

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Conceptual Framework



Critical Theory, Social Justice, Power, and Autoethnography

FELECIA M. BRISCOE AND MUHAMMAD A. KHALIFA

We, Felecia and Muhammad, began our academic careers as middle school science teachers in Las Vegas, Nevada, and Detroit, Michigan, respectively. Our teaching experiences led us to become deeply troubled by the systemic practices that disadvantaged minority and low-income students in these two very different cities. One of our primary goals in earning our doctoral degrees was to help develop knowledge that would create a more equitable educational system. Yet, more than 20 years after teaching in the public schools, I (Felecia) received the following e-mail from one of my brightest and most highly motivated teacher education students:

You ever been in a place, where everybody is real depressed, but they don't really know it. It is where the tedious and mundane are worshipped . . . The least bit of creativity and inspiration has been excised. People rule through fear and intimidation. The staff is treated like children. People wonder what is wrong with our kids. We aren't doing them any favors, except making them sick of school. We have tested them to death. When we aren't testing them, we are pre-testing them or teaching them test strategies. Richmond worships at the altar of standardized testing. There is no room for heretics or non-believers. (A. Jackson, personal communication, September 16, 2008)

Mr. Jackson, an African American man, was one of the most creative and motivated students I have encountered in my more than 20 years of teaching

in higher education. He wrote the letter during his third year of teaching in an urban majority Black elementary school. I reflected a long time on this e-mail, asking myself questions about what had happened to this very promising teacher and how such an environment was affecting the lives of the children he taught. I came to the conclusion that somewhere we had taken a wrong turn in our understanding of what an equitable school system should look like. The current punitive approach of standardized testing, fear, intimidation, and so forth was the result of neoliberal accountability policies and was supposedly done in the name of achieving equity.

Muhammad had similar experiences both personally and through his own children's education. When he first began his teaching career on the east side of Detroit in the late 1990s, he encountered such an intense culture of standardized test fraud that he thought it was just part of the way that education *really* happened. The rationale he was given for cheating on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, or MEAP, was that "the wealthy White suburbs cheat on the MEAP, so we cannot compete unless we do it." The same culture that caused despondency in Felecia's students led, on the one hand, to conformity with a high-stakes neoliberal reform imposed on Detroiters. Ironically, this was followed by a resistance to the neoliberal reform, ultimately through an elaborate culture of staff working behind the scenes to increase the MEAP scores of Detroit students.

We have spent many hours discussing what different kinds of understandings might help our educational system to actually become equitable. We would also like it to become one in which teaching and learning occur, not within a technical-rational testing framework, but within a framework that encouraged the intrinsic joys of teaching and learning. Those discussions led to our present objectives. The first segment of this chapter focuses on the book's objectives. The second segment describes our conceptual framework. Finally, we present an overview of the book's organization and content.

Objectives

Our objective is to develop an understanding of the different paths taken by people of various races/ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, national origins, abilities, and genders in their development as critical scholars. We develop this understanding through a qualitative meta-analysis. These autoethnographies delineate key events and points in our lives that have shaped us into the critical scholars we are today. As critical autoethnographies, they focus on power relations embedded in those events and the authors' responses to colonizing relationships of power. Despite being positioned in different spaces, all the authors have developed critical perspectives in their

teaching and/or research. There are two levels of findings and two levels of critical social theory development. Each of the 11 authors conducts the first level of analysis on her or his own life using and expanding on current critical theories. We, the editors, conduct a second level of analysis by identifying common and divergent themes and the relationship of those themes among the 11 case studies. Thus, this book contributes to the development of critical theories—especially as they pertain to identities—and qualitative methodologies, as well as the literature on social justice education. Accordingly, we analyze the autoethnographies, delineating relationships in the commonalities and differences in the paths taken by the different authors in becoming critical scholars for social justice. Therefore, this book can be read in its entirety, or any one of the autoethnographic case studies and be read alone and on its own terms.

Why These Objectives? New Perspectives from Different Social Spaces

There are a number of important reasons for writing this book that relate to the development of critical theory and research methodologies. However, and perhaps more importantly, this book applies to the practical and ethical challenges faced by teacher educators, pre-service teachers, educational researchers, and educational practitioners. Increasing numbers of teacher education programs are emphasizing social justice or critical perspectives in their curricula (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2009). At the same time, the university and public schools are becoming increasingly diverse: “By the year 2020, minority students will account for 45 percent of the nation’s public high-school graduates, up from 38 percent in 2009” (Hoover, 2013, para. 2). This diversity presents a number of opportunities and challenges for teacher education programs, educational practitioners, and those interested in social justice. Unlike recent uses of the word, by *diverse* we include all races/ethnicities (not just people of color), genders, economic classes, (dis)abilities, and sexual orientations. These challenges have arisen because, traditionally, the practices and policies of public schools (including institutions of higher education) have enacted the cultural values, norms, and otherwise privileged White (e.g., Spring, 2006), male (e.g., Cannella & Perez, 2012), and middle-upper class students (e.g., Gandara, 1995).

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Max Weber (1902/1992) predicted that Western society was developing into an iron cage of technical-rationality, wherein people were embedded in a quantifiable accounting-type system and had little to no freedom to use their own judgment or express their unique personality. A number of scholars have described neoliberal educational policies as the embodiment of this iron cage of

technical-rationality (e.g., Hill, 2009; Mirowski, 2013; Samier, 2002). Other scholars have found that the neoliberal iron cage provides a colorblind façade of equity while continuing to disenfranchise groups that have historically suffered from oppression (Briscoe & Khalifa, 2013, Lipman, 2011). In addition to its inimical effects on disadvantaged groups, the neoliberal iron cage of technical-rationality has produced an increasingly sterile, alienated environment for the privileged (Baudrillard, 2005; Case, 2013). The voices of groups that have been marginalized may offer new understandings that help change the direction of schools and society into a more humane one.

The challenges presented by neoliberal versions of lingering traditional practices and policies of schools in the midst of increasing diversity are realized through inquiries such as a) Are the curriculum, practices, and norms of teacher education and public schools relevant to the increasingly diverse pool of teacher educators, pre-service teachers, practitioners, and students? b) Are the increasingly diverse students in higher education, including White, middle-class men, able to see the relevancy of social justice education and/or critical research in their lives and work? c) Are scholars, teacher educators, pre-service students, and educational practitioners aware of the diverse perspectives in society? d) Are all of the foregoing groups aware of the different paths available to diverse people in becoming critical?

This book provides information to help teacher educators, scholars, students, and public school practitioners address those challenges. In addition to addressing the above challenges, this book contributes to the development of critical theory and qualitative research methodologies. In doing so, it necessarily provides epistemological perspectives from those who have traditionally been excluded, silenced, or otherwise oppressed in our schools and society (e.g., Dixson & Rousseau, 2006).

Furthermore, people who have been silenced, excluded, or otherwise oppressed have all too often had their stories told by those of the dominant group (middle-class, European-American males)—and all too often those stories have constructed negative identities for those who have been traditionally oppressed (e.g., Briscoe, 2005). When critical educational researchers and/or practitioners from diverse social spaces and places tell their own stories, they produce counter-narratives, which not only resist the deficit identities that have been constructed in the dominant discourse (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994), but also develop new practices, epistemologies, and social theories (e.g., Collins, 2002; Duncan, 2005). These new understandings have the potential to help people engage in new forms of social justice activities.

As several scholars (e.g., Haraway, 1991) have noted, historically middle-class White males have conducted research and developed theories about oppressed groups. Most of this research and theorizing is colonizing, as

it is still mired in European ways of seeing, understanding, and knowing the world (Tuwihai-Smith, 2012). Historically, such colonizing and colonized research has constructed deficit identities for marginalized groups. These constructions are part of an oppressive colonizing force. Dei (2006) finds that colonizing forces seek

to impose the will of one people on another and to use the resources of the imposed people for the benefit of the imposer. Nothing is sacred in such a system as it powers its way toward the extinction of the wills of the imposed upon with one objective in mind: the ultimate subjection of the will to resist. An effective system of colonialism reduces the imposed upon to a shell of a human who is incapable of thinking in a subjective way of his or her own interest. In everything the person becomes like the imposer; thus in desires wishes, visions, purposes, styles, structures, values, and especially the values of education, the person operates against his or her own interest. Colonialism does not engender creativity; it stifles it, suppresses it under the cloak of assistance when in fact it is creating the conditions that make it impossible for humans to effectively resist. And yet there has always been resistance and there are new methods of resistance gaining ground each day.

One way to resist the colonizing forces of academic production and the unequal relationships of power it engenders is to have those of us who have been traditionally marginalized create and write our own stories, our own ethnographies. As Chang (2011) has noted, “[a]utoethnography is a qualitative research method that enables researchers to use their autobiographical and contextual data to gain a hermeneutical understanding of the societal context, and in turn, a sociocultural meaning of self (p. 13).

Furthermore, Denzin (2003) has found that “performance [auto] ethnography is more than a tool of liberation. It is a way of being moral and political in the world” (p. 258). This book articulates and embodies not only the way that autoethnography can inform critical thought, but also how it can be practically used to impact local change.

Autoethnographies have emerged in scholarly journals over the past decade or so. Carolyn Ellis (1997, 2004) and scholars like bell hooks (2003) and Gloria Anzaldúa (1999) have produced autoethnographies that have reflexively explored subjectivity, gender, and class in the context of a heteronormative, racialized, gendered, and classed society. Autoethnography challenges the criticism of traditional positivist epistemologies regarding “objectivity, absolute truth, and ‘validity.’” We argue that we can tell our

stories and project our “truths” using the tools only we, as native researchers, have to interpret our lived experiences and the intellectual, emotional, and material effects of these experiences. By doing so, we help to develop new ways of knowing and acting in the world.

There is a third resonance to criticality. Pennycook (2001) describes this resonance as a crucial turning point, as in reaching a critical mass. The United States, indeed the world, is approaching a critical point in several areas, if it has not already reached that point. These critical points would include an increasingly disproportionate share of wealth and resources both between and within nation-states (e.g., Irvin, 2008; Rapley, 2004); increasing unrest, especially within nations with a smaller share of resources (de Oliver, 2008); and the degrading environment and depletion of natural resources (e.g., Climate Institute, 2011). It would seem that the conceptual frameworks that have informed the perspectives through which we make decisions locally, nationally, and globally have led us amiss in some way. By integrating the critical voices and epistemologies of those who have been silenced or otherwise marginalized, perhaps a more complete and holistic perspective will emerge. It is our hope that the emerging critical social theory from this book will help develop such a perspective.

Our work is relevant and unique for a number of reasons. For one, our project focuses on *educators* and their lived experiences that led them to become critical researchers and/or educators. We also found no works that focus exclusively on the experiences of critical scholars. Secondly, none of the extant autoethnographic projects brings a *number of collective voices* together. To date, they have all been single persons who have shared their stories. This book brings many critical autoethnographic voices into a single project and then draws lessons, similarities, reflections, and conclusions from individuals and the collective. This, we believe, has the transformational power to push our field forward—both methodologically and epistemologically. And finally, our work is unique in that it focuses on how educators and researchers trace their history into becoming *critical*. This journey pushes conversations both in and about education forward, particularly in an age when researchers are increasingly expected to be more deeply reflective about their own journeys. Indeed, it is this “critical” edge that allows researchers and educators to be good, yet *different*, at what they do.

Conceptual Framework

In this section, we present the conceptual framework for *Becoming Critical: The Emergence of Social Justice Scholars*. It offers the logic and organizing principles of critical theories, power, and emerging identities as they apply to the epistemological challenges presented by race, class, gender, and other

key social positionings. We contextualize the book as part of a larger plan aimed at developing the capacity of future teachers, administrators, and other practitioners as well as scholars to understand the different ways in which they and others can become critical; giving practitioners a broader and more diverse understanding of what it means to teach for social justice and the different paths that might be taken; and, finally, providing researchers with examples of innovative methods and new theoretical paths that can help us develop knowledge to advance the goals of equity and an appreciation of diversity.

Critical theory, social justice, power, and autoethnography provide the structure of the conceptual framework used in this study. Thus, we define and link each of these concepts together. Our definitions are very broad, allowing for a diversity of specific understandings as utilized by the variety of authors. We do this to simplify the use of these concepts and to provide a conceptual framework encompassing their meanings simultaneously. We begin by describing what we mean by the term *critical*, linking it to critical theory and social justice; then we provide examples of both critical theory and social justice. We then turn to the concept of power as it relates to both critical theories and social justice. Finally, we describe how critical autoethnography relates to the foregoing concepts and why autoethnography is integral to the book's objectives.

This book provides a range of understandings and commonalities in what is meant by social justice and by being critical. Some have argued that the concept of social justice is ambiguous and unclear (e.g., McDonald & Zwiechner, 2008; North, 2006). But we maintain that having a range of meaning for social justice and criticality is desirable, as different meanings may prove more useful in different and complex settings: Rather than expecting one meaning to apply to every situation, being able to select the meaning that best fits one's context may be more useful. Thus, throughout this book we often refer to these terms in the plural form. We, like many others (e.g., Collins, 2002; Pennycook, 2001), understand that there is no one universal critical theory or praxis (Freire, 2008), but rather many different ones that help us to understand and act in the different social, political, economic, and educational realities that we navigate in our lives.

Critical Social Theories and How They Relate to Social Justice

The critical aspect of our framework means that we are concerned with developing understandings of existing oppressive power relationships. As Pennycook (2001, p. 4) notes, "the most significant aspect of critical work is an engagement with the political critiques of social relations." For us, such knowledge should promote educational, social, and economic equity.

By equity, we do not mean equal conditions, but rather conditions that offer a diverse people equal opportunities for success, which includes an appreciation for diversity rather than a desire for uniformity. For example, in a classroom, if all students were taught in Farsi, the conditions would be equal for all. However, these conditions mean that students who speak Farsi will have a much greater opportunity for success than those who do not. Nor would such a classroom engender an appreciation for diversity in either the teachers or the students. Thus, although equal, the conditions would not be equitable.

Critical theories are theories that are developed and used to understand and investigate oppressive power relationships to help advance toward equity in all aspects of life. Currently, there are a variety of critical theories, ranging from Jürgen Habermas's *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1968), to Patricia Hill Collins's *Black Feminist Thought* (2002), to Dixson and Rouseau's *Critical Race Theory in Education* (2006), to Tuhiwai-Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2012).

What these diverse critical scholars have in common is a critique of society or some aspect of society, with an effort to determine the following questions: Who is being oppressed? How are they being oppressed? What sorts of power relations reproduce that oppression? And how can that oppression be eliminated or at least ameliorated? Social justice is the praxis of bringing about greater social, political, and economic equity. Thus, we understand critical theories as the theoretical part of social justice praxis. However, the distinction between the two concepts may be more blurred than this simple categorization suggests; indeed, many scholars write about social justice theories—while others consider the development and dissemination of critical understandings as a form of praxis (e.g., Foucault, 1980a). These two terms coalesce in defining critical scholars. Critical scholars are those who use their critical understandings to teach and produce scholarship for social justice.

Clearly, critical scholarship and critical education (i.e., educating for social justice) are complementary aspects of one coherent effort to connect critical theories to the context in which one works—whether that work is teaching, researching, administering, or cooking. In making this connection, as a praxis of social justice, one can argue for and implement changes in institutional practices to bring about greater equity. Critical education attempts to build skills “for reflexive analysis of the educational process itself . . . [including] focus shifts from critique of existing practices to exploration and even advocacy of possible alternatives” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 221). Critical education, in other words, is a form of social justice praxis, as it consists of teaching people to understand and apply critical theories in their domains of practice. Such applications can be a tremendous force

for transforming unequal power relations that privilege some while disadvantaging others. Thus, the concepts of critical theory and social justice are both integral to praxes for transforming our schools and society into more equitable ones.

Public schools are one of the few remaining public institutions that are charged with providing equal opportunities for students from different social spaces to develop into citizens with the knowledge and skills to effectively participate in a democratic society. Accordingly, we do not seek to condemn public schools, but to improve them. Rather than seeking to eliminate or privatize them, we see them as integral to the development of an egalitarian society. If our schools are to help bring about a more egalitarian society, we must be able to identify the specific aspects of our educational systems that act to oppress and marginalize various groups. To identify these aspects, we must first understand how power operates on these various groups within schools, including higher education.

Power, Colonizing Forces, and Identity

Power is one of those diffuse concepts that everyone uses and seems to vaguely understand, but for which there is no one, clear, agreed-on definition. We provide a working description, which we use in our introduction and in the summative chapter. However, a wonderful caveat is that our conception of power is deepened by the critical autoethnographies written by the variety of authors in this book. Foucault's explicit analyses of power³ are found in *Discipline and Punish* (1977), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings* (1980a), and *The History of Sexuality: Volume I* (1980b). These provide a tool kit for analyzing the relationship between power embedded in and enacted through social practices and identities. For Foucault (1980a; 1980b), power is that which influences the actions of others and operates around conflicts or potential conflicts. Foucault (1980a; 1980b) claims that power operates through everyday social practices (e.g., pledging allegiance to the flag), which act on an individual even as the individual enacts those social practices; power relations are reproduced or challenged in these enactments.

In addition, power is diffuse rather than concentrated in one person or center: "Power is never localized here or there. . . . [Rather, it] is employed and exercised through a net-like organization" (Foucault, 1980a, p. 98). "One doesn't have here a power which is totally in the hands of one person who can exercise it alone and totally over the others. . . . [But] everyone doesn't occupy the same position: certain positions preponderate and permit an effect of supremacy to be produced" (Foucault, 1980a, p. 156). On this construction, power relations act to oppress some while elevating others to

reap the benefit of those oppressed. However, according to Foucault (1980a; 1980b), wherever there is power there is resistance. In the interplay between power and resistance that people carve out and perform their identities (e.g., Butler, 2003). “[Individuals] are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power” (Foucault, 1980a, p. 98). In this book we focus on colonizing forces, which is power operating to shape people’s identities into colonizer/colonized.

We examine this interplay of power in the development of critical scholar identities. However, this book is unique in that the owners of those identities individually describe and make meaning of their own identities and experiences related to those identities. Thus, the power relations involved with the developing epistemologies are more equal than in most collective case studies. Because the editors do not pick out which parts of the contributors’ narratives to include, the focus of each case study is the author of the case studies. As such, the contributing authors have lengthy periods of reflection to determine not only the wording they wish to convey their experiences, but indeed which aspects of their experiences they deem appropriate to keep private (see, e.g., Giles in Chapter 4). At the same time, the contributors of this book are more vulnerable than typical participants of case studies in that their identities are not kept confidential but rather are put on display for all to see and judge.

Many contributing authors described the difficulty they experienced in writing their autoethnographies. As they described to us (the editors) in e-mails and in person, reliving and writing down these events in their lives was both painful and cathartic. However, many said that they had developed new critical understandings of themselves and society. Tuck and Yang (2013) note that much of the qualitative research on those in different social spaces simply produces pain narratives, which act to construct damaged identities. They encourage moving beyond such spectacle-based, victim-only type of representations to “speaking in a voice of resistance” (Tuck & Yang, 2013, p. 230). These narratives all move beyond pain to voices of resistance. All authors hoped that their stories would advance equity for the increasingly diverse students and teachers in public schools and higher education. The contributing authors hoped to advance social justice by helping those in educational institutions become more aware of the difficulties faced by diverse students and develop appropriate frames for understanding their experiences and making educational decisions. Critical autoethnographies help develop these understandings of and practices in educational and social systems by drawing from the experiences and perspectives of those who traditionally have been silenced, excluded, and/or marginalized in the production and dissemination of knowledge about how people in different spaces experience our schools and society.

The Goals of Critical Autoethnographies

Autoethnographies as emerging qualitative methodologies provide for non-traditional ways of knowing. As it is an emerging field, its exact parameters are also widely contested. Denzin (2006) lists six different definitions of autoethnography. We embrace this same notion of multiplicity, but if we had to give a single definition to autoethnography it would be Stacy Holman Jones's (2005):

Autoethnography is a blurred genre . . . a response to the call . . . it is setting a scene, telling a story, weaving intricate connections between life and art . . . making a text present . . . refusing categorization . . . believing that words matter and writing toward the moment when the point of creating autoethnographic texts is to change the world. (765)

Likewise, critical autoethnography is neither monolithic nor monolingual. Humans are complex beings and have multiple identities and realities. Adams and Jones (2011) demonstrate this well, as they bring autoethnography to Queer Theory. In their articulation of these bodies merging, they write, "[t]aking seriously autoethnography's and queer theory's commitment to uncertain, fluid, and becoming subjectivities, multiple forms of knowledge and representations, and research as an agent of change, we write a series of reflexively queer personal texts" (p. 108). Yet their work indicates—and this book confirms—that autoethnography can be merged with other critical frameworks that respond to unique realities. Thus, a primary goal of the critical autoethnographies in this book is to change the world by helping to create greater equity.

Autoethnography, as a nontraditional way of knowing, allows us to represent knowledge outside a traditional European framework that positions social change and progress in a linear fashion, from point A to point B. Most of our knowledge, methodologies for producing knowledge, and practices associated with the dissemination of knowledge have been constrained by traditions developed by upper middle-class White men. Thus, the knowledge produced under those traditional constraints necessarily follows White middle-class male norms. A rhizome approach, adapted from the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1984, 1987), understands the emergence and existence of knowledge as expanding in multiple directions of a given historical social system, weaving through various forms of knowledge, experiences, and subjectivities of a society. Although each of these autoethnographies is necessarily unique—as they are written by authors in different social spaces, focusing on different aspects of educational and social processes—they are

at the same time related through rhizomatic sensitivity. Autoethnographies express rhizomatic sensitivity because stories find each other in some way, bringing together a wide diversity of voices, perspectives, and subjectivities that provide alternatives to the traditional essentialized identities many of us have been coerced into assuming during the current neoliberal period of late capitalism.

Through this autoethnographic project, our counter-stories come together in a rhizomatic fashion and are linked by key experiences that share similarities, dancing across ethnic, racial, gender, and economic class realities. Critical autoethnographies capitalize on autoethnography's promise of developing social theories in directions delegitimized by traditional research methods, but they do so critically. That is, the direction of the development is aimed toward the eradication of colonizing power relations and the pain brought on by those forces (see Pennycook, 2001).

Overview of the Book

The rest of the book is divided into five sections. The middle three sections are composed of the 11 autoethnographies. The authors include women and men who are African American and Black, Latino and Chicano, and European American; those from the middle, working and poverty classes; as well as those from a variety of religious faiths. The fourth remaining section of the book discusses the findings from our meta-analysis of the 11 autoethnographies as well as the theoretical implications of our meta-analysis. The professional biographies of the contributors make up the final section of the book.

The Autoethnographies in Sections II, III, and IV

While all 11 of the autoethnographic chapters focus on more than one aspect of the author's social locations, Section II primarily focuses on racism and Section III on sexism. The autoethnographies in Section IV focus on the intersections of multiple aspects of identity.

Section II consists of five critical race autoethnographies that use race as the primary focus of their analysis and critiques of their life experiences. These autoethnographies examine the authors' resistance to the oppressive colonizing forces that act on their identities. In Chapter 2, Michael E. Jennings, an African American male college professor who works at a large, research-oriented university, analyzes his early childhood experiences. In Chapter 3, Nosakhare Griffin-EL adds to the discourse on the contradictory lives of Black students within predominately White educational spaces. In Chapter 4, Mark Giles makes meaning of his academic experiences through

the specific life events, cultural identity, and cultural relevance of a Black man teaching in higher education settings. In Chapter 5, Drs. Brenda G. Juárez and Cleveland Hayes analyze the importance of race in their respective stories of becoming critical educators. In Chapter 6, Joy Howard deconstructs how she, as a White woman, was shaped by racist colorblind discourse.

The two chapters of Section III examine the oppressive colonizing forces that act around gender. Although the authors examine women's situations in different countries (Kenya and the United States), they both come from singularly patriarchal cultures. Felecia M. Briscoe traces the conflicting truths about women that she learned in school/society and at home in a polygamous community. Damaris Choti describes an oppressive situation that surrounds the lives of girls and women in most societies in the world.

Section IV contains four autoethnographies that have more than one primary focus. In the first one, Dr. de la Portilla describes the complexities of her intersecting Chicana and working-class identity dimensions: how her earlier family experiences provided her with an understanding of the oppression she experienced in her doctoral program, as well as methods of resistance. Dr. Khalifa then explains the particular types of oppression he experienced as a Black man and his resistance to the identities ascribed to him. Subsequently, Drs. El-Amin, Henry, and Laura focus specifically on the hyphens that make up their intersecting identities and how many of the important dimensions of their identities were simply ignored, especially as a focus for research. Finally, Dr. de Oliver describes how the different dimensions of his identity became salient depending on the space he occupied and how even his identity as a professor was morphing as the university became increasingly neoliberal.

Concluding Chapters

Chapter 13 presents patterns and divergences found in the autoethnographies and the implications of these patterns. Chapter 14 presents advancements in critical social theory by examining the implications of these patterns and divergences and a model of the development of criticality suggested by the collective case study of these autoethnographies. Our book advances critical theory by presenting our understanding of the way the processes of schooling and society affect people from different social spaces. We also hope that it is an interesting and informative read for those who are not scholars, but who may have lived in spaces that isolate them from the lived reality of many.