Teaching social justice: Reframing some common pedagogical assumptions

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Drawing on scholarship in Critical Pedagogy, this article speaks to the debate about pedagogical approaches within social justice education (SJE). The article addresses itself to privileged positionality within the context of university-based SJE, with a specific focus on race and whiteness. As a conceptual piece, it addresses some key considerations when working with liberatory pedagogies towards conscientising people from dominant positionalities, challenging some pedagogical assumptions that have achieved virtual common sense status. It indicates that we should reframe student resistance, cautions about uncritical use of dialogue and student experience in methodologies, and problematizes the advocacy of safety as a prerequisite for SJE. We end by outlining the reasons why firmly challenging students, though uncomfortable and controversial, may be necessary.

Key Words: Social justice education, whiteness, pedagogy, critical pedagogy, resistance, dialogue, student experience, race, safety, discomfort.

As in other parts the world where societies are redressing entrenched inequity and historical injustice, the context of post-apartheid South Africa is an important site for engaging with the pedagogical challenges of educating young people to develop subjectivities that embrace the principles of a just society (Fuentes, Chanthongthip & Rios, 2010; Nagda, Gurin & Lopez, 2003). While many educators would agree with such a contention, contestation surrounds questions of how to achieve this goal. This article addresses itself to the difficult question of developing a social justice orientation among those of privileged positionality in university-based social justice education (SJE).[1] With a specific focus on race and whiteness, the article problematizes some widely held pedagogical assumptions in SJE, suggesting that, if we take the systemic nature of social injustice seriously, we may need a clearer stance on positioning's that benefit from oppression. This, in turn, indicates that we should reframe student resistance, the uncritical use of dialogue and student experience in methodologies, and rethink our virtually taken-for-granted espousal of the notion of 'safety' as a prerequisite for SJE – at least in the way it currently plays itself out in reports of teaching practice. We end by outlining the reasons why firmly challenging students, though uncomfortable and controversial, may be necessary.

Conceptual foundations

This article speaks to this debate about pedagogical approaches within SJE. As a conceptual piece, it addresses some key considerations when working with liberatory pedagogies towards conscientising people from dominant positionalities, challenging some pedagogical assumptions that have achieved virtual common sense status. It assumes that critical theory has a place in SJE, a position that is not held across the board, and is a point of contention in the area of higher education in South Africa (Jansen, 2009).

Various approaches and pedagogies, offering contesting views, are being developed to address the challenges of how best to engage young people from different sides of historical and current social divides. We think, for example, of Pedagogy for the Privileged (Curry-Stevens, 2005, 2007, 2010), Pedagogy for the Oppressor (Allen, 2002, 2009; Schapiro, 2001), Post-Conflict Pedagogy (Jansen, 2008, 2009), Pedagogy of Discomfort (Boler 1999, Boler & Zembylas, 2003), and Decolonising Pedagogy (Tejeda, 2008). Many of these pedagogies draw on the learning's from Critical Multiculturalism (Steinberg, 2009),

Critical Whiteness Studies (Kincheloe, Steinberg, Rodriguez and Chennault, 2000), and Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings, 1997; Leonardo, 2009). Historically, an underlying assumption in the field of SJE is that oppressed people are the key audience, as explored in the highly influential work of Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy for the oppressed*. Recent times have seen a shift in focus with the recognition that the people who derive privilege from oppression, that is, those in dominant positionalities, *also* need conscientising (Allen, 2009; Goodman, 2001; Jansen, 2009).

While all these pedagogies are concerned with how to bring students and learners to develop a value system that takes justice, democratic values, freedom, and the suffering of others seriously, a crucial point of difference is the centrality that should be afforded to naming and confronting power differentials both within and beyond the classroom. We take as the theoretical foundation of our pedagogical argument Freire's (1970) frame that structural oppression and inequality result in 'oppressed' and 'oppressor' groups with related internalised inferiority and superiority. We contend that hegemonic identities develop within dominant positionalities along axes of difference; that access to power and privilege is often determined by individuals' proximity to whiteness, heterosexuality, masculinity, ablebodiedness, middleclassness, etc. (Steyn, 2010), and that people from dominant groups often share certain oppressor traits (Goodman, 2001), including (dys)consciousness (King, 1991) of the social relations from which they benefit. As people are very rarely only oppressed or only oppressors, however, their overall access to power depends on factors that are interdependent (Leonardo, 2009) and intersectional (Yuval-Davis, 2006) within social formations. While we address ourselves only to the axis of race in this article, it is important to note "the complex interplay between oppressed and privileged identities that can be a part of the same individual" (Munin & Speight, 2010:263). We assert the need to acknowledge and teach about hegemonic identities, power, privilege and oppression (Giroux, 2011). Our contention is that there are limitations in pedagogies that focus on learning about the others' realities, worldviews, experiences, life histories, vulnerabilities, and promoting empathy and forgiveness, but do not ask for direct engagement with the way in which social dynamics shape us through unequal power relations, and with what these dynamics enable and foreclose.

A corollary of this view is that different learning processes may be required for those in dominant and non-dominant positions. Learning to claim power, as opposed to learning to let go of unearned privilege and the unilateral operation of power, are not identical. Only if both sides are doing their own work – "white race work" and "black race work" (Erasmus, 2010:397) – can we bridge the divides. This is not achieved through empathy alone, but also through developing solidarity (Delgado, 1997).

'Oppressor' pedagogy: Explaining the use of the term

Our position follows from understanding race as a form of oppression. Race cannot be construed solely as neutral difference; it is the operation of power on difference and results in oppression. Race was created to justify colonialism, exploitation and slavery (Leonardo, 2009:124), and much of the structural damage created in the name of colonialism and apartheid remains intact. While white people's social locations intersect with other social formations (gender, class, sexuality, ability, etc.), resulting in different access to overall privilege in society, all white people benefit from systemic whiteness (Leonardo, 2009:121). Whites remain at the top of the racial hierarchy or pigmentocracy (Bonilla-Silva, 2004:229).

It is no doubt more comfortable for many of us to use the term 'privileged', rather than 'oppressor' in talking about dominant positionalities. It is less offensive to dominant groups and therefore less likely to trigger defensive behaviour. We argue, however, that the term 'privileged' may be problematic in that it focuses on the symptoms of oppression instead of the cause, naming the effects and benefactors of oppression without naming the agents (Leonardo, 2009:76-77). In line with Critical Pedagogy, we maintain that being an oppressor is related to the positioning that benefits from oppression, rather than actions that individuals take. Even those oppressor group members that fight against oppression, by this logic, can be considered oppressors (Allen & Rossatto, 2009:165). We are therefore advocating an approach that raises awareness of positionality and the inevitable implication of individuals within such social arrangements. Contrary to condemning one to helplessness and hopelessness, such an understanding offers an individual

the tools to develop a praxis that is ultimately hopeful and self-affirming (Delgado, 1997; Giroux, 2011; Munin & Speight, 2010).

Framing resistance

Educators working in the field of SJE will certainly be familiar with the sometimes vehement opposition to course material expressed by white students. Encountering resistance is a central feature of SJE; it "... frames the pedagogical challenge" (Rich & Cargile, 2004:361), and should be expected. As Allen (2002:29) states: "The critical educator can assume that those from oppressor groups will not readily divest themselves of their views of themselves and Others". According to Boler (1999:191), it represents a deconstruction of their identity; their beliefs, culture, values and overall map of the world. It complicates their sense of self, ways of being and knowing, their relationships (Jansen, 2008:71) as well as their understanding of the past, present, and future. People resist oppressor labels (Allen, 2004:130, Bonilla-Silva & Embrick, 2006:21), want to be seen as non-racist (Dlamini, 2002:59; Rains, 2000:94) and have a deep desire for innocence (Steyn, 2001:97). In essence, we avoid the pain of consciousness (Leonardo, 2009:177). White people get caught up in intention rather than effect (Goodman, 2001:33) in protection of self rather than promotion of social justice (Russo, 2001:210) and in solidifying inequitable power relations (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2009). Problematizing the status quo challenges the foundation of their reality (Steyn, 2001:98), and even their perceived freedom (Freire 1970/1993:18; Boler & Zembylas, 2003:360). Given all of this, it is understandable that students resist. The issue, however, is not *that* they resist, but that their resistance represents problematic thinking that is acted out in problematic ways.

For educators, resistance is often taxing and vexed – should it be avoided, minimised, or engaged? If resistance is viewed negatively, it is understandable that educators go out of their way to avoid it. Often resistance and learning are viewed as mutually exclusive, but while this is a possibility, it is not inevitable. Even when students are not receptive in class, it does not mean they are not learning; their opinions may change in the days, weeks, months and years that follow. bell hooks (1994:42) relates: "I have found through the years that many of my students who bitch endlessly while they are taking my classes contact me at a later date to talk about how much that experience meant to them, how much they learned". As Rich and Cargile (2004:363) remind us: "For some students, the transformation may begin during class. For others, perhaps, the seeds have at least been planted".

Educators may also fear that they lack the skills to engage resistance in useful ways, or the effect that student outbursts may have on the class or on their own well-being, or even that they are being negatively received. These fears, though understandable, are not useful, especially if out of the fear of causing discomfort for students or themselves, educators change their pedagogies by either avoiding hard truths or telling half truths. hooks (1994:42) affirms: "In my professional role I had to surrender my need for immediate affirmation of successful teaching (even though some reward is immediate) and accept that students may not appreciate the value of a certain stand point or process straightaway".

Resistance is not 'not engaging'; in fact, resistance is often *how* white students engage. White student resistance is often deeply entrenched in problematic white discourses and white privilege (Rich & Cargile, 2004:360). Warren and Hytten (2004:336) explain: "The jump to defensiveness and a pre-established list of complications and excuses is a production of whiteness ...". McKinney and Norton (2008:200) encourage educators to "[re-conceptualize] resistance more productively as a meaning-making activity which offers powerful teaching moments", to work resistance into one's pedagogy instead of avoiding methodologies that result in resistant behaviour. McKinney and van Pletzen (2004:169) have found that "resistance does not necessarily prevent productive engagement". Pedagogies should therefore not be changed to shelter students: resistance necessitates engagement rather than avoidance. Nevertheless, student resistance does complicate common methods, so these need to be rethought with whiteness-based-resistance in mind.

Problematizing dialogue and personal experience as methodologies

Experience and dialogue-based pedagogies are widely employed in SJE.[2] However, the use of personal experience can encourage abuse of classroom freedom (hooks, 1994:15) and restrict a structural analysis

(Hemson, Moletsane & Muthukrishna, 2001:95). hooks (1994:81) cautions that white male students often claim authority of experience – they expect their experience to be the centre of discussions. Similarly, Bell and Golombisky (2004:320) comment on their "unwillingness or inability to validate subjectivities other than their own". Allen and Rossatto (2009:170-171) highlight the problem with using experiences from oppressor groups:

> *How do we use critical pedagogy with these privileged teacher credential students when they have not lived close to the traumatizing effects of, as well as daily struggles against, colonization and structural oppression? Should we base instruction primarily on their experiences when their lives are so detached from the realities of the oppressed?*

Uncritical sharing of experiences may therefore not lead to transformation (Allen, 2004:133), calling into question the focus on equality of voice in a classroom (Allen & Rossatto, 2009:175). The question, according to Russo, is not whether the subaltern can speak, but rather "whether privileged white groups are willing to listen" (Russo, 2001:208). Listening therefore needs to be promoted (Russo, 2001:209; Warren & Hytten, 2004:332), taught and learned (hooks, 1994:150), and worked at (Allen & Rossatto, 2009:175).

Similarly, dialogue seldom occurs on equal grounds (Allen, 2004:132): it is "fraught with difficulty" (Warren & Hytten, 2004:332) and is "never truly open" (Allen, 2002:29-30). Freire questioned whether dialogue between oppressed and oppressors is even possible (Freire, 1970/1993:69; Allen, 2002:28). Authors argue that the communication and contribution to dialogue by white students tend to be entrenched in whiteness (Allen, 2004:132; Warren & Hytten, 2004:332), and that it is consequently unsurprising when "[w]hite educators and students act ... to ensure that such critical dialogues are quashed" (Allen, 2004:132-133). Leonardo (2009:116) gives an explanation of this point with reference to white racial knowledge:

> *When dialogue is without tension, whites are willing to enter racial dialogue ... When discussions become tense or uncomfortable and people of colour show some anger or outrage, whites' racial resolve wanes and opting out of race dialogue becomes convenient. It becomes too difficult, too much of a strain, and too dangerous ... People of colour do not enjoy the same choice.*

Dialogue without the humility of whites is ineffective (Allen, 2004:133). Students from oppressor groups lack humility when they project ignorance onto others and never perceive their own (Freire, 1970/1993:71); and when they "focus more on the colonized mentality of the oppressed than on their own colonizing mentality" (Allen, 2002:28). Allen (2002:29) explains: "... it is sometimes the oppressed who lack humility. However, the more typical and destructive scenario is for the oppressor to be the one who denies, dismisses, denigrates, and belittles the oppressed in dialogue." Ideally, humility for white students would be a prerequisite for dialogue, but since this is not always possible, educators must rather intervene in dialogue when students lack humility. While this may be met with claims of being silenced, such feedback should also be examined critically as claiming to feel silenced may itself be a strategy of keeping marginalised students occupied with their concerns (Chinnery, 2008) and thus avoiding their "race work."

In sum, employing experience and dialogue in SJE is both useful and potentially problematic. For these tools to be used effectively, deep power inequalities within the classroom need to be factored into practice.

Reframing classroom safety

It is common for participants and educators to expect and promote a frame of safety when engaging social justice topics, and that safety should not be jeopardised (Jansen, 2009:152). At the heart of safety is a respect for students' emotions (Adams *et al.*, 2007:29-30; Leonardo, 2009:179). It has been named a requirement for growth, empathy and trust (Goodman, 2001:169) and a prerequisite for certain pedagogies. Often, the taken-for-granted assumption is that transformation will not occur in the absence of safety, yet, ironically when people expect comfort and to not have their views challenged it may actually foreclose the possibility of growth. Not all educators support its uncritical promotion, therefore, arguing for a balance between safety and challenging students (Adams *et al.*, 2007:30, Chinnery, 2008; Goodman, 2001:169).

In the first place, the assumption that the classroom is 'normally' safe is dubious, because for many students of colour it is not (Chinnery, 2008; hooks, 1994:39), and as explored above, classroom dialogues are often problematic. Pertinently, Macdonald, Gebhuza, Bologna and Morreira (2007:70) ask: "Safe from what or whom?" The marginalised students' need for safety, i.e. not being dominated, seems incompatible with the oppressor students' desire to not be challenged. When safety is promised, students often imagine being protected from feeling pain, conflict, discomfort and challenge. We discuss below how promoting this type of environment is at odds with transformation and justice.

While students from oppressor groups are likely to avoid pain, this type of learning can be painful, and though unpleasant, painful does not always imply harmful (Ron Scapp in hooks, 1994:154). hooks (1994:154) reminds that there is "integrity in grappling with difficult material", and certainly, the pain may be justified: "For white students, it should be painful to hear that the white race has colonized and constructed a world after its own image" (Leonardo, 2009:123). Jensen (2005:94) has also found that the process of transformation for white people inevitably involves pain.

Safety cannot be construed as the absence of conflict, either, as this is inevitable, necessary, and a useful part of the SJE process (Adams *et al.*, 2007; Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Berlak & Moyenda, 2007; Rich & Cargile, 2004). Engaging with passion, as hooks (1994:39) points out, has the potential for confrontation and conflict. Conflict is an opportunity for new thinking and growth (hooks, 1994:113) and the concomitant trauma and crisis are often a necessary step in the journey towards transformation (Berlak and Moyenda, 2007:215). Adams *et al.* (2007) see the conflict from the collision of white students' guilt and students of colour's anger as inevitable; accordingly, this conflict is to be expected, students are warned about it and when it occurs it is worked through (Tatum in Adams *et al.*, 2007:406). Similarly, Rich and Cargile (2004:363) take the stance that white identity transformation is facilitated by conflict. They write about the need to 'invite conflict' to create a more equitable community, instead of maintaining what they refer to as a false sense of community (ibid:354). Bell and Golombisky (2004:313) note that there is a racial component to conflict avoidance, linking conflict avoidance to race and class privilege. It is therefore problematic to promise safety, given its dichotomous relationship with conflict – and the essential role that conflict plays in shifting students.

Similarly, safety is too often mistaken for comfort. We should not confuse "experiencing tension or confusion with not being safe" (Adams *et al.*, 2007:54). The assumption that education should be comfortable is in any case questionable (Boler & Zembylas, 2003:134), as is the use of easy and comfortable methods to achieve radical transformation (Allen & Rossatto, 2009:175-76). Still, when people feel discomfort they are likely to resist and withdraw (ibid:55). Adams *et al.* strive to prevent this reaction by encouraging students to identify their discomfort and frame it as a cue to engage instead of a signal to retreat.

For white students, safety may further imply not having their input challenged and intervened upon, yet, educators who refuse to intervene after racist or sexist comments (Dlamini, 2002:57), or allow the recentring of oppressor focussed emotions, fail the class. Moyenda (in Berlak *et al.*, 2007:214) explains the situation aptly: "A just environment must deal with the abuse of that safe environment. Your classroom should not be a safe haven for the racist *mentality*". Rather, participants "need to feel confident that facilitators will intervene" if necessary (Adams, 2007:30). Moyenda points out that notions of safety are often incompatible with experiences of justice: "While you provide a safe environment for exploring an issue X, you don't provide a just one" (Moyenda, in Berlak *et al.*, 2007:214). Similarly, Leonardo (2009:178-179) notes that more harmonious environments neglect to critique feelings. hooks (1994:31) also problematizes the expectations of happy multiculturalism; implying a link to injustice, she maintains that it is the "stuff of colonizing fantasies".

In sum, promising safety sets up the false promise of a pain-free, conflict-free, comfortable and unchallenged classroom experience. Such a promise would likely promote false expectations and more resistance when such expectations are not met, and is simply inconsistent with transformation and justice. Leonardo (2009:89-90) explains how whites' need for safe spaces is linked to a lack of real engagement and is incompatible with creating solidarity:

> *As long as whites ultimately feel a sense of comfort with racial analysis, they will not sympathize with the pain and discomfort they have unleashed on racial minorities for centuries. Solidarity between whites and non-whites will proceed at the reluctant pace of the white imagination, whose subjects accept the problem of racism without an agent.*

We therefore argue that frames of discomfort and "unsafety" (Macdonald *et al.*, 2007:73), though counterintuitive, are more accurate and more productive. As Macdonald *et al.* (2007:72) argue, there is already a misleading "paradoxical 'unsafety' located in the metaphoric 'safe space'". We rather need to pre-frame "unsafety" and discomfort for learners to "embrace, not to avoid, the uneasiness of participation, the shocks of awareness and the dangers of vulnerability" (ibid). Even as emotions and comments are respected, problematic ones need to be challenged, and this challenge will not feel safe. If safety is incompatible with transformation, justice and the need to intervene; if pain, conflict and discomfort are part of the process – and feel anything but safe – the false dichotomy that sees challenging students and supporting them as mutually exclusive needs to be exposed.

Challenging students for social justice

There are many reasons why educators believe students should not be firmly challenged.[3] One is that educators must not choose sides, which is linked to the myth of neutrality (hooks, 1994:37; Boler, 1999:179; Adams *et al.*, 2007:112; Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997:24). Yet, ultimately, it is crucial that educators defend social justice, and not taking sides can result in favouring oppression (Dlamini, 2002:57). SJE involves risks to students and educators,[4] and it is possible that a more clearly committed pedagogy will increase those. As Moyenda (in Berlak *et al.*, 2007:216) maintains, such risks are "part of the game if we are really committed to not harbouring a racist mentality". And how do we even estimate the risk to society if students who are in a position to reproduce oppressor positionalities are not challenged?

The threat to the educator is influenced by her or his own positional power. A critical look at the power differences inherent in the average classroom is required, asking, "Who is teaching whom and under what conditions?" (Dlamini, 2002:64). Johnson, Rich and Cargile (2008:130) found that educators' race has an impact on how much they can challenge students, and Francis, Hemson, Mphambukeli and Quin (2003:142) found it significant even when race is not the topic being discussed. One of the problems is that academia does not generally acknowledge that academics and teachers have bodies (Ahmed, 2009; hooks, 1994). It is a privilege of whiteness and maleness when educators are able to forget that their bodies have meaning. Johnson *et al.* (2008:132) describe the differential treatment educators are subject to:

> *[I]t is important to explore how pedagogical strategies for teaching antiracism must differ based on faculty embodiment. For example, teachers of colour are treated as 'inherently' knowledgeable and self-interested when they teach about racism. Conversely, white teachers may be viewed as 'more objective,' and will rarely be accused of 'pushing an agenda'.*

Educators of colour often experience resistance linked to their racial position (Dlamini, 2002:63-64). Dlamini (2002:64) writes: "How do I share power with those already in power?" It is likely that educators with more overall positional power with respect to race, gender, age, tenure, prominent status, well-recognised work, etc., will likely have an easier time implementing more challenging methods.

Taking on the risk

While educators experience different levels of risk and resistance when challenging students, students ultimately ought to be challenged. The idea that South African educators must be sensitive (Hemson, 2006:35) may come with the cost of avoiding difficult and controversial issues related to power imbalances (Francis & Hemson, 2007:47). Francis and Hemson (2007:47) state that challenging oppression requires "challenging authority, naming privilege, emphasising the power relations that exist between social groups, listening to people one has previously ignored ...". Sometimes educators avoid challenging students because they fear that if students are pushed they will not listen. Along these lines, Jansen (2009:153) stresses the importance of listening to oppressor students, he states that listening to oppressors' problematic inherited

knowledge "signals respect, not agreement". However, unless educators, having listened, also challenge such problematic positions they unintentionally validate them; it is important to consider that, given the depth of resistant ideologies, discourses and myths tied to whiteness, white students enter the classroom poorly equipped to listen (Allen, 2004:133).

At the core of Allen's argument for a more exacting pedagogy is the presupposition that challenging students from oppressor positionalities to become more human is justifiable and does not represent oppression (Freire, 1970/1993:38-39; Allen, 2004:133). Many educators fear being hypocritical by curbing students while teaching about anti-oppression. For Allen, there is a double standard in the classroom and a justifiable reason to challenge students. The pedagogical frame that he promotes is radical love,[5] where challenging and loving occur simultaneously. Similarly, Leonardo (2009:123) maintains that educators should be at once aggressive and tender; he "tread(s) tenderly on the topic of race at the same time that I aggressively analyse it". McKinney (2005:387) describes this dilemma when the values encouraged in the South African policy on higher education and the country's constitution clash with student contributions. However, it is helpful to realise that demanding methods are ultimately less about pushing new agendas on students than stretching students to see what is already there, challenging them to uncover what they have been socialised to repress:

> One idea I find helpful to keep in mind is that the problem is less about 'awareness' and more about 'repression' and 'denial'. White people already have a keen sense that society is structured unevenly. How they deal with that fact is really the question (Allen, 2010:personal communication).

Adopting an unflinching approach is therefore about challenging students to see what they already know to be there. Bram Fischer (in Passop, 2012) once asserted: "The glaring injustice is there for all who are not blinded by prejudice to see". This uncovering is at the heart of creating dissonance, "highlighting the inconsistency between egalitarian values and negative attitudes" (Pedersen, Walker & Wise, 2005:23), and an essential part of facilitating the unlearning of racism (Moyenda in Berlak *et al.*, 2007:211). Rich and Cargile (2004:355) have come to a similar conclusion: "we believe that it is our job to expose the rift and rupture the silence that exists around issues of race". While creating dissonance may be uncomfortable, we must not forget the urgent nature of this work (see Kincheloe, Steinberg, Rodriguez & Chennault, 2000; Allen, 2004:133; Curry-Stevens, 2010:67; Leonardo, 2009:90).

Conclusion

This article explored the rationale for revising some commonly held SJE assumptions which, unwittingly, assume a white audience and prioritise its comfort. Specifically, we framed resistance as something to be engaged rather than avoided; urged an ethos that holds a functional discomfort rather than safety; advised the use of dialogue and personal experience only when educators are willing and able to intervene when dominant students engage in problematic ways; and invited educators to simultaneously challenge and support in firm yet tender ways to help students from dominant positionalities understand the nature of oppression, its prevalence in society at individual, structural, ideological and institutional levels, and their role in these formations. If educators want to create just societies it is likely that such a pedagogy is required; one that speaks truth to power and challenges students in dominant positionalities to own their role in either perpetuating or challenging oppression, inviting them to become allies to social justice.

Endnotes

1. This article is based on the first author's master thesis (Davis, 2012).

2. Benefits include: first-hand knowledge (Goodman, 2001:59); potential of lessening students denial of the effects of racism (Hemson, Moletsane & Muthukrishna, 2001:93); illuminating academic material (hooks, 1994:21); creating common humanity (Jansen, 2008:72); countering white students "fragmented consciousness" (Leonardo, 2009:174); enhancing the chances of student effectiveness

through validating their experience; and making "the connections between personal experience and relevant theory" (Francis & Hemson 2007a:47).

3. These include that the decision to change should be up to student (Adams et al., 2007:18); that the process must be student-led so students develop the skill of thinking critically on their own (Tejeda, 2008:30); a believed dichotomy between 'convincing' and 'teaching' (Goodman, 2001:1); and a fear of estranging and alienating students who need it most (Curry-Stevens, 2010:65-66; Jansen, 2009:152).

4. Students do "poorly on class assignments, both in terms of understanding the concepts or critiques and completing assignments in a full and timely manner. Some even drop the class" (Allen & Rossatto, 2009:166), they may walk out, cry or feel attacked (Dlamini, 2002:57). Educators risk getting negative reviews from students, and having their credibility threatened (Berlak et al., 2007:216; Moyenda in Berlak et al., 2007:211), students may dismiss the educator or the entire course (Adams et al., 2007:108). Educators risk "being seen as deviant or troublesome or unpopular" (Francis & Hemson, 2007a:47). It is important to note that, given the risks and challenges of this type of work, institutional support is required (Moyenda, in Berlak et al., 2007:212)

5. Allen and Rossatto (2009:178) describe radical love as "interventions that help them learn how to not dehumanize themselves and others ... not allowing them to take on the oppressor role in dialogue ... letting them know that if they make a mistake they will still be loved".

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