figure 9*), while other people of color are represented in the remaining three images. What is not surprising is the image that relates to gangs to which Blacks continue to be the designated actors. Despite this historical and disturbing bias, Sociology Class does a decent job deconstructing racialized dominant discourse to which has always favored whites.

Example: gangs glorify violence, retaliation, and crime as a means for achieving social status.



**BOTTOM LINE: INDIVIDUALS LEARN DEVIANT BEHAVIOR FROM THOSE CLOSE TO THEM WHO PROVIDE MODELS OF AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVIANCE.**

Figure 9 shows Sociology Class visual example of a “Gang”

The sociology class also illustrates a different narrative of the social construction of deviance compared to US History Class A & Class B. While US History Class A and Class B utilize labels to describe specific groups, sociology class offers a different approach that deconstructs the racialized rhetoric that maintains power and oppression. Instead of historical narratives perpetuating racialized microaggressions like those represented in US History Class A & Class B, Sociology Class provides the narratives of deviance from a multi racialized lens, incorporating not just the crimes of Blacks and people of color but about the crimes of whites as well. Sociology Class does this by providing students with the narratives of white collar crimes, for example under the class subject of “Economic Inequality and Social Stratification” American author John Perkins tells his story as an Economic Hitman (EHMs) which are highly paid professionals who cheat countries around the globe out of trillion of dollars by the process of economic colonization of Third World countries on the behalf of corporations, banks, and the United States government (Perkins 2004). The meaning of this lesson is to critically analyze the creation and maintenance of global inequality, a social issue that has been dominated by whites but is rarely addressed publicly. By introducing this topic to students, Sociology Class initiates

critical dialogue amongst students who may view crime with a biased lens that automatically associates deviance with Black and Brown people.

The social construction of organized crime.

Historically, the social construction of deviance has played an instrumental role in the formation of the social strata. Based on the significant relevance of mass media and its role in organizing and reinforcing criminality and deviance, I analyzed how deviance was situated within the contemporary text. My analysis of content produced enticing findings. In Class B the term “gangs” was used in two instances to describe Blacks in America. In Chapter 4 titled “American Life in the Seventeenth Century, 1607-1692” (2006:72) a section describing Africans in America the text states “the widely scattered South Carolina rice and indigo plantations were lonely hells on earth where **gangs** [emphasis added] of mostly male Africans toiled and perished.” Furthermore, the term is used again stating, “Owning **gangs** [emphasis added] of slaves and vast domains of land, the planters ruled the region’s economy and virtually monopolized political power” (2006:73). The historical significance of utilizing this term to describe a group of Blacks is critical to understanding the social construction of the Black man as the face of criminality.

The significance using this term to refer to a group was an important finding that emerged while analyzing how other racialized groups were verbally represented. Whites who account for 81 percent of the text are not associated with the term ‘gang’ despite their recorded history of colonial violence. During the historical narratives of the Boston tea party and the Freedom Riders (2006:916), whites were referred to as a “mob” meaning “a large crowd of people, especially one that is disorderly and intent on causing trouble or violence” (Merriam-Webster 2020). Although the term is associated with criminality and deviance, within American

culture the term is also revered and celebrated which one may argue, elevates white's social status over people of color, providing power and privileges even when criminalized.

Gloria Ladson Billings demonstrates my analysis of race issues prevalent in Class A, Class B, and Sociology Class. Ladson Billings utilizes the concept of the racial binary, a categorization which is a covert binary process of race identification through the normative conceptualization of whiteness and blackness. Through notions of conceptualizing race binaries, Gloria states “we create categories like ‘school achievement,’ ‘middle classness,’ ‘maleness,’ ‘beauty,’ ‘intelligence,’ and ‘science’ become normative categories of whiteness, while categories like ‘gangs,’ ‘welfare recipients,’ ‘basketball players,’ and ‘the underclass’ become the marginalized and de-legitimated categories of blackness” (Ladson-Billings 1998). Ladson Billings analysis of race demonstrates the construction and accepted norms of Black and white binaries to which are represented within the text of Class A, Class B, and Sociology Class. The significance of this representation is the amount of time that these texts have been in use, both Class A and Class B have been utilized for over a decade, reproducing the maintenance of whiteness and the subordination of others.

Guns equal Power.

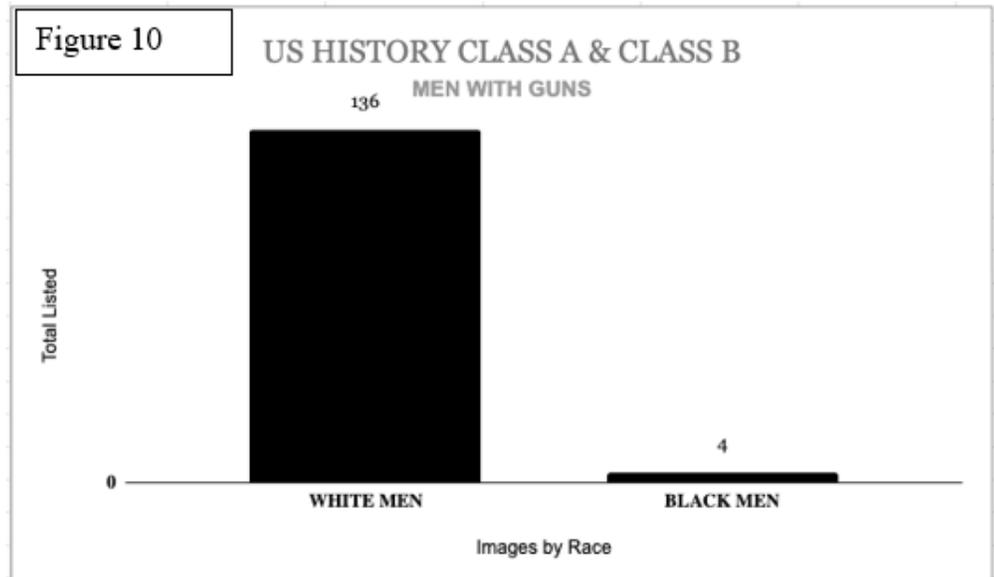
*“God Damn, God Damn, what is this God damn country coming to that niggers have got guns!”*

*-Robert Williams (1962)*

Criminality and deviance continued to play a vital role in my analysis of race. The social construction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment was a theme that emerged in regard to race relations between whites and Blacks. The use of firearms during the process of colonialism and imperialism gave eurocentric institutions massive amounts of social political power—power that was used to eradicate the socio-political power of indigenous people worldwide. Whoever owns the

legitimate right to not only have firearms but to use them without punishment—control the masses. This is how the State has historically gained its power, and why America continues to be the leading country in defense spending throughout the world (SIPRI 2019).

The analysis above provided a framework to establish my visual study of U.S. History Class A and Class B. I accounted for every image that had white and Black men



carrying firearms which is reflected within my study (see Figure 10).

According to my analysis white men accounted for 97% of the total combined images

represented in both classes, while the remaining 3% accounted for Black men who represented the U.S. Military. Shown in figure 11 the Black soldier's weapon is not visible, however both white men appear to have rifles. The Black soldier's left arm is slightly angled horizontally to represent a 90-degree pointing posture which



is partially covered behind the kneeling white soldier. The Black soldier's right arm is pointed downward in a vertical axis. Again, the Black man is not in the visual possession of a rifle or

handgun. The significance of my findings highlights an interesting analysis of power in relation to race, deviance, and criminality.

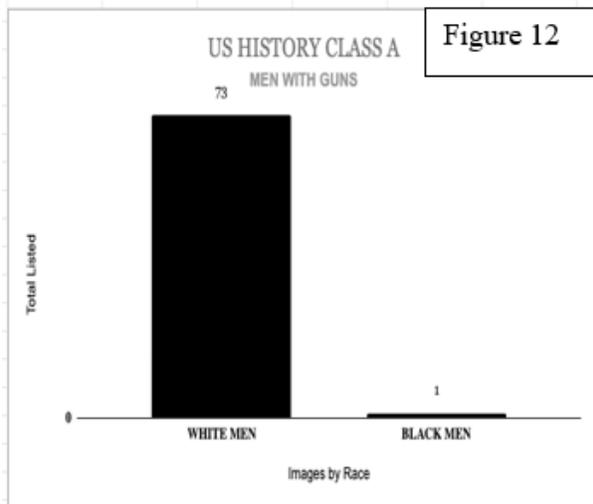


Figure 12

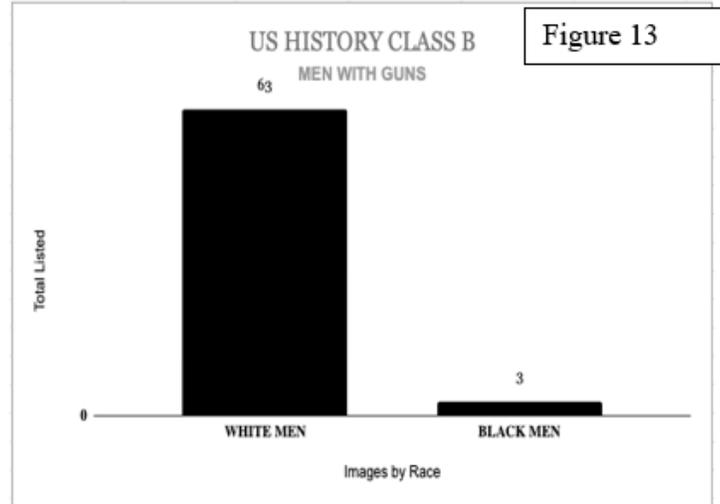


Figure 13

Figure 12 & 13 shows Military dressed men with guns.

First, with white men accounting for 97% of the total images, I argue that the disparity in conjunction to firearms and the U.S. Military reinforces frameworks of white supremacy and white hegemony. Within this concept whites assume the national identity, representing our social and political agendas worldwide. Of the 97% of the white men carrying firearms, 92% of those images are of white men

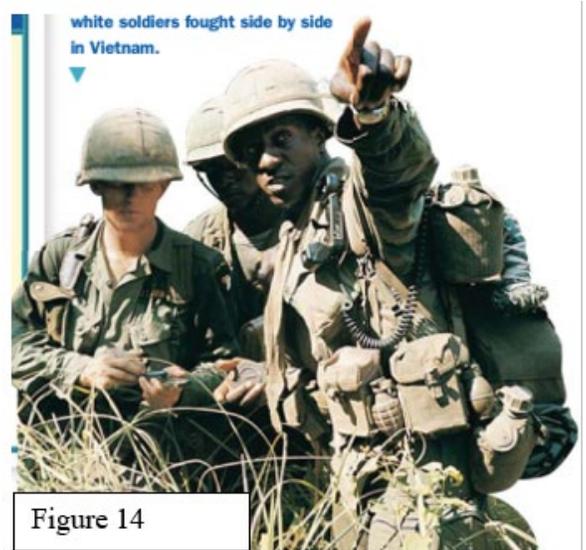
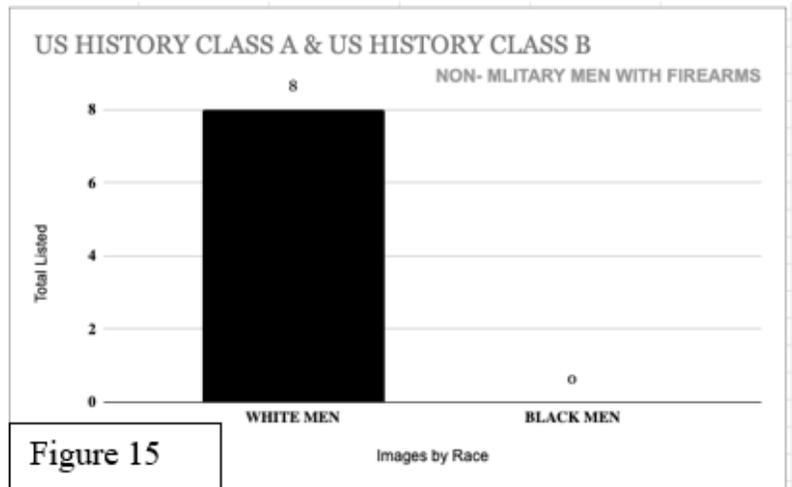


Figure 14

representing the U.S. Military, which as a result reinforces whites as the symbolic leaders of America's national and global identity. From a critical race perspective in reference to discourse and content analysis, this is how power is maintained over America's social and political

identity—reinforcing a white supremacist ideology that “No negro whether slave or free, could ever be considered a citizen of the United States” (Lynch, 2008).

Also, whites accounted for 100% of the visual images of white and Black men who possessed firearms, however, were not dressed in military or State controlled uniforms (see Figure 15). The lack of visual representation of Black men holding firearms reinforces the perception that



reflects the State’s power to limit Black’s political presence and possession of firearms.

My analysis also highlights the significant narrative and ideas of patriarchy and masculinity. Between Class A, Class B, and Sociology Class, one image displays womxn carrying firearms. The image shown in figure 16 illustrates womxn’s positionality within the context of gun’s and the individual and group power associated with having one. The lack of womxn representation under this narrative reinforces the dominant narrative of patriarchy in regard to womxn’s role as the dependent of men. Under my argument guns represent

independence and the lack of having one as a social political being implies dependency of masculine values. The lack of representation and omission of womxn without guns reinforces their dependence of men which as a result reproduces



patriarchal ideas. Why can't an argument be made that womxn's power should not be determined by weapons, but through their own existence as social beings who operate under multiple modes of oppression.

#### Modes of Resistance.

To further my analysis of the States control to stifle the political presence of Black power within discourse, a theme emerged, reflecting the social construction of racial political parties; the Klu Klux Klan (KKK) and the Black Panther Party (BPP). Within the historical context of these racialized groups, both are socially constructed as deviant, however one group status is elevated over the other. Due to color-blind narratives and attitudes associated with Black men and socio-political power, both U.S. History Classes omit the visual representation of Black men with their guns while extending this practice of racial power exclusion by including non-military white men with theirs.

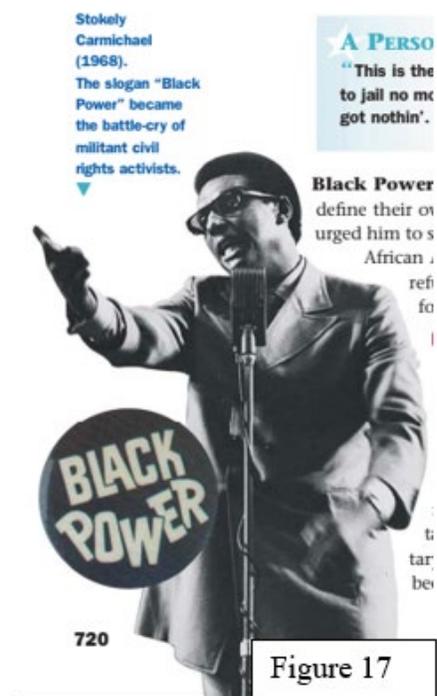
The indoctrinating process of U.S. History, the illustration of the KKK and BPP is presented in an equivalent fashion to represent deviant culture within America due to their racial separatism politics under the legal sanctions of the federal government. The KKK with their long history of violence is nationally recognized as a hate group that targeted Black people, Jews, immigrants, and members of the LGBTQAI community (SPLC 2020). The BPP although criminalized not only advocated for the complete end to all forms of oppression of Black bodies but also advocated for the end of oppression for people of all hues, hence the creation of the "Rainbow Coalition," a racial unification of poor Black, Brown, and whites under the leadership of Black Panther Fredrick Allen Hampton (Britannica 2020). Therefore, under objective historical facts making this group equivalency false.

The Black Panther Party under the perspective of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and their initiation of the Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO), was recognized

as a Black extremist organization for their use of violence and guerilla tactics to overthrow the U.S. government (FBI, 2020). This is imperative to my findings due to their legacy and visual symbolic representation of Black power. Symbolically, a Black man with a gun ignites national fear because it is viewed as a threat to white supremacy, therefore engendering moral panics. The BPP gained national attention not only because of the rapid growth of consciousness of Black people but also due to their radical 10 Point Program.

In addition, the BPP armed themselves with guns to counter state sanctioned police brutality and the murder of Black people. The state of California responded by initiating the Mulford Act (1967) that directly targeted Black power and resistance by repealing the law that allowed the public carry of loaded firearms.

The BPP should not only be shown with their traditional all Black dress uniforms to reflect their political statement of pro Blackness, but they should also have their guns. By not including this significant portrayal of Black resistance—is not only a denial of African American history but also a perpetuation of the master slave narrative, that Blacks are incompetent and dependent of white governance (Delgado & Stefancic 2013). Furthermore, my findings of the exclusion of Black men with guns reflect the master slave narrative provided by Willie Lynch’s “The Making Of A Slave” (Lynch 2008). Lynch emphasizes that white supremacist ideology in a socio-political framework is organized to break the desire of independence for [Black people] in order to create a state of dependency so that whites may alienate Blacks to reproduce



wealth and pleasure for whites (Lynch, 2008). I reiterate that symbolically, the omission to not show Black men with guns—a relative symbolic meaning of power, within discourse is a socio-political agenda of white supremacy.

A critical argument could be made that the omission to not show Black men with guns (*see Table 3*), is an attempt to challenge the deviance and criminalization of Black men. With that said, I would agree under that context based on my own personal experience as a Black man. However, I would counter that argument by encouraging readers to acknowledge the racial disparity in relation to guns, and the symbolic power and roles guns play in the history of white colonialism and imperialism.

Non-Military Men with Firearms Table 3

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>WHITE MEN</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>BLACK MEN</b>	<b>%</b>
CLASS A	1	12.5	0	0.0
CLASS B	7	87.5	0	0.0
TOTAL	8	100	0	0.0

Have you ever heard of the analogy “don’t bring a knife to a gun fight?” The statement is a general analogy that represents a confrontation or other challenging situation without being adequately equipped or prepared. Well, what is omitted from text is not just about when the BPP had guns, but when Blacks in general had guns and the power they had when they had them. In the book titled “Negroes with Guns” ([1962] 2013) by Robert F. Williams a Black civil rights leader from North Carolina, illustrates multiple instances when Blacks during the Jim Crow era armed themselves to defend against white supremacy.

Traveling to a nearby swimming pool with friends, Williams narrates his hostile encounter with an angry crowd of whites. The angry whites attempted to hit his car so that Williams vehicle would flip over, but to their surprise the vehicle did not. With both vehicles stopped the angry mob walked towards Williams car with hostile intent shouting, “Kill the

niggers! Kill the niggers! Pour gasoline on the niggers! Burn the niggers!” ([1962] 2013:45). What the hostile whites did not know was that Williams was armed with two pistols and a rifle. Once the hostile whites became close enough Williams showed them that he was prepared, that he did not bring a knife to a gun fight. The response of the angry whites is a reflection of U.S. History’s symbolic omission of Blacks without guns. The hostile white crowd responded, “God Damn, God Damn, what is this God damn country coming to that niggers have got guns!” ([1962] 2013:46). In reference to my analysis, U.S. History Class A and Class B demonstrates that white supremacy is predicated on eradicating Black power, therefore theoretically disarming Black power by restricting social, political, and economic access to resources in order to reproduce white supremacy.

The inadequate visual representation of the BPP although significant, is not solely about their guns, but about their true contributions towards social liberation and equity which is not reflected within text. Author and Historian James W. Loewen critical stance on history supports my argument by stating that “[by omission] textbooks stifle meaning by suppressing causation. Students exit history textbooks without having developed the ability to think coherently about social life” (Loewen 2007:7). The visual representation of the BPP should highlight their significance and their national influence on the social issue of food insecurity for children to which the BPP introduced the free breakfast program—a program the United States government replicated within the educational system. Also, images should reflect their racial collaborations, to highlight the BPP’s effort to unify all marginal people impacted by poverty regardless of race. From an historical standpoint, it is imperative to acknowledge the historical significance of the BPP from an objective lens, a lens that is responsible and critical in relation to what is included and excluded from discourse.

## Family & Race.

The traditional American family nucleus, established by eurocentric values, is constructed to reflect the heteronormative patriarchal relationship of man and womxn gender roles. Whereas, the gender roles within the American family is organized in a collaborative manner to which men and womxn take on assigned responsibilities to reflect the socio-politic norms of the social world outside their homes. The institution of family stands as a central praxis for the social construction of one's reality. Within contemporary society, the family nucleus has transitioned away from the traditional construct of the American family due to social, political, and economic changes (Nam, 2004). For this reason, it was imperative that I analyzed the institution of family within a contemporary framework to determine whether or not dominant discourse still maintained the core traditional values of white patriarchy.

While conducting my quantitative analysis of the visual representation of the eurocentric perception of the American family, I found that white families dominated the total images found within Class A, Class B, and Sociology Class. Within 168 visual representations of the family,

whites accounted for 72% of the recorded images while the remaining 28% accounted for communities of color. A limitation to my visual analysis of race in reference to the Latinx and Hispanic community is due to the issue of racial ambiguity.

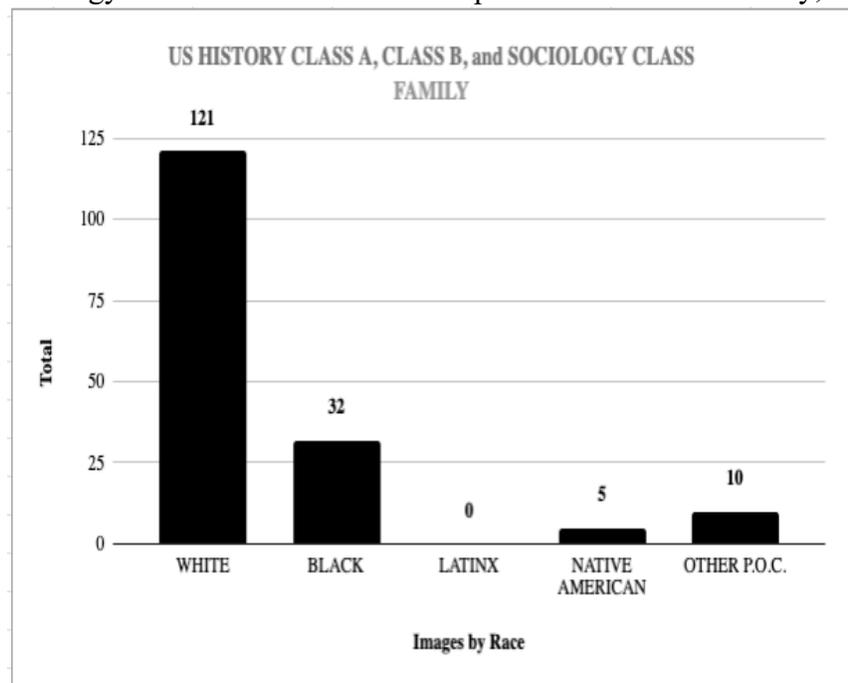


Figure 18

The dominant narrative of race has historically been dominated by white and Black relations, which is why I was unable to provide an accurate analysis of Latinx and Hispanic representation in regard to symbolic parenting roles. The numbers within figure 18 reflect a fundamental argument within social research pertaining to topics about race. The contemporary argument about the social construct of race and the institution of the American family, argues that the dominant visual representation of white's and their portrayal as the norm of the American family, operates in a ethnocentric fashion, alienating and oppressing the racial and ethnic beliefs of families of color (Pyke 2004).

One of the more significant findings to emerge from the visual representation and social construction of race within the monolithic norm of the eurocentric American family was the narrative of deviance in reference to the absentee black mother and father. Dominant discourse has historically described the Black family as incomplete; if the mother is present, the father is absent or vice versa. A damaging narrative that targets Blackness without acknowledging the role that covert and overt racial rhetoric and punitive policies play in separating Black families.

The data represented in figure 19 illustrates the reproduction of this damaging narrative. I collected a combined total of 138 images within U.S. History Class A and Class B that

symbolically represented men and womxn as parental figures.

Utilizing a critical race framework in conjunction with symbolic interactionism to analyze color blind dominant



Figure 19

discourse within the institution of the family, white men were more visually represented compared to Black men. According to my analysis, 53 out of 57 images visually showed white men with children. That is a huge racial disparity with white men accounting for 93% of the symbolic representation of fatherhood, while Black men accounted for the remaining 7%. These numbers reinforce the social position of white men within American culture, by being the dominant representation of the primary figure within the heteronormative patriarchal nucleus of the American family. Furthermore, the data in U.S. History Class A and Class B demonstrates the perpetuation of pre and post slavery ideology, that the Black family is deviant, hypersexual, and pathological (Peters 1974). Divide and conquer politics and propaganda in regard to the nucleus of the Black family that fails to acknowledge them as viable representations of the American family. Ultimately, reinforcing the social location of whites within the social strata.

Sociology Class does a slightly better job deconstructing the misrepresentation of Black men as fathers. During my analysis, I accounted for 8 images that showed the symbolic representation of men as fathers (*see Figure 20*). From those 8 images, Black men accounted for 37% of the total images and white men accounted for 63%.

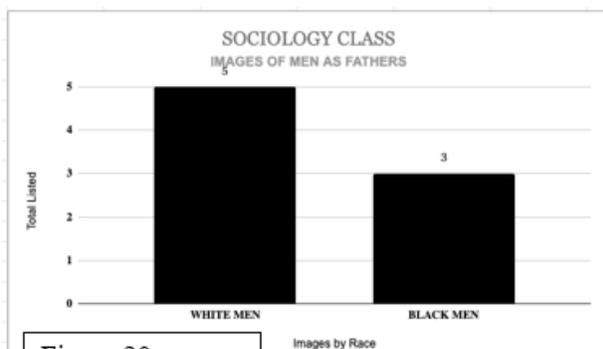


Figure 20



Figure 21

In the 6 images that showed womxn as mothers (see Figure 21), Black womxn accounted for 33% and white womxn accounted for the remaining 67% of the symbolic representation of womxn parental figures. Also, in regard to these images and the visual misrepresentation of the Black family that leads to racial inequality, I accounted for 21 images that were specifically situated within Sociology Class lesson on the social institution of the family. There was only one image to represent the Black family. Although the image of the Black family is present within the text, the image is not reflective of the racial and ethnic composition of American culture, specifically as it relates to the eurocentric construction of the American Black family.

Shown in figure 22, the represented Black family appears to reflect African indigenouness culture, dressed in tribal clothing, topless, holding shields and spears. Also, the omission of the American Black family specific to the lesson on the institution of family, implies that the Black American family simply does not garner the social

Figure 22



significance to be acknowledged within the standard context of the American family. Ultimately perpetuating the racial bias and misrepresentation of Black families, a narrative that many media outlets have historically participated in.

Figure 23



Sexuality.

Sociology Class challenges the common perceptions within sexuality identity politics and the engendered narrative of heteronormativity, which refers to “the Western social norm, or assumption, that the overwhelming majority of sexual relationships in society are heterosexual” (Goldberg 2016). Due to the rampant homophobia that is deeply engrained in American culture, dominant discourse has excluded same-sex couple in the assimilating and indoctrinating

practices (Hammack & Cohler 2011). Although the social climate within the context of sexuality has become more diverse in terms of identity politics, there has not been complete transformative change as



many who represent this community are still targets of state and interpersonal violence. Through visual discourse Sociology Class challenges social inequality in reference to sexuality and heteronormativity by using 3 out of 21 images (*see Figures 23, 24, 25*) to represent the social institution of family and marriage. Furthermore, two of those images shown in figure 23 and figure 25 portray male couples, a direct challenge to gender roles, patriarchy, and hyper masculinity.

Under the same analysis, both U.S. History Classes A and B, combined for a total of 2 images out of 147 (see Figure 26 and Figure 27) to represent the social institution of family. The

Figure 26



results of my comparative analysis in regard to sexuality show similarities within the framework of sexuality identity politics. Sociology Class and U.S. History Class A and Class B account for 14% of their respective educational framework. According to my findings, the numbers related to the visual

Figure 27



representation of non-heteronormative relationships raise significant questions about the context of omission. Specifically, what amount is acceptable in regard to discursive exclusion and inclusion? Is 14% enough to reduce homophobia? I would argue 14% is

not an equal and equitable amount to stop the violence against the LGBTQAI population.

### Summary/Overview of findings.

Overall, my findings present a critical reality in reference to the 9-12 educational framework within the City of San Diego. In regard to the content that I analyzed pertaining to the themes represented within my study, the social construction of race, gender, sexuality, family, deviance and criminality remain to reflect the conventional critique that Social Studies and U.S. History is an exclusionary experience. Based on my quantitative and qualitative comparative content analysis of Social Studies U.S. History Class A & Class B, and Sociology Class, all three high school classes struggle to reflect the social reality of its students by reproducing dominant

colonial narratives through the process of omission and misrepresentation. White men maintain the dominant narratives of American history, representing 72% of the combined classroom content of Class A and Class B. Sociology Class reinforces white men's dominance as well with white men representing 71% of the classroom content. Collectively, my study shows a clear representation of structural racism and white patriarchy within high school education; a social reality that reinforces the inferior social and political status of people of color.

According to my findings, Class A and Class B utilizes text that contributes to the marginalization of minority groups. Through the language politics of exclusion (1997) people of color are symbolically represented as the deviant other. Black people are connected with corruption, gangs and ghettos; Latinx and Hispanics intellectual capacity is portrayed in a compromising manner by connecting them with the term retarded; and Islam is associated with terrorism. Within the same context, sociology class does a more effective job challenging the dominant narrative of the Black criminal by utilizing whites to maintain the majority representation of the deviant themes within the classroom content. However, throughout my quantitative and qualitative analysis power is still situated in a manner that benefits whiteness.

Throughout all represented text between the three classes studied, the Black family is poorly represented in comparison to the normative standard of the eurocentric colonial American family. Illustrated within my findings, Blackness is again constructed as the deviant other under this context. The narrative of the absentee Black father is symbolically illustrated through visual representation with Black men only accounting for only 7% of the images representing fatherhood within U.S. History Class A and Class B. White families still represent the social construction of the American family accounting for 72% of the families visually portrayed within the text. By dominating the institution of the American family, the racial and ethnic

beliefs of families of color becomes sub-standard, ultimately alienating and oppressing people of color.

Also, Class A, Class B, and Sociology Class does little to reduce oppressive narratives and discourse about homophobia and the violence experienced by LGBTQIA+ people. Non heterosexual relationships only account for 14% of the visual representation within my comparative content analysis. Heterosexual relationships still operate within the confines of privilege and power by maintaining the dominant visual images of sexuality. Overall, the dominant narrative within all three classes reproduces whiteness and white's possessive investment over the control of knowledge and information. The discourse within the three classes reflect eurocentric colonial narratives that have historically benefited white people and oppressed marginalized communities. The themes within my study represent how the social construction of race, gender, sexuality, family, deviance and criminality continue to encompass the conventional critique that Social Studies and U.S. History is an exclusionary experience.

### Limitations.

Content analysis provided me a descriptive illustration of the material from a symbolic interactionist theoretical framework, but my interpretation was from a subjective lens. As inclusive as I attempted to be within my study, my social identity as a Black man dominated my analysis. As much as I tried to utilize my critical scholarship to advocate for all marginalized people, my positionality as a cis-hetero black man informed my discussion on the themes within my study. As a result, the oppressive conditions of other marginalized communities like womxn, indigenous, and other people of color were not thoroughly examined to the extent that I would have liked them to be.

Conclusion.

Discussion.

This research extends our knowledge on the historic racial disparity within the educational framework of the K-12 system. Exclusion, lack of representation, and misrepresentation were a common theme within my quantitative and qualitative content comparative analysis of Social Studies U.S History Class A, Class B, and Sociology. I entered my study with bias and preconceived notions about Social Studies with the intent to prove myself wrong, however, that turned out not to be the case. More so, I was alarmed by the racial disparity to which does not reflect our social and political climate. Both Class A and Class B highlighted the need for more relevant material that is more reflexive of the forever changing diverse student population.

The most significant finding was the date that these U.S. History books were published. Both textbooks representing Class A and Class B were published in 2006, a total of 14 years of unacknowledged historic events that have changed the social climate within America. The significance of this finding is in connection to the diverse ethnic and racial composition within American Society. America had its first Black president within this time frame, as well as our first womxn presidential nominee, the legalization of same-sex marriages, the legalization of marijuana—a drug that criminalized and imprisoned Black and Brown bodies, encountered multiple acts of mass shootings and domestic terrorism—majority from white perpetrators, developed a critical consciousness surrounding mass incarceration, encountered the growth of police sanctioned violence which gave birth to socio-political forms of resistance, Black Lives

Matter movement, and the MeToo movement. The amount of social change and the amount of social inequalities is something that should reflect the historical relevance of American culture.

I contend that the use of these outdated textbooks reinforces white's maintenance within the social and racial hierarchy. The use of these textbooks utilized by Class A and Class B operates as an indoctrinating process for young students to learn the racial order within society. This method to construct the racial order within society is reflective of the same methods used to assimilate Native Americans and suppress the independence of people of color within America. From a color-blind race perspective, racism within contemporary U.S. History is presented in a "now you see it, now you don't fashion" (2018). The narratives illustrated within my study reflect various modes of subtle racism. In a subtle fashion, Blacks are visually presented in a subordinate state, always under and misrepresented within text and visual discourse. The Black experience is never the norm or representation of American culture, even when the Black experience is celebrated within the two pages titled "Makers of America" (2006). Blacks are always othered, consistently illustrated as dependent and incompetent, reinforcing the master slave narrative of control and white governance.

Furthermore, Eduardo Bonilla Silvia argues that "compared to Jim Crow racism, the ideology of color blindness seems like 'racism lite.' Instead of relying on name calling (niggers, spics, chinks), color-blind racism otherizes softly" (Bonilla-Silva 2018:3). In my study, Blacks are not referred to as "a group" but as "a gang", Latinx and Hispanics are not complimented on their intellect, but their political influence is blatantly regarded as "retarded", and foreigners are referred to as butchers and terrorists. I could also argue that the narratives above may also be overt racism as well. A counter argument to my analysis could be made that there is a linguistical framework operating within these historical contexts, therefore the semantics of these words

have different meaning and are not actually reflective of any racial bias. However, under the theoretical framework of color-blind racism I would argue that the U.S. History textbooks utilized in my study does a great job of “othering softly” (2018) covertly through the application of linguistics.

Also, through the process of exclusion within my study, the voices and agency of marginalized communities like womxn and the LGBTQIA+ community are minimized to an extreme extent that their presence is like hearing small voices from a faraway distance. The lack of representation is alarming and is a denial of womxn’s historic significance within American history. From this perspective, the dominant group “white men” is in constant control of the historical narratives within American history, and without a critical consciousness, white men’s superior influence over the construction of America’s social and political ideas become natural. Under this argument, I am reminded of how the social is never questioned and how men’s control over institutions like religion, law, politics, and education is always normalized. My study is just a small glimpse of the reproduction of white eurocentric colonialism that without a critical lens operates covertly, maintaining power and privileges for heteronormative men while reproducing various modes of oppression for marginalized groups.

Conventional thought has it that students are pushed out of high schools because of the practice of hyper-surveillance and criminalization of marginalized students. However, I contend that reflexivity is another key factor that is pushing students out back into their communities. Schools should be spaces where children find safety and joy within a world that is situated to alienate and exploit them. Being racially labeled and connected to deviance within classroom content is not a flattering experience for children who already experience discrimination outside of school grounds. Learning should be an entertaining process where children learn to be

critically engaged, and not put in a compromising position where the racist and oppressive discourse forces them to leave. I advocate that to reduce eurocentric colonial narratives and color-blind ideology the knowledge base should be equitable, meaning there should be more scholarship from marginalized people who have faced historic societal oppression.

### Recommendations for Future Research.

Further work is suggested regarding the role high school Social Studies and Sociology play on the student population as it pertains to the reproduction of social inequality. It would be interesting to see this study conducted by a mixed method approach; as a content comparative analysis that includes student participant interviews and surveys. I think their feedback and personal experiences with high school Social Studies and Sociology would go a long way in regard to improving not just the two specific educational frameworks but the entirety of the K-12 system. Also, further investigation needs to be done to determine whether or not there are other methods of teaching philosophies that take place within the classroom. I would like to identify whether or not teachers critically analyze content with their students to deconstruct dominant narratives associated with color-blind ideology and attitudes that reinforce ethnocentric and eurocentric values. As I further my academic scholarship, I will look to address these issues and employ different methods to investigate the reproduction of social inequality within the academic discourse of our young people.

I would also recommend that U.S. History textbooks be updated to reflect the social and political atmosphere of contemporary society. Textbooks should be more inclusive and reflective of the diverse social identities of the American population. More narratives of marginalized people should be properly represented to provide agency to students who have a difficult time

developing self and cultural identity. This is especially important in today's climate, as many educators move from face to face interaction to online teaching due to the global pandemic of COVID-19. The new method of remote education can reinforce multiple modes of oppression within young students because students would lose the ability to gain group cohesion and clarity on classroom content. Group cohesion is extremely valuable in academic spaces because it encourages community—understanding of differences between the self and the other. Not having the opportunity to engage in critical consciousness collectively in face to face interaction could disrupt the deconstructing process of white colonial power that reinforces modes of oppression for marginal students. If COVID-19 continues to disrupt our face to face interactions, then it is critical that we provide a knowledge base for students that does not operate in a covert and overt oppressive fashion. Education must be more responsible in constructing the social reality and life possibilities for students, and the first step in the right direction is disposing of the old textbooks.

Lastly, I would also recommend the implementation of Ethnic Studies within the K-12 curriculum. I think Ethnic Studies provides a different element to education that Social Studies and Sociology does not provide. Ethnic Studies cultivates cultural and ethnic awareness while simultaneously deconstructing colonial discourse. I think all three should be used in a collaborative effort to teach students about history, social life, and culture about the self and others.

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## APPENDIX A.

### Recruitment Email.

Example of communication via email sent to High School Teachers asking them for release of curricula and classroom content.

*Good afternoon,*

*My name is Sterling Briggs, and I am a current graduate student in the Master of Arts in Sociological Practice (MASP) at CSUSM. I am currently conducting social research on the state of high school Sociology San Diego, CA, and I have identified your school and yourself as 1 of 4 schools in San Diego that teaches high school Sociology.*

*My study is a content analysis of high school sociology as it pertains to curriculum; textbooks, reading materials, audio and visual content. Through comparative analysis between High School Sociology and High School Social Studies, it is my belief that sociological content is more aimed at promoting a critical pedagogy that is better equipped to deconstruct oppressive white hegemonic discourse and address social issues related to inclusion, equity and social justice advocacy.*

*As directed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), to protect those like yourself to who I hope will be willing to help further my Sociological education, the names of schools and personnel will not be used. I am respectfully asking for access to your Sociology content in an attempt to promote the advancement of High School Sociology. I hope to hear from you soon and thank you for your time.*

*Respectfully,*

*Sterling Briggs*

*CSU Sally Casanova Scholar 19-20*

*MASP Graduate Student 2<sup>nd</sup> year*

## APPENDIX B.

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