Seattle Journal for Social Justice

Volume 8
Issue 1 *Fall/Winter 2009*

Article 10

November 2009

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Recommended Citation

Malagon, Maria C.; Huber, Lindsay Perez; and Velez, Veronica N. (2009) "Our Experiences, Our Methods: Using Grounded Theory to Inform a Critical Race Theory Methodology," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice*: Vol. 8: Iss. 1, Article 10.
Available at: http://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/sjsj/vol8/iss1/10

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Our Experiences, Our Methods: Using Grounded Theory to Inform a Critical Race Theory Methodology

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I. INTRODUCTION

As critical race scholars in the field of education, we created this research note in response to our collective frustration with traditional, qualitative research methods to accurately understand and document the complex experiences of Students of Color, their families, and their communities. We experienced this frustration not only in searching for research on People of Color, often finding deficit explanations of their behavior and social circumstances, but also in looking for qualitative research methodologies that are critically sensitive in their abilities to situate lived experience within a broader sociopolitical frame—both in the final research product and throughout the entire research process. But addressing these shortcomings requires an initial exposure of the ideological premise and goals of the traditional qualitative research process that Linda Smith argues, "is deeply embedded in the multiple layers of imperial and colonial practices."[1] And, we argue, any endeavor to (re)construct a more critical approach within qualitative research requires an unwavering commitment to the pursuit of social justice as a guiding methodological principle.

Our struggles with using a Critical Race Theory (CRT) lens in qualitative research methodology prompted our participation in the Thirteenth Annual Latina/o Critical Race Theory (LatCrit) Conference in Seattle, Washington. At this conference, each of us described how we are building and extending from existing work in critical race methodologies by demonstrating how we used CRT, and by extension LatCrit, as a theoretical framework to guide

our work. This framework informs the research questions we ask, the methodologies we employ, and the ways we analyze data. Moreover, we argued that critical race research must always center on an anti-racist social justice agenda.

This article outlines our 2008 LatCrit Conference presentation, describing the evolution of a critical race-grounded methodology process. By working to situate grounded theory within a critical race framework, we strengthen the interdisciplinary, methodological toolbox for qualitative critical race research, which seeks to build theory from the lived experiences of the researchers' informants and research collaborators. In addition, by aligning grounded theory with the goals of CRT, we deliberately attempt to employ grounded theory in the research process to directly challenge previous scholarship that has distorted and erased the experiences of students of color, their families, and their communities. In this sense, we argue that a critical race-grounded methodology process has the potential to be a tool for social change.

This research note begins with a discussion of how CRT can help challenge the apartheid of knowledge[2] present in academic research and reveals the ways oppression manifests in the experiences of People of Color. In this context, we describe the importance of a CRT lens in qualitative research methodology. Next, we briefly describe grounded theory as a methodological approach, including the debates surrounding its traditional use, and argue that it affords several positive characteristics of interest to critical race research. We build from these connections, while simultaneously addressing several of the challenges in merging grounded theory with CRT, to introduce a critical race-grounded theory. Here, we describe how the process of "cultural intuition" is instrumental in engaging the multiple sources of knowledge a researcher brings to her work and which necessarily becomes part of the theory building that occurs in a critical race-grounded theory approach. By being more attuned to these sources of knowledge or forms of "cultural intuition," a researcher is more

reflexive throughout the research process and is better able to "ground" her work in the life experiences of People of Color. Finally, we describe preliminary tenets, or elements, of a critical race-grounded theory process and suggest areas for future development of this approach.

II. CRITICAL RACE THEORY

CRT originated in the late 1970s from the work of lawyers, activists, and legal scholars as a new strategy for dealing with the emergence of a post-civil rights racial structure in the United States.[3] This structure, they argued, was maintained by a colorblind ideology that hid and protected white privilege, while masking racism within the rhetoric of "meritocracy" and "fairness."[4] CRT emerged within this historical context as a framework aimed at undermining colorblind ideology through a deconstruction of its racist premise. CRT is deeply committed to a pursuit of social justice by affording its users a theoretical tool to eliminate racism as part of a broader effort to end subordination based on gender, class, sexual orientation, language, and national origin.[5]

Today, CRT is utilized within different fields and draws from several disciplines, including civil rights, ethnic studies, and critical legal studies, to examine and transform the relationship among race, racism, and power.[6] Some of the basic themes of CRT include the re-examination of history through the eyes and voices of People of Color and interest convergence, or the belief that racial reform only served to promote whites' self-interest.[7] It is characterized by several subdisciplines, including Latina/o Critical Race Theory (LatCrit), which employs CRT to examine the particular ways multiple forms of oppression intersect to shape the experiences of Latinas/os in the U.S.[8]

As a related framework, LatCrit embraces the same purpose and traditions of CRT, but explores issues relevant to Latinas/os where CRT falls short as an analytical lens. Elizabeth Iglesias describes the main limitation of CRT as one of scope; namely, that CRT's preoccupation with a

Black/White paradigm often narrows its ability to adequately answer questions about the role of race, racism, and other forms of oppression in the lives of Latinas/os, Asian Americans, and other Communities of Color.[9] Thus, LatCrit, as a branch of CRT, has become an important theoretical lens that allows one to more fully examine how multiple forms of oppression based on immigration status, language, culture, ethnicity, and phenotype intersect to shape the experiences of Latinas/os.[10]

Within the field of education, CRT and LatCrit are being used to expose and challenge the ways racism can produce inequality both in and out of the classroom.[11] CRT and LatCrit in education employ the following five tenets to frame its methodological use within research:[12]

1. **The intersectionality[13] of race and racism with other forms of subordination.**[14] CRT, as a theoretical lens, exposes the centrality of race and racism and the intersection of race and racism with other forms of subordination. In the research process, CRT does not simply treat race as a variable, but rather works to understand how race and racism intersect with gender, class, sexuality, language, etc. as structural and institutional factors that impact the everyday experiences of People of Color. CRT critically frames race in the research process by including methodologies that expose the structural and institutional ways race and racism influence the phenomena being investigated.

2. **The challenge to dominant ideology.**[15] CRT is committed to challenging race-neutral dominant ideologies such as meritocracy and colorblindness that have contributed to deficit thinking[16] about People of Color. CRT counters deficit thinking within the research process and requires critical race researchers to deeply analyze how their research instruments, many of which stem from positivist[17] research approaches, may end up affirming the same dominant ideologies they strive to challenge in their work. CRT seeks to develop, create, and utilize research methodologies and tools that can adequately capture the lived experiences of communities.[18]

3. **The commitment to social justice.**[19] CRT is committed to an anti-racist social justice agenda.[20] It seeks to eliminate racism and other forms of subordination. Within the research process, the goal of CRT is to identify, analyze, and transform the structural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and racial positions in and out of the classroom. It also intentionally works to empower participants through the research process and requires researchers to reflect on how they employ methods as they enter and leave research sites, design interview protocols, and develop reciprocity with the communities that are a part of their research.

4. **The centrality of experiential knowledge.**[21] CRT strongly believes that the lived experiences of People of Color are instrumental in helping us understand how, and to what extent, race and racism mediate everyday life.[22] Connected to this, CRT believes that People of Color are creators of knowledge and have a deeply rooted sensibility to name racist injuries and identify their origins.[23] Thus, in the CRT research process, there is an explicit attempt to employ methodologies that can center and capture the lived experiences of People of Color.[24] There is also an attempt, where possible, to work jointly with informants and to collectively analyze data and build theory as collaborators in the research process.

5. **The transdisciplinary perspective.**[25] CRT also utilizes the transdisciplinary knowledge and the methodological base of ethnic studies, women's studies, sociology, history, and the law in constructing its theoretical premise. This is important to the research process because it offers the critical-race researcher an array of research methodologies to consider, especially those methodologies that have developed in an attempt to capture and understand the experiences of marginalized communities better than more traditional research methods.

Centering CRT within the research process transforms the types of questions we ask, the types of methodologies we employ, the way we analyze data, and most importantly, the very purpose of our research. We argue that the very act of centering CRT in the research process serves to

transform higher education by disrupting the dominant ideologies traditionally embedded in the knowledge production process. According to Dolores Delgado Bernal and Octavio Villalpando, academia has historically functioned from a Eurocentric, epistemological perspective that perpetuates dominant ideologies.[26] This has resulted in an "apartheid of knowledge," where only certain types of knowledge and knowledge production are validated in higher education in the U.S., thus serving to marginalize, distort, and erase the experiences of People of Color, particularly as sources of knowledge.[27]

As an example of this concept, Richard Delgado showed how an entire academic field became defined by a dominant epistemological perspective by Scholars of Color in civil rights law scholarship.[28] Delgado found that among leading civil rights law reviews, most articles were authored by white male legal scholars who cited works of other white male scholars. Thus, most of the leading civil rights law scholarship became dominated by an elite group of white male legal scholars. Delgado named this process "imperial scholarship," where a single perspective can define an entire field.[29] In the case of civil rights law, and arguably in many other academic fields, this is an elite White male perspective. Delgado argued that imperial scholarship in the academy can be dangerous, creating limited discourses, ideologies, and perspectives that justify and maintain white superiority.[30] Recognizing how the apartheid of knowledge is constructed and perpetuated in academic research through imperial scholarship, the need for scholarship drawing from nontraditional sources of knowledge becomes clear. Scholarship that has been devalued and marginalized in traditional academic scholarship draws from epistemological, methodological, and theoretical perspectives that honor sources of knowledge existing outside of the academy and within communities of color.

CRT functions to deconstruct the narrowly-defined knowledge production process that has traditionally existed in higher education and provides researchers the opportunity to carve out a space in academia to

engage in research that honors and learns from sources of knowledge outside the Eurocentricity of the academy.

III. GROUNDED THEORY

In this section, we argue that a grounded theory approach offers many characteristics that support CRT research methodology. The methodological strategy of grounded theory has significantly impacted qualitative research by contributing to a number of theoretical shifts for over thirty years. In particular, feminist scholars in the field of nursing have applied grounded theory to their research and noted that, despite meeting certain tensions, grounded theory contains epistemological congruencies that can inform feminist inquiry.[31] Grounded theory was not developed as a methodology for collecting knowledge and building theory from the lived experiences of People of Color. However, we argue that, when used in partnership with a critical race framework, the researcher can utilize grounded methodology to interpret the perspectives and voices of the narratives that remain unacknowledged, invalidated, and distorted in social science research.

We begin by providing an overview of grounded theory and then acknowledge the theoretical debates surrounding this methodology as it pertains to our epistemological standpoint. After addressing these challenges and limitations, we modify the definition of grounded theory to be more compatible with an anti-racist, social justice framework. We conclude by proposing a combined critical race-grounded theory methodology as a strategy that can help inform, reveal, and better understand the experiences of People of Color.

A. Background

Grounded theory is primarily a methodological strategy developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss to generate theory from real life experience.[32] It is important to understand the work of Glaser and Strauss within the academic climate that invalidated the use of qualitative research

as a rigorous methodology in the social sciences. Glaser and Strauss challenged positivist conceptions of the scientific method, which reigned as the only valid approach to conducting social science research until the middle of the last century.[33] The belief that positivist methods were unbiased rejected other possible ways of generating knowledge. We argue that this use of positivism has contributed to the apartheid of knowledge because it strives for a universal science of society, rooted in Western/Eurocentric epistemology. As CRT scholars, we strive to deconstruct and expose the research paradigms that ignore the role of the observer in the construction of social reality and thereby fail to consider the historical and social conditions that distort and ignore the experiences of People of Color.

In their groundbreaking book, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, Glaser and Strauss challenged deductive[34] approaches that emphasized the overreliance on "great-man" theories that dominated sociology departments. Their work attempted to "strengthen the mandate for generating theory, to help provide a defense against doctrinaire approaches to verification."[35] The work also set out to "help students to defend themselves against verifiers who would teach them to deny the validity of their own scientific knowledge."[36] Additionally, Glaser and Strauss challenged the notion that qualitative methods only served as a precursor to test research instruments prior to conducting more "rigorous" quantitative methods.[37] This prior assumption—that qualitative methods could not generate theory—maintained an arbitrary division between theory and research that separated data collection from the analysis phase of the research process.

Similarly, our goals as CRT scholars parallel those of Glaser and Strauss in that our objectives seek to better illuminate and understand the lived experiences of our research participants through a reflexive research process. Our point of departure as CRT scholars is the normative concern with the status of People of Color. Dominant research paradigms that inform and design methodological processes help to (re)produce the

domination of People of Color. CRT researchers must reveal these processes and develop strategies of inquiry that facilitate the transformation of those relations.

A grounded theory methodology provides a systematic, yet flexible approach to the development of theories grounded in data rather than deducing testable hypotheses from existing theories.[38]

Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin define grounded theory in this way:

> A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis, and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other. One does not begin with a theory, then prove, it. Rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge.[39]

In grounded theory, researchers seek multiple and diverse perspectives to illuminate the theoretical properties of emerging concepts in a given study. Several defining components of grounded theory support an approach that informs a CRT methodology.[40]

One of these components is the constant comparative method, allowing the researcher to make comparisons during each stage of analysis. This method involves simultaneous engagement of data collection and analysis.[41] Constructing analytic codes and categories from data advances theory development during each step of the process.[42] Memo writing further elaborates categories, which helps to specify their properties, define relationships between categories, and identify potential gaps.[43]

Another component of grounded theory that is attractive to the CRT researcher is sampling aimed at theory construction, instead of population representativeness. Because CRT is committed to illuminating the experiences of those who are marginalized, there is less concern with both the external validity required by traditional research methodologies and the ability to generalize the study's findings beyond the immediate study.[44]

B. Using CRT to Inform a Grounded Theory Methodology

Given our purpose, a detailed discussion of the methodological process of grounded theory is beyond the scope of this article. However, in building a critical race-grounded methodology, we address several concerns regarding the use of a grounded theory approach in critical race research. First, we discuss our concerns with grounded theory's inductive approach, which seeks to build theory from units of data themselves. While we agree that building theory from data is a critical element of the methodological process, we recommend considering the larger structural, personal, and interpersonal processes that shape our data—what some scholars are calling an abductive approach. Second, we situate ourselves in an on-going debate about the use of prior theory, which further challenges grounded theory's inductive approach. These conversations allow for a more reflexive and emancipatory research strategy, which is a central goal in our scholarship.

1. Inductive Versus Abductive Approaches

Kaysi E. Kushner and Raymond Morrow argue that we should more accurately frame grounded theory as an abductive approach, rather than an inductive approach, because the abductive "is more willing to decontextualize lay accounts for the purposes of stronger notions of explanation."[45] An abductive approach, as Kathy Charmaz explains, begins by examining and scrutinizing the data and considering *all* possible theoretical explanations for the phenomenon being studied.[46] Next, a hypothesis is formulated for each possible explanation and checked empirically by re-examining the data and pursuing the most plausible explanation. Reframing grounded theory as an abductive approach allows researchers to consider how larger structural phenomena shape the data itself, informing a CRT methodology where one can be more open to introducing broader theoretical questions.

Adopting this abductive approach, we also consider how a CRT framework exposes larger structural relations of power that shape social

phenomena. To better explain why we advocate for using CRT as a theoretical position in a grounded methodology, we feel we must briefly address a long-standing debate within grounded theory scholarship.

Glaser advises scholars to approach research with as few predetermined expectations as possible in order to promote theoretical sensitivity and openness to the data-guided emerging theory.[47] Glaser felt that coming into the research process with predetermined expectations, such as specific theoretical positions, could cloud theories that emerged from the data itself.[48] Strauss and Glaser were criticized for their limited theoretical positioning of grounded theory.[49] Later, Strauss and Corbin acknowledged the importance of theory elaboration.[50] They drew upon other theoretical perspectives to address the theoretical limitations because the researcher ensured that theoretical interpretations were continuously grounded in, and not imposed on, the data.[51] Strauss and Corbin acknowledged that the researchers' prior knowledge, experiences, and perspectives are influential and potentially useful components of data.[52] This is attractive to CRT researchers as we focus on settings and social relationships that have not previously been the explicit foci of attention.

Even as Glaser urged theorists to avoid forcing data to fit their theoretical perspectives, we argue that a prior theoretical framework like CRT is necessary to emancipatory theory building. A CRT framework may influence what is observed, how discussion topics arise, and so forth, but the emerging theory is driven by the data, not by a theoretical framework. Accordingly, as anti-racist, social justice scholars, we use the synergy between CRT and grounded theory in our research as we connect everyday life experiences of People of Color to systemic processes of oppression.

IV. Toward a Critical Race-Grounded Methodology

Grounded theory methodology does not offer any specific guidelines with respect to research priorities, theoretical presumptions, or normative standpoints.[53] Grounded theory may allow, but does not compel, researchers

to consider the influence of structural processes of domination. We strongly agree with Glaser and Strauss's central argument that theory is a constantly evolving process. They state, "theory as process, we believe, renders quite well the reality of social interaction and its structural context."[54] Here, Glaser and Strauss clearly advocate for the consideration of both social and structural processes that shape the social phenomena we explore in our research. Using a CRT lens helps move toward this goal, as we move our scholarship forward in a social context where racism maintains permanence and expose the many ways that racism manifests in the daily experiences of People of Color.

Since we have addressed some of our epistemological concerns about utilizing this methodological strategy, we move toward a definition that can further inform our research goals as critical race researchers.

A critical race-grounded methodology draws from multiple disciplines to challenge white supremacy, which shapes the way research specifically, and society generally, understands the experiences, conditions, and outcomes of People of Color. It allows CRT scholars to move toward a form of data collection and analysis that builds from the knowledge of Communities of Color to reveal the ways race, class, gender, and other forms of oppression interact to mediate the experiences and realities of those affected by such oppression.

Drawing from various sources of knowledge, this methodological approach poses systematic, yet flexible, guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories "grounded" in the data itself. Our data analysis generates the concepts we construct in order to further our commitment to deconstructing oppressive conditions and empowering Communities of Color.

A primary concern for us as CRT researchers is how to move our scholarship closer toward the goal of social justice. Guiding the academic research process, the "apartheid of knowledge" perpetuates dominant ideologies rooted in white superiority. However, we theoretically position

ourselves in an effort to disrupt the Eurocentric epistemologies that have distorted and erased the experiences of People of Color. In articulating a critical race-grounded methodology, we ask how we can make research tools work for us; if necessary, how we redefine them; and how we use them unapologetically. Moreover, we ask how our methodologies challenge the apartheid of knowledge in an effort to counter the processes that function to subjugate communities of color. Our research design begins with framing our research problem and designing our research questions. While there are many approaches researchers can take, we briefly discuss our epistemological stance—a Chicana feminist epistemology—and specifically, how we can utilize our own cultural intuition in a critical race-grounded theory methodology.

A. Chicana Feminist Epistemological Standpoint and Cultural Intuition

Delgado Bernal explains how a Chicana feminist epistemological orientation allows for Chicana researchers to bring multiple sources of knowledge to the research process through "cultural intuition."[55] According to Delgado Bernal, there are four sources of cultural intuition we draw upon during the research process. The first source is the personal experience of the researcher. The researcher's background and personal history shape how she makes sense of the events and circumstances during the research process, leading to a better understanding and interpretation of the data. The second source of intuition draws from our academic experiences, specifically, how we make sense of related literature on our research topic. The third source originates from our professional experiences which provide us with significant insight into the research process. The final source of cultural intuition lies in the analytical research process itself to bring meaning to our data and larger study. This source of cultural intuition acknowledges that there are multiple ways our experiences inform the ways we approach, collect, interpret, and analyze data.

As CRT scholars, we build from these four sources and argue that our cultural intuition informs not only data collection and analysis, but also the entire research process itself—from the questions we ask and the methodologies we employ, to the ways we articulate our findings in the writing process. The four sources of cultural intuition are not static categories. We agree with Delgado Bernal in describing cultural intuition as, "a complex process that is experiential, intuitive, historical, personal, collective and dynamic."[56] Framing our research problem and articulating our research questions begins from our experiential knowledge and includes a relatively simultaneous critique of literature. A critical race-grounded methodology affords us the ability to draw from our cultural intuition to explore the themes that derive from our data by engaging in a reflexive research process that allows for a reframing of the research problem and the questions we ask.

Drawing from our cultural intuition, a critical race-grounded methodology includes a social justice research design that calls for a thoughtful and respectful process of how to engage our participants. We must be reflective of how we employ our methods including how we enter and leave research sites, design interview protocols, and think about reciprocity.

In the previous section, we discussed what grounded theory methodology provides to critical race researchers—a systematic yet flexible qualitative approach that facilitates theory development grounded in the data itself. In the next section, we describe how specific grounded theory strategies can be used in a critical race-grounded methodology approach that informs not only the outcomes of the research project, but also interrogates the very research process itself, allowing us to consider how our approach influences the data collection and analysis processes.

B. Elements of Critical Race-Grounded Methodology

In this section, we identify three grounded theory strategies that inform a critical race-grounded methodology. As Tara J. Yosso suggests, CRT methodology must illuminate the patterns of racialized inequality by recounting experiences of racism, both individual and shared, in order to reveal multiple perspectives that have long been silenced.[57] Here, we identify the importance of theoretical sampling, the use of a conditional matrix, and data collaboration, which provide opportunities to discover knowledge about how a particular event or experience is both specific to, and representative of, a larger phenomenon.

1. Theoretical Sampling

When employing theoretical sampling, the researcher "seeks people, events, or information to illuminate and define the boundaries and relevance of the categories."[58] This strategy departs from the sampling of either randomly selected populations or representative distributions of a particular population. Our cultural intuition allows us to engage in a sampling strategy that seeks to develop properties from the developing categories or theory within a given study. This strategy allows us to reach theoretical saturation, which is the point at which gathering more data about a theoretical category reveals no new properties nor requires any further theoretical inquiries about the emerging theory.[59]

2. Conditional Matrix

Since CRT scholarship seeks to uncover the relationship between agency, structure, and critique, we can draw from strategies such as the use of a conditional matrix.[60] A conditional matrix is utilized as a coding device that shows the intersections of micro and macro conditions with actions and clarifies the connections between them.[61] Strauss and Corbin introduce this matrix as a visual representation that maps conditions, contexts, and consequences of how the observed element is connected and interacting

beyond micro-social structures.[62] The conditional matrix aids researchers in making theoretical sampling decisions. Guided by a critical race framework, a conditional matrix can get at larger social structural factors that have impact at the micro-level and beyond.

3. Collaboration

Another critical element of a critical race-grounded methodology is the inclusion of research participants in data analysis for co-construction of knowledge. In her work on cultural intuition, Delgado Bernal emphasizes the inclusion of participants in the data analysis process.[63] She argues that developing a collaborative relationship with research participants achieves several goals. First, data collaboration deconstructs traditional "researcher-subject" roles in academic research, recognizing the value of research participants' knowledge and creating a more lateral relationship in place of a hierarchical relationship. Second, including participants in data analysis provides them with a role in communicating how their experiences and stories are portrayed in a given research project. This strategy compliments the tenets of CRT, as we are not only committed to theory development, but also to making knowledge accessible to those best able to use it toward an emancipatory goal of social justice.

V. CONCLUSION: BUILDING A CRITICAL RACE-GROUNDED METHODOLOGY

Critical Race Theory has contributed to knowledge generation by providing a framework that privileges the voices of People of Color. While we advocate for the development of a critical race-grounded methodological approach, more work must be done to further develop and inform this strategy. We hope to further elaborate the processes involved in developing this approach through our future work. This includes further discussions on coding, memo-writing, collaborative data collection and analysis, theoretical sampling and saturation, and writing the first draft.

While we have briefly discussed some specific research strategies that we feel contribute to the development of a critical race-grounded methodology, we hope that we can engage in continued conversations as a CRT community of scholars in order to build emancipatory research strategies. CRT scholarship must not only direct energy to substantive knowledge generation but must also reveal how an anti-oppressive research process can aid in achieving our central goals for racial and social justice.

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[1] Linda Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People 2 (1999).

[2] Dolores Delgado Bernal & Octavio Villalpando, *An Apartheid of Knowledge in Academia: The Struggle Over the "Legitimate" Knowledge of Faculty of Color*, 35(2) EQUITY & EXCELLENCE IN EDUC. 169, 171 (2002).

[3] RICHARD DELGADO & JEAN STEFANCIC, CRITICAL RACE THEORY 3–4 (2001).

[4] EDUARDO BONILLA-SILVA, WHITE SUPREMACY & RACISM IN THE POST-CIVIL RIGHTS ERA 80 (2001); RICHARD DELGADO & JEAN STEFANCIC, CRITICAL RACE THEORY: AN INTRODUCTION (2001); Daniel G. Solórzano & Tara J. Yosso, *Critical Race Methodology: Counter-Storytelling as an Analytical Framework for Education Research*, 8(1) QUALITATIVE INQUIRY 23–44 (2002) [hereinafter Solórzano & Yosso].

[5] Daniel G. Solórzano, *Critical Race Theory, Race and Gender Microagressions, and the Experience of Chicana and Chicano Scholars*, 11(1) QUALITATIVE STUD. IN EDUC. 121, 122 (1998) [hereinafter Solórzano].

[6] Daniel G. Solórzano & Dolores Delgado Bernal, *Examining Transitional Resistance Through a Critical Race and Latcrit Theory Framework: Chicana and Chicano Students in an Urban Context*, 36 URB. EDUC. 308, 312, 315 (2001) [hereinafter Solórzano & Delgado Bernal].

[7] *Id.* at 314.

[8] *Id.* at 312.

[9] Elizabeth M. Iglesias, *International Law, Human Rights, and LatCrit Theory*, 28 U. MIAMI INTER-AM. L. REV. 177–213 (1997).

[10] Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, *supra* note 6, at 311.

[11] *See generally* Solórzano, *supra* note 5, at 121–36; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, *supra* note 6; Daniel G. Solórzano & Tara J. Yosso, *Critical Race and Latcrit Theory and Method: Counter-storytelling*, 14(4) INT'L J. OF QUALITATIVE STUD. IN EDUC. 471–95 (2001); Daniel G. Solórzano & Tara J. Yasso, *Maintaining Social Justice Hopes Within Academic Realities: A Freirean Approach to Critical Race/LatCrit Pedagogy*, 78 DENV. U. L. REV. 595 (2001); Solórzano & Yosso, *Critical Race Methodology*, *supra* note 4, at 23–44.

[12] Solórzano, *supra* note 5, at 121–36; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, *supra* note 6, at 312.

[13] In the context of a CRT framework, "intersectionality" is defined as the way different socially and culturally constructed categories, such as race, class, gender, and sexual

orientation interact with one another to mediate and shape the experiences of People of Color. CRT goes beyond understanding "intersectionality" as a concept of identity-politics and seeks to explore how it operates to create conditions of oppression and how individuals respond as a result. It was first coined by critical race legal scholar Kimberlé W. Crenshaw who provided an in-depth conceptualization of the term in her 1989 article entitled "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. Kimberlé W. Crenshaw, *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*, 1989 U. CHI. LEGAL F. 139 (1989). In this article, she described how race and gender intersect to shape Black women's employment experiences. She frames intersectionality not just to understand how Black women were being positioned in her study, but also how it impacts the types of inequalities they experienced and the kinds of strategies needed to dismantle the oppression they faced. For more on intersectionality see Kimberlé W. Crenshaw, *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color*, 43 STAN. L. REV. 1241–79 (1991); BELL HOOKS, FEMINIST THEORY: FROM MARGIN TO CENTER (1984); Leslie McCall, *The Complexity of Intersectionality*, 30 SIGNS: JOURNAL OF WOMEN IN CULTURAL AND SOCIETY 1771–800 (2005).

[14] Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, *supra* note 6, at 312.

[15] *Id.* at 313.

[16] Valencia (1997) defines deficit thinking as "tantamount to the process of 'blaming the victim.' It is a model founded on imputation, not documentation" (p. x). He argues that deficit thinking has six characteristics: (1) blaming the victim; (2) oppression; (3) pseudoscience; (4) temporal changes; (5) educability; and 6) heterodoxy. THE EVOLUTION OF DEFICIT THINKING IN EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE ix–xvii (Richard R. Valencia ed., 1997).

[17] Charmaz notes that positivism is "an epistemology that subscribes to a unitary scientific method consisting of objective systematic observation and experimentation in an external world. The goal of positivistic inquiry is to discover and to establish general laws that explain the studied phenomena and from which predictions can be made." KATHY CHARMAZ, CONSTRUCTING GROUNDED THEORY: A PRACTICAL GUIDE THROUGH QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS 188 (2006).

[18] Solórzano & Yosso, *supra* note 4, at 23–44.

[19] Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, *supra* note 6, at 313.

[20] *Id.*

[21] Solórzano & Yosso, *supra* note 4, at 23–44.

[22] *Id.*

[23] *Id.*

[24] *Id.*

[25] Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, *supra* note 6, at 314.

[26] Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, *supra* note 2.

[27] *Id.*

[28] Richard Delgado, *The Imperial Scholar: Reflections on a Review of Civil Rights Literature*, 132 U. PA. L. REV 561–78 (1984).

[29] *Id.*

[30] *Id.*
[31] Barbara Keddy, Sharon L. Sims & Phyllis Noerager Stern, *Grounded Theory as Feminist Research Methodology*, 23 J. OF ADVANCED NURSING 448 (1996); Kaysi Kushner & Raymond Morrow, *Grounded Theory: Feminist Theory, Critical Theory: Toward Theoretical Triangulation*, 26(1) ADVANCES IN NURSING SCI. 30 (2003) [hereinafter Kushner & Morrow]; Judith Wuest, *Feminist Grounded Theory: An Exploration of the Congruency and Tensions Between Two Traditions in Knowledge Discovery*, 5 QUALITATIVE HEALTH RES. 125 (1995).
[32] *See* BARNEY GLASER & ANSELM STRAUSS, THE DISCOVERY OF GROUNDED THEORY: STRATEGIES FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH (1967) [hereinafter GLASER & STRAUSS].
[33] *Id.*; ANSELM STRAUSS & JULIET CORBIN, BASICS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: GROUNDED THEORY PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES (1990) [hereinafter STRAUSS & CORBIN]; CHARMAZ, *supra* note 17.
[34] Charmaz defines deductive as "a type of reasoning that starts with the general or abstract concept and reasons to specific instances." CHARMAZ, *supra* note 17, at 187.
[35] GLASER & STRAUSS, *supra* note 32.
[36] *Id.*
[37] CHARMAZ, *supra* note 17, at 6.
[38] GLASER & STRAUSS, *supra* note 32; CHARMAZ, *supra* note 17.
[39] STRAUSS & CORBIN, *supra* note 33.
[40] GLASER & STRAUSS, *supra* note 32; BARNEY G. GLASER, THEORETICAL SENSITIVITY: ADVANCES IN THE METHODOLOGY OF GROUNDED THEORY (1978) [hereinafter BARNEY G. GLASER]; ANSELM STRAUSS, QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS FOR SOCIAL SCIENTISTS (1987).
[41] CHARMAZ, *supra* note 17, at 5.
[42] *Id.*
[43] *Id.* at 6.
[44] R.K. YIN, CASE STUDY RESEARCH: DESIGN AND METHODS (1994).
[45] Kushner & Morrow*, supra* note 31, at 33.
[46] CHARMAZ, *supra* note 17, at 103–04.
[47] Kushner & Morrow*, supra* note 31, at 33 BARNEY G. GLASER, *supra* note 40.
[48] BARNEY G. GLASER, *supra* note 40.
[49] Kushner & Morrow*, supra* note 31, at 30–43.
[50] Anselm Strauss & Juliet Corbin, *Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research*, *in* HANDBOOK OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH 273–85 (N. K. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds., 1994).
[51] *Id.*
[52] *Id.*
[53] Kushner & Morrow*, supra* note 31, at 30–43.
[54] GLASER & STRAUSS, *supra* note 32, at 32.
[55] Dolores Delgado Bernal, *Using a Chicana Feminist Epistemology in Educational Research,* 68 HARV. EDUC. REV. 555 (1998) [hereinafter Delgado Bernal].
[56] *Id.* at 568.
[57] TARA YOSSO, CRITICAL RACE COUNTERSTORIES ALONG THE CHICANA/CHICANO EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE 10–11 (2006).

[58] CHARMAZ, *supra* note 17, at 189.
[59] *Id.*
[60] STRAUSS & CORBIN, *supra* note 33.
[61] CHARMAZ, *supra* note 17, at 118.
[62] STRAUSS & CORBIN, *supra* note 33.
[63] Delgado Bernal, *supra* note 55, at 566.