Summer 2013

Housing Patterns, Academic Performance and School Choice: An Inquiry into the Relocation Experiences of African-American Families

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HOUSING PATTERNS, ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND SCHOOL CHOICE:

AN INQUIRY INTO THE RELOCATION EXPERIENCES OF

AFRICAN-AMERICAN FAMILIES

by

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Under the direction of Sabrina Ross

ABSTRACT

This qualitative inquiry explored the educational relocation experiences of African-American families residing in predominately-White and northern Gwinnett County, Georgia, who relocated to pursue improved educational opportunities for their children. For poor families or African- American families with limited resources, school choice is determined largely by where one lives. Historical oppression at the local, state and federal level has encouraged the concentration of African-American families into segregated communities and segregated housing patterns (Massey & Denton, 1998; Rice, 2009; Squires & Kim, 1995), which are often associated with educational inequality (Royce, 2009). The historical oppression and racial injustices in society challenges us to think more critically about education, curriculum and the role segregated housing patterns plays in perpetuating systematic educational inequality. Using Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a theoretical framework, this inquiry explored the subjectivities and realities associated with the socio-political, economic, cultural, linguistic, ethical, and historical context of African-American families and the pursuit of educational equity.

Despite many advancements and achievements of African-Americans during the past decades, findings of this inquiry revealed that there is more work to be done. Key findings indicate that African-American students are still underserved in educational settings and

continue to experience systemic racism. Research findings also indicated that despite moving to more affluent all White suburban neighborhoods with the expectation of excellent educational opportunities, African-American families desperately need social support networks to survive and thrive in these settings. Findings from this study are significant in that they shed light on relationships between race, space, and educational equity. In so doing, this study provides new information and knowledge for policymakers, administrators, teachers and society interested in improving the education of African-American learners.

INDEX WORDS: Segregation, Housing Patterns, Critical Race Theory (CRT), Racism, Inequality.

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

OF

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

STATESBORO, GEORGIA

2013

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Electronic Version Approved:

July 2013

DEDICATION

To the late John M. Jones, Sr., for his eternal love and inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION: THINKING ABOUT MOVING

The Current Educational Context

The pursuit of quality education is a persistent theme in the history of African-Americans in the U.S. and this theme has been marked by monumental successes and failures. One seemingly monumental success was the 1954 Supreme Court ruling in Brown v. Board of Education. The Board of Education mandate of 1954 was revolutionary, in that it challenged school segregation and required desegregation by the Supreme Court. Yet significant educational failures for African-Americans followed Brown v. Board of Education. This ruling severed Plessy v. Ferguson of 1896, (separate but equal doctrine) but was not enough to equalize education for blacks. Resources such as facilities, books and supplies were significantly inferior and unequal in comparison to Whites. Even more troubling has been a steady trend of re-segregation in U.S. schools that threatens to undermine the desegregation efforts of Brown v. Board of Education. Referring to this negative trend, Jonathan Kozol writes, "Since the landmark Brown v. Board decision, a trend of re-segregation has occurred through a leveraging of resources that have moved White families into either suburban settings, private-school settings, or magnet schools with intra-segregated populations" (as cited in Varner & Seriki, 2012, p. 2). Soja

Along with the re-segregation of U.S. schools is a troublesome trend that disproportionately places minority students in special education and lower educational tracks. In integrated schools, the disproportionate placement of minority students in lower academic tracks is another method of segregation. Orfield and Losen (2002) refer to this segregation within schools when they state that, "The disproportionate number of minority students who are categorized as learning disabled and placed into special education programs is often cited

as one of the methods school districts employ to remove and isolate students from the academic mainstream" (as cited in Noguera, 2007, p. 4). Thus, despite the promises of educational equity brought on by the 1954 Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education, the above trends and my own lived experiences as an African-American educator demonstrate that the promises of Brown v. Board of Education remain unkept for many African-American students.

Residential Patterns and Schooling Options

Not surprisingly, where one lives influences available schooling options. For poor families and/or African-American families, school choice is often limited because the vast majority of African-Americans and "other" people of color do not possess the economic means to escape inferior schools that are often located in their neighborhoods. Due to neighborhood inequalities, "Poor families are often stuck with inferior schools, inadequate public facilities, and an unhealthy and sometimes dangerous residential environment" (Royce, 2009, p.193). These schools, which are often staffed by inexperienced White teachers, have high teacher attrition rates and are often located in unsafe communities. The instability of the community school leads to job dissatisfaction among teachers, which may be further exacerbated by insufficient support from school administration, student discipline problems, and low pay. Referring to the disparities often found in schools in high-poverty areas, Ingersoll (2001) states, "Teacher turnover is 50% higher in high-poverty than in lower poverty schools" (p. 516). High rates of teacher mobility are also found in urban, minority populated schools where "New teachers in urban districts exit or transfer at higher rates than their suburban counterparts" (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 1999, p. 181). Thus, for many African-American families and other families of color, there is a link between residential patterns and the educational achievement of their children. The historical oppression and

racial injustices of society that encourage the concentration of African-American families into segregated neighborhoods and inadequate schools challenges us to think more critically about education, curriculum, and the role of segregated housing patterns in perpetuating systematic educational inequality.

Is Educational Relocation the Answer?

The phenomenon of how race, socio-economic status and school-choice options influence housing patterns that affect the school success rates of African-American children is of particular interest and is a passionate topic for me because of my own family history. Educational opportunity strongly influenced the choice my family made when we moved away from a mostly segregated African-American eastern DeKalb County, Georgia, community to a mostly White, northern Gwinnett County, Georgia community. I am passionate about exploring the educational relocation experiences of other African-American families because of the personal experiences and frustrations my family encountered during our relocation process. This venture stemmed from a search that primarily consisted of seeking better school-choice options for our middle school-aged daughter. Our search was not any easy one because it took us more than three years to reach a final decision. Ultimately, our decision carried educational benefits as well as unexpected cultural consequences.

In examining my family's relocation decision over the past three years, we have some misgivings and regrets. While my family achieved some tangible advantages of relocating to a suburban community, there were consequences and sacrifices for our relocation decision, namely, the social isolation since many of our relatives, friends, colleagues and associates live in urban areas or the outer fringes of Atlanta. Upon reflection, our relocation decision

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resulted in limited opportunities for social networking and for developing and sustaining a

necessary support system for my family.

Although we would have probably preferred to remain in our all African-American

segregated community, the reality pertaining to the social-economic decline of the

community, coupled with the declining performance of our daughter's school were factors

we could no longer ignore. The phenomenon of "White flight" caused deterioration of our

community and schools over time. "White flight" was a phenomenon that developed in

major urban cities and spread throughout the nation. The common themes shared by

homeowners in the urban North and the resistance of the urban South, suggests segregated

housing patterns characteristic of "white flight". Although Atlanta was at the forefront of the

civil rights era in the south, it still remains a place of sustained segregationist resistance.

"White flight" emerged due to segregationist organizations. A campaign of political

resistance reinforced die-hard segregationist organizations such as the White Citizen's

Council and the Ku Klux Klan, which sought extra-legal and illegal methods to enforce

conformity of Whites, and evoked fear among African-Americans (Kruse, 2005). Fear of

reprisal through terrorist acts and violence used economic means to intimidate and further

advance White political resistance.

The number of bank-owned and/or foreclosed homes, vacant properties, and

declining property values was apparent in the lack of maintenance of surrounding properties,

increased crime and safety concerns. Consequently, the once owner-occupied homes were

evolving into renter communities, which resulted in transitory housing patterns in the

community. We were no longer willing to sacrifice the financial and personal investment we

had made in our home and community. As a family, we felt there were no viable housing

options within our existing community, which forced us out of our once previously desired community and into the outer suburbs.

We found exactly what we had been searching for: high performing middle/high student test scores, better house/land for the money, and safe/walkable communities. We would not have found our suburban community in our price range in the city or fringe areas of Atlanta. Unlike our prior community, our resources allowed us to relocate to the suburbs with heightened resources and amenities with greater access to a higher caliber of goods and services. We wanted to shield our daughter from the real and symbolic threats of crime/violence, peer influences, and social dysfunction, which glamorize and uplift many negative aspects of urban culture.

We felt the northern suburbs would be an ideal place to raise our daughter, coupled with the belief that we were not just buying a better built home, we were buying into a community, a peer group and a highly coveted school district. Our move was two-fold in our quest for living the "American Dream". We were making a monetary investment in our new community in the hope of acquiring increased property values and an emotional investment with the hope of our daughter receiving a quality education.

Even though our relocation decision was ultimately positive for my daughter in terms of academic achievement, her social adjustment after the move was difficult. Having all White teachers and assimilating to a culture of mostly White peers and teachers initially posed some adjustment challenges. Additionally, both my daughter and I have witnessed disparities in academic achievement that negatively affect the minority students she attends school with. Although my daughter attends a highly coveted school district, the racial disparities in student enrollment, class placement and discipline are evident, and she has observed African-American boys being disciplined more harshly than White students were---

leading her to question the disparities and subjectivities of similar offenses committed by White students. In her current school, she has also observed a higher incidence of African-American students in remedial classes, special education and referrals for disciplinary infractions. Since relocating, she has come to recognize various forms of covert and overt racism, discrimination and prejudice in the lives of African-Americans and marginalized "others".

Similar to my daughter's African-American male counterparts, her initial experiences in the highly coveted school district that we relocated to were troubling. As an African-American female teen, our daughter initially felt socially isolated in a new educational environment, which served as a "double whammy" or dual disadvantage for her. A "double whammy" for her was the realization of not having opportunities for interacting with her peers, which lends itself to racial, cultural, and social isolation. Though enrolled in a "better school," my daughter and her African-American counterparts are being deprived of those social connections situated in a majority White context, which can significantly impact levels of achievement and school success that further contributes to the inequities in the educational system.

Purpose of the Study

Much has been written about the historical struggles African-Americans have gone through to obtain equitable education in the United States. Little, however, is known about the struggles African-American families continue to experience as they search for better educational opportunities in a post-Civil Rights era when education for all children is presumably equal. The purpose of this study was to shed light on the present-day struggles of African-American families to obtain quality education for their children. My research

study gave voice to those families that did not have a platform to express their experiences relating to housing, school options and the academic success of their children.

For African-American families with the resources to relocate in order to improve educational opportunities for their children, it is ironic that access to "better schools" can also result in unintended consequences for their children such as a lack of cultural grounding in their own heritage. Just as important, these "better schools" may not result in higher academic achievement for minority students, particularly African-American males. In my own experience, "better schools" are not necessarily better in every sense of the word because there are African- American children in these better schools that are still being under-served.

There were many factors involved in reaching a final relocation decision for my family, and I suspect that many factors were also involved in the relocation decisions of the families I interviewed. I was particularly interested, however, in revealing the experiences of African-American families who sought to relocate to improve school-choice options for their children. This research examined the institutionalized racism that has created environments of segregation and unequal schools for African-American students and the steps African-American families have taken to obtain more equitable education for their children. Ultimately, this research explored whether the benefits of educational relocation by African-American families were worth the sacrifices endured.

While contributing to existing literature on African-American educational opportunity, this study contributes specifically to the field of curriculum studies. Through its focus on the educational experiences and opportunities of African-American parents and children, this research extends scholarship that understands curriculum as racial text (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 1995). Through its focus on residential patterns that

contribute to educational outcomes, this study also connects to the work of other curriculum scholars focusing on curricula of place (Kincheloe & Pinar, 1991; Pinar et al., 1995).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided my inquiry:

1. How do African-American families describe their educational relocation experiences?

2. How do African-American families perceive the impact of their housing choices on their children's education? Do they perceive their relocation decision as being worth the effort?

3. What do African-American families perceive as the components or factors of a good public school education in their community?

4. What mitigation techniques do African-American families use to ensure that their children receive the best education possible?

Chapter Organization

The organization of my dissertation is based on the metaphor of moving. Chapter One: "Thinking about Moving" provided a context for the issue of African-American educational relocation that I explored. Chapter Two: "Where Do We Go from Here," reviews key events in the history of African-American education. Chapter Three: "Packing and Unpacking" describes the methodology of inquiry I used to explore my research topic. Chapter Four: "We're Here, Now What," presents the narratives of the African-American families I will interview. Finally, Chapter Five: "Surveying the Landscape," will theorize the narratives I collected in order to answer the research questions for this study. Chapter Five will also address implications for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

This chapter reviews key events in the history of African-American education and introduces the perspective of critical race theory, including main concepts associated with the theory. This chapter also reviews relevant literature related to housing segregation and academic performance for African-American students.

Notable Events in the History of African-American Education

It is important to examine the history of education because it is essential to examining the future of African-American education. This review of notable events in the history of African-American education in the U.S. highlights the disparities that have existed throughout our country's history during slavery, Reconstruction, the Industrial Revolution, and the Civil Rights era. African-Americans and other racial minorities have experienced many challenges associated with receiving "equal access of opportunity" in the areas of schooling.

Education of African-Americans during Slavery

Enslaved African-Americans placed great value in the practical power of literacy, whether it was to enable them to read the Bible for themselves or to keep informed of the abolition movement, and later the progress of the Civil War (Grant, 1993). Regardless of the laws and threat of punishment and/or death, some slaves devised creative and clever ways to obtain literacy. In the South, slave masters were very much afraid of what education could do to enlighten African-Americans, and therefore, education was prohibited for slaves. Access to literacy for slaves was far too threatening for the slave owners, and proved disruptive to the social order. Therefore, prohibition of educational attainment demonstrated the lengths to which White slave owners would go to keep another human enslaved, ignorant

and subordinate. According to Lemann (1992), "Race relations stood out nearly everywhere as the one thing most plainly wrong in America, the flawed portion of the tableau, the chief generator of doubt about how essentially noble the whole national enterprise really was" (p. 7).

Education of African-Americans after Slavery

Following the Civil War, the discussion of how to educate free African-Americans began in earnest. According to Anderson (1988), "Soon after the late 1870s, African-Americans were ruthlessly disenfranchised; their civil and political subordination was fixed in southern law, and they were trapped by statutes and social customs in an agricultural economy that rested heavily on coercive control and allocation of labor" (p. 2). Immediately after the collapse of the Confederacy, some southern leaders advocated the education of the freedmen (ex-slaves), but they insisted that education be overseen by the southerner rather than by the Yankee. Some of the organizations that were active in relief, religious, and educational work in the South during the years following the end of the war were the American Union Commission; Pennsylvania Freemen's Relief Association; National Freedmen's Relief Association of New York; American Missionary Society; Freemen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Friends' Association of Philadelphia for the Relief of Colored Freedmen (Grant, 1993).

Immediately after the collapse of the Confederacy, many Southern leaders wanted the former slaves as workers for the purpose of rebuilding the nation and advocated restricting education of the freedmen. According to Cobb (2005), "During the reconstruction era, Southern Whites played a key role in achieving not just the new South objective of restoring White supremacy over African-Americans, but of restoring the supremacy of White elites over the entire society" (p. 83).

Although free from slavery, African-Americans suffered in a myriad of ways. Woodson (1933) conveys, "The poverty which afflicted them for a generation after Emancipation held them down to the order or society, nominally free but economically enslaved" (p. 10). Great lengths were deemed as necessary by the slave owners to preserve the Southern economic engine. As Lehman (1992) describes, "Slavery was a political institution that enabled an economic system, the antebellum cotton kingdom" (p. 6). To preserve the economic viability of the nation, many Whites opposed providing schools for African-Americans under any circumstances.

While considered to be a part of the "distant past", practices that evolved during the age of slavery continued well into the 20th century. As noted by Watkins (2001), "Even after the abolition of slavery, the 'Negro Question or 'Negro Problem' remains at the social and educational conundrum" (p. 11). At a time when slavery had been abolished, the nation had mass numbers of former slaves with whom to contend.

Robinson (2000) describes their plight as follows,

Abandoned, penniless, and unskilled, at the mercies of a humiliated and hostile South, millions of men, women and children trudged into the false freedom of the Jim Crow South with virtually nothing in the way of recompense, preparation, or even national apology. (p. 213)

The United States experienced profound wealth as a result of centuries of free labor provided by the slaves through an agricultural economy, which lead to sustaining the economic viability of the nation. During the Civil War and in the first decade after freedom, African-Americans were very much interested in literacy.

The law had significant influence in the lives of most slaves, as the master was deemed as the "law. Although it was against the law to read and write, enslaved people

developed ingenious ways to gain literacy. Despite the threat of punishment, former slaves

persuaded the white children they had shared close relationships with to share their lessons

(Dodge, 2006). Access to newspapers and books also enhanced their quest toward obtaining

literacy. Just as the Underground Railroad was a means toward freedom, obtaining literacy,

too, was perceived as the path toward gaining freedom.

According to Franklin (2005), "Literate men who escaped slavery to enlist in the

Union Army, became teachers in regiments of black men, and once the war ended, these

same men taught in local communities" (p. 1). Often these "literate men taught and donated

money, time and labor to build schools for communities of freed people, even as they

engaged in combat, built fortifications, and reflected on the role they would play as free men

in a world transformed by war" (p. 2). Also former slaves used their churches as schools or

built new buildings for schools and paid tuition in an effort to provide an education for their

children (Franklin, 2005).

Educational Prerogatives

Despite all the suffering, death, disease and lynching etc., many African-Americans

historically did not readily accept the deplorable conditions they faced, nor the White legal

system and their laws that kept them from progressing to become educated or self-sufficient.

For example, African-American codes excluded freed slaves to vote, sit on juries, or work in

certain occupations (DuBois, 1908). Discrimination, limited resources, and inequality further

hindered the path toward self-sufficiency. Regardless of the African-American codes of the

1860s, which were designed to limit the civil rights of African-Americans, Jim Crow laws

between 1876 and 1965, which enforced separation of the races, and various other oppressive

laws and restrictions ---- before, during and after slavery --- African-American families

temporarily enjoyed some modicum of upward mobility (Fraser, 1932). African-Americans

held meetings by increasing their support networks through delegates throughout the South, and in general fought for equal rights. Their self-advocacy resulted in improved conditions such as improved living conditions, owning property, acquiring better jobs, and educational attainment.

According to Walker (1996),

Although black schools were indeed commonly lacking in facilities and funding, some evidence suggests that the environment of the segregated school had affective traits, institutional policies, and community support that helped black children learn in spite of the neglect their schools received from white school boards. (p. 3)

Despite the many barriers, African-Americans made progress with leaders and educators such as W. E. B. DuBois, who was the first African-American to receive a doctoral degree from Harvard University. When he was not teaching, DuBois was educating the world through his vast array of writings including the Crisis of the NAACP and the Phylon: The Atlanta University Review of Race and Culture (Stafford, 1989).

During this era, Atlanta, Georgia became a center of higher education for African-Americans. Primary education was the first area where African-Americans accomplished a great deal for themselves, which was assisted by northern philanthropy. Northern missionaries aided in the transition of the classical New England curriculum to their Georgia schools (Grant, 1993). However, the missionary organizations did not send enough teachers to the South to fulfill the demand for education. Therefore, Gammon Theological Seminary, Morris Brown and many others were funded by the A. M. E. church, and were chartered in 1885 with 105 students and nine faculty members (Woodson, 2001). Other cities such as Atlanta also saw the rise of colleges throughout the United States.

The colleges had problems resulting from poverty and limited backgrounds of many

of their students. Tuition was low, but it was out of the reach for many of their students

(Woodson, 2000). Atlanta University students paid about 34% of the schools' cost, the same

relative amount Harvard University students paid (Jackson, 2001). This detracted from their

ability to focus their resources on developing a larger pool of college-educated graduates.

There were few resources and an emphasis on teaching (there still is) creating limited

opportunity or scholarly distinction for African-American professors who were overburdened

instructors of underprivileged undergraduates, with overwhelming teaching loads, inadequate

libraries, and departments without research budgets (Woodson, 2000).

W. E. B. DuBois

During the Twentieth Century, W. E. B. DuBois graduated from Harvard University

and was the first African-American social scientist to acknowledge the challenges facing its'

citizenry. According to Anderson (1988), "Blacks emerged from slavery with a strong belief

in the desirability of learning to read and write" (p. 5). During a post-slavery era, DuBois

states, "The heavy burden of the century for America would be the issue of the "color line"

(Watkins, 2001, p. 115). To address the color line, he actively promoted civil rights with an

ideology of "self-help" through practical and moral values associated with achieving

scholarly education for the "best and brightest". He theorized the 'Talented Tenth' "were

central to the concept of higher education" (Kliebard, 2004, p. 143), and referred to the

"Talented Tenth" in the following way,

> If this be true---and who can deny it---three tasks lay before me, first to show from
>
> the past the Talented Tenth have risen among American Negros have been worthy of
>
> leadership; secondly to show how these men may be educated and developed, and
>
> thirdly to show their relation to the Negro problem. (DuBois, 1903, p. 1)

DuBois concentrated on calling upon the top 10% of African-American males, and left

educating the remaining 90% of former slaves to Booker T. Washington and the "White

architects" of African-American education. The heated discussion on scholarly education

espoused by DuBois lead to a huge controversy, which was in comparison to the vocational

education supported by Booker T. Washington. According to Anderson (1988), "The

Washington-DuBois controversy merely represented one of the last great battles in the long

war to determine whether black people would be educated to challenge or accommodate the

oppressive southern political economy" (p. 77).

   According to Watkins (2001), W. E. B. DuBois was considered a radical reformer

because he endorsed classical education for black men, minimized his ideas on African-

American women's education" and as Meier (1963), notes, "Said little about whether black

women should receive academic instruction at all" (p. 67). However, in the minds of the

"White architects", their view of educating blacks was limited to training in the performance

of menial labor tasks or vocational education, at best. According to Watkins (2001), DuBois'

version of social meliorism called into question the economic and social arrangements of the

corporate state and argues; vocational schools deprived segments of the school population of

necessary intellectual training and were not an effective method of uplifting the masses.

Kliebard (2004) notes that DuBois argues the following, "Blacks were being denied the

intellectual training and professional skills that a twentieth-century economy demanded, and

therefore, being denied a chance at true equality" (p. 114). Education of African-Americans

was met with resistance at every turn. For example, W. E. B. DuBois, in his study entitled

The Common School and the Negro American (1911) states,

   Not only have the general enrollment and the attendance of Negro children in the

   rural schools of the lower South and to a large extent the city schools has been at a

standstill in the last ten years, and in many cases actually decreased, but many of the

school authorities have shown by their acts and in a few cases expressed declaration

that it was their policy to eliminate the Negro school as far as possible. (Kliebard,

2004, p. 15)

In spite of some of the educational prerogatives made by some African-Americans, DuBois

worried that college educated African-Americans had abandoned their obligation to become

socially responsible leaders within their own race. He set the standard regarding African-

American education, and today remains true in the following quote,

And when we call for education, we mean real education. We believe in work. We

ourselves are workers, but work is not necessarily education. Education is the

development of power and ideal. We want our children trained as intelligent human

beings should be and we will fight for all time against any proposal to educate black

boys and girls simply as servants and underlings, or simply for the use of other

people. They have a right to know, to think, to aspire. (DuBois, 1906, p. 251)

Intelligence Testing and African-American Education

Hilliard (1991) addresses this paradigm noting, "The 'blacks score low on

standardized tests theme' fails to add that White America created and nourished the

conditions responsible for these low test scores" (p. 4). Aptitude and the desirability of

having the necessary skills to predict ability is an age-old assumption. The intelligence

quotient or "intelligence" test has been fostered by the status quo and dedicate to a particular

social point of view. Those falling below the "norm" are victimized in mainstream-based

society, and are sorted and categorized as early as Kindergarten. According to Woodson

(1933), at the height of Jim Crow, "The thought of inferiority of the Negro is drilled into him

in almost every book he studies" (p. 2). Consequently, intelligence and achievement tests

serve as instruments of oppression against the poor, disadvantaged and students of color. Under the façade of behaviorism, IQ testing is disguised as truth and is based upon empirical data. As far back as intelligence sampling with the "army and alpha and beta tests" data were skewed to conclude unfavorable results of African-Americans.

The over-utilization of traditional methods of intelligence assessment has resulted in ranking and labeling of students as well as reoccurring issues regarding validity. According to Neill (1989), "Lower-income, rural, inner city and minority background children are tested and placed in programs that virtually guarantee they will never receive an adequate education" (p. 9). Myths associated with achievement tests are problematic, in that few instruments of intelligence have proven to demonstrate validity. According to Hilliard (1991),

> Cultural or linguistically biased tests reinforce undesirable attitudes and give them the appearance of reflecting measurable scientific objectivity; society at large assumes that speakers of certain language varies are likely to have lower scholastic achievement and the tests 'prove' it. (p. 64)

As each theory was proven to be incorrect, other erroneous theories replaced the previous ones. The validity of assessment instruments and their impact on identification, categorization, employment and instructional plans for students pose serious questions of credibility that significantly bring negative generalizations of race, socio-economic factors, and cognitive styles on individual student performance. Asa Hilliard, an African-American psychologist, scholar, and expert on testing African-American students (1991) notes, --- "Black skin is related to Black brains which have been psychometrically proven to be inferior to White brains" (p. 18). Instruments and measurements of intelligence of African-

Americans and people of color have historically been riddled with falsehoods, submission, cultural biases and exploitation.

Many of the "scientific racism" policies affected colonial education and public policy. As noted by Hilliard (1991), "With regard to black people, science becomes racist and its tools, such as psychological assessments, become weapons" (p. 19). Psychological assessment tools served as methods to perpetuate racial myths, superiority, domination and exploitation. Francis Galton (1870), a scholar on par with Charles Darwin in his scholarship on eugenics and anthropology, notes, "The average intellectual standard of the negro race is some two grades below our own" (p. 338). This was a standard belief by some of the most brilliant minds of the time, later supplying ready ammunition for segregationists and White supremacists across the nation.

The education of African-Americans was limited to a vocational education of subservient tasks because Whites perceived African-Americans are intellectually inferior. As noted by Hilliard (1991), these perceptions were valued as authoritative and backed by science, "The ultimate proof of European superiority was, of course, not subjective opinion or personal desire but 'scientific' fact" (p. 20). Scientific racism practices such as color-coding and skull measuring, along with other myths, lies and stereotypes, were designed to marginalize newly freed slaves, by justifying ethnocentrism and superiority, portraying African-Americans as genetically inferior.

In African-American schools, facilities such as auditoriums, cafeterias and gymnasiums, supplies and materials lagged significantly behind White schools (Urban League Report, 1944). According to Kuhn, Joye, and West (1990), it was common for Boards of Education back in the 1920s to theorize, "As far as providing facilities and supplies and material in the schools that what they should do is take care of the Whites first,

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and if there was anything left, they'd give it to the blacks" (p. 141). For example, *Plessy v Ferguson* (1896) promised separate but equal facilities. However, as noted by Anyon (1997), "At present in many schools, toilets are unsanitary [sic] and in some cases indescribably unclean … these areas are filthy and foul-smelling" (p. 69).

Plessy v. Ferguson

In the United States, there has been constant resistance from the status quo regarding racial desegregation efforts. The resistance can be traced to "structural and historical" origins deeply entrenched in America's past (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2006, p. 162). The *Plessy v. Ferguson* case started when Homer Plessy, an African-American, sat in a fully accommodated "White" train car that was reserved for "Whites only". In 1892, Homer Plessy challenged Louisiana's Separate Car Act (1890) on the basis that his Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendment rights had been violated (Lofgren, 1987). The *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) United States Supreme Court landmark case was a major setback for African-Americans, in that the precedent stated that "separate but equal" facilities for blacks and whites was within the constitution as long as they were "equal". Shortly after the passage of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the "separate but equal" doctrine was quickly extended to include public facilities, such as restaurants, theatres, parks, restrooms, and schools. Discrimination was evident, in that public facilities for African-Americans were always inferior, unequal, and substandard in quality in comparison to White facilities. An enthralling example of the disparities is noted in the following case of the Richmond County Georgia School System. The school district provided "Sufficient elementary schools for whites but not for blacks, paid substantially higher salaries to white than to black teachers, closed the only black high school and continued operating the two white high schools" (Anderson, 1988, p. 192).

Historically, the Court allowed "separate but equal" public facilities for the two races, but never "equal". In 1910, "Eleven southern states spent over nine dollars on each white public school student and less than three on each black one" (Anderson, 2004, p. 4). The laws prohibited African-American and Whites from attending the same schools. According to Haskins (1998), "The largely southern and pro-segregation Court, was determined to put Negroes in their place" (p. 70). School systems in the South operated schools specifically for white students and schools specifically for African-American students, including DeKalb County School District (Laud, 2010). The facilities throughout the South were unequal; school districts in Georgia were overly resistant to the "separate but equal" clause and made no attempts of providing equality. Haskins (1998) notes, "The Court did not define just what was meant by equal, and Southern states never intended even to try to provide equal accommodations" (p. 70).

In reflecting upon the history of civil rights for African-Americans, the abolition of slavery (1865), "separate but equal doctrine" (1896), and the overturning of Jim Crow laws (1954), were just legal ways for the courts to justify sustaining segregation. Margo (1990) states, "Had the equal part of the "separate but equal" doctrine been adhered to, racial differences in educational outcomes would have been smaller" (p. 68). The disparities of facilities and resources among the races further demonstrate that the "separate but equal" doctrine was meaningless, and without equal protection under the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendment, these laws served to the detriment of African-Americans.

It was not until *Brown v. The Board of Education* (1954) that the "separate but equal" doctrine was struck down and desegregation efforts were initiated, whereby African-Americans continue to fight for equal access to resources. In reality, "Cross-racial socialization and integration are still low among non-White group members" (Ladson-

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Billings & Tate, 2006, p. 165). In other words, dual racial societies still exists. Separate---

but *never* equal.

Brown v. Board of Education

Brown v The Board of Education (1954, 1955) ruled that segregation was

unconstitutional and violated the 14th amendment. The case of *Roberts v The City of Boston*

(1849) was passed in 1855 banned racial segregation.

Another major lawsuit following *Plessey* was approximately 58 years later known as

Brown v The Board of Education (1954) that separate schooling of African-American and

White children was inherently unequal, marking the beginning of the modern civil rights

movement. The "separate but equal" provision was deemed unconstitutional, which

determined that separate facilities were not equal. This inequality extended well into the

1980s, "From the Virginia laws in 1661[…]that for blacks to be educated, to the warehousing

of black children in the dilapidated urban schools during Reagan-Bush eras, black children

had to overcome obstacles at every turn" (Watkins, 2005 p. 68).

Desegregation

In the 1970s, the Supreme Court determined that school segregation in the North was

an acceptable consequence of segregated housing patterns and geo-political boundaries.

According to Levin and Hawley (1977), "Residence in the ghetto, and thus membership in

the class disadvantaged by the neighborhood school assignment policy, is often the

immediate consequence of racially discriminatory practices in the housing market" (p. 70).

As a result, boards of education across the country used racial criteria as a method to reduce

segregation. According to Clotfelter (2004), "There were four techniques for modifying

school assignments such as pairing, rezoning, magnet schools and majority-to-minority

transfers" (p. 84). Varieties of proposals were set forth in an effort to garner desegregation.

For example, pairing and clustering involved grade level restructuring such as K-3 or K-6

configurations, specialized curricular such as Technology, Performing Arts, Science and

Math etc., Majority to Minority option (M to M) involved voluntary student transfers of

African-American students transferring to a majority White school and busing (Brown-

Nagin, 2011). In areas primarily comprised of a disproportionate number of African-

Americans, disparate and contradictory practices continued to be the method of choice in

upholding segregation in the schools. Examples of this movement included the June 28

decision in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v Seattle School District No. 1*, (2007) to

make *Brown* obsolete (Bell, 1994).

The Moynihan Report and African-American Education

It all started in the 1960s when racial tension was at its' highest among African-

Americans and Whites. The Moynihan Report chronicled the facts of America's failure to

African-Americans. At a time when the Civil Rights Act had recently passed, President

Johnson needed an analysis of the "Negro Problem". Consequently, a document entitled,

"The Negro Family: The Case for National Action" was published in 1965 (Moynihan, 1965,

p. 51). The document is commonly referred to as the Moynihan Report, which was written

by Patrick Moynihan upon the request of the Department of Labor. Former President

Johnson presented the Moynihan Report at the White House Conference on Civil Rights.

Contents of the Moynihan report were met with a great deal of curiosity as to why a

governmental agency would generate such a report on the Negro family. Many questioned,

"Whose interest would best be served by such a report?" What was the intended purpose of

the report? The report was produced and controlled by the government, and therefore,

deemed reliable and credible, but the information was disseminated to the public without

questioning the reliability of the information. The significance of the Moynihan report for

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African-American education was that it created the precedent of a deficit-oriented paradigm where African-Americans were concerned. The Moynihan report and its designation of African-American families as pathological ushered in a wave of research that labeled African-American learners as "at-risk," "endangered," or in other deficit-oriented terminology. The history of African-American education reviewed above, highlights gross inequities in the treatment and education of African-Americans in the U.S. Critical race theory is used in this study to document and explains the continued educational inequities faced by African-Americans in U.S. public schools. The next section of this chapter reviews the development and major tenets of critical race theory.

Critical Race Theory

Derrick Bell practiced as a civil rights attorney and was known as one of the earliest contributors of critical race theory. Bell openly demonstrated his dissatisfaction with the slow and often arduous legal process, and participated in legal arguments that addressed the "unjust" existing laws arguing in favor of equitability and social justice efforts.

The hierarchy of social order associated with race, power and privilege laid the framework for critical race theorists to investigate inequities between the races. As noted by Roithmayr (1999), "Critical race theory can be used to deconstruct the meaning of 'educational achievement' to recognize that the classroom is a central site for the constructing social and racial power" (p. 5). The critical race movement began in legal studies and grew out of discontent associated with the slow progress of the civil rights movement and laws, which were supposed to eliminate racism and discrimination by transforming the oppressive systems in place. According to Bell (1992), "The fact that, as victims, we suffer racism's harm but, as a people, [we] cannot share the responsibility for

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that harm, may be the crucial component in a definition of what it is to be black in America"

(p. 155).

Critical race theory examines the various ways in which traditional "law" legitimizes

racism, which negatively impacts African-Americans and people of color. As Marques

(2009) notes,

> Placing aside the permanence of racism argument, CRT's basic objective is employed
>
> through a methodology called the 'subordination question'...which seeks to
>
> deconstruct the existing legal order to reveal ways in which it invalidates or
>
> handicaps the claims of people of color," thus, allowing critical race theorists and
>
> those who accept this theory to develop subjective and objective assumptions on the
>
> concept of racism in the United States. (p. 13)

Proponents of CRT espouse that racism is pervasive in American society and can be

described as a "radical movement that seeks to transform the relationship among race, racism

and power" (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001, p. 1). Critical race theory (CRT) analyzes and

attempts to dismantle structures and processes that perpetuate racial injustice. It is a useful

tool for identifying and dismantling structures and social processes that allow racism and

racial discrimination to persist. Parker, Deyhele, and Villens (1999) notes, "The assumptions

of white superiority are so ingrained in our political and legal structures are almost

unrecognizable" (p. 183).

Asa Hilliard, a noted psychologist and race theorist, was critical of the

disproportionate numbers of African-American boys in special education and attributed

standardized testing as playing a major role in this phenomenon. Hilliard (1991) notes,

"Science becomes racist and its tools such as psychological assessments become weapons"

(p. 19). Historical messages of inferior intelligence quotients (IQs) suggest that poor,

African-American, and other racial minorities are shown by mainstream society to function below the norm. Preexisting perceptions, coupled with culturally unfair IQ assessments further perpetuate attitudinal or racial discrimination among American Americans and minority student populations.

Hilliard (1991) continues,

The confusion about the purpose of education and the basic function of America's public schools … seems to have spawned and fostered the notion that the salvation of our nation and our schools requires that we concentrate on testing school children rather than on teaching them; on blaming and embarrassing school children for low test scores instead of teaching and nourishing them; decapitating prospective teachers professionally by holding them up to public ridicule and scorn, before they can even begin their teaching careers, because of their test scores rather than encouraging them and teaching them how to teach children. (p. 19)

There are five main tenets commonly identified by CRT scholars. These include: (1) a belief in the normalcy of racism; (2) a belief that the educational system and other social systems are integral to the maintenance of racism; (3) support of the use of counter-storytelling to resist racism and other forms of oppression; (4) a belief in the principle of interest convergence; and (5) emphasis on intersectionality. A fuller description of these tenets is provided below.

Normalcy of Racism

Critical race theorists believe racism is normal and natural and requires those who want to fight for equality expose racism in a variety of methods. CRT scholars and practitioners assert that, rather than something out of the ordinary or unusual, racism is a normal aspect of life for persons of color. Many CRT scholars highlight laws in U.S. society

that are presumably neutral, but in application, perpetuate racism, inequality and discrimination. For example, *Brown v The Board of Education* (1954) provided false promises with regard to providing access to opportunity for African-Americans attending public schools, the Fair Housing Act of 1968, 1974, and 1988 promised an end to housing discrimination based on race, color or origin, and the Civil Rights Act of 1866, 1875, 1957, 1960, 1964, 1965, 1968, 1991 promising equal rights, but were practiced superficially.

CRT explains how racism continues to operate at the advantage of Whites by sustaining social, economic, political and legal advantages, while at the disadvantage of African-Americans and marginalized "others". CRT rejects the dominate ideology of "White privilege" by challenging the status quo (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 5). According to Bell (1992), "Tolerated in good times, despised when things go wrong, as a people we are scapegoated and sacrificed as distraction or catalyst for compromise to facilitate resolution of political differences or relieve economic adversity" (p. 10).

Counter-Storytelling

CRT uses storytelling as a method to reveal and understand the beliefs and values of marginalized "others". For example, counter-story telling reveals how White privilege reinforces social injustices between Whites and African-Americans. Critical race theory attempts to bring forth voice of the racially ignored through storytelling which provides viewpoints from historical oppression in an effort to create a society that is not tainted or determined by race. According to Delgado and Stefanic (2001), "Powerfully written stories and narratives may begin a process of adjustment in our system of beliefs and categories by calling attention to neglected evidence and reminding readers of our common humanity" (p. 42). When told as a narrative, capturing the essence of race, racism, and power can be powerful.

Whiteness as Property

The removal of lower income African-Americans from the spatial landscape including victims of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana and lower income African-Americans in Atlanta, Georgia further serve as examples of race and class inequities. In both instances, the removal of oppressed populations was accomplished by physically demolishing the urban housing projects, which were situated in low-income African-American communities. As a result, both urban cities are currently experiencing gentrification initiates, which include a reclaiming of the residential and commercial urban areas by the privileged few. This phenomenon may be attributed to the increasing popularity of "green" and "sustaining paradigms" because it is trendy to live in the city under the auspices of doing something good for the environment (e.g., urban infilling, land reclamation, etc.).

With regard to housing, African-Americans have historically been removed from the spatial landscape and have been forced out of their community, which excludes them from mainstream society. For example, major highways and interstates further isolate the races and the privileged few continually impose restrictions to force the "undesirables" of the population out of sight. White privilege is a social system of racism that benefits Whites. For example, Pulido (2000) asserts,

> White privilege allows us to see how environmental racism has been produced ---not only by consciously targeting people of color --- but by the larger process of urban development including, white flight, in which whites have sought to fully exploit the benefits of their whiteness. (p. 33)

Economic devices are also used to create and sustain communities that are designed to separate "others" such as restrictive covenants, gated/coded entrances, imminent domain,

and pathways only accessible to those with certain incomes and/or entitlements. Higher

property values tend to have well-endowed schools, whereas low property values have poor

schools. Therefore, in order to get a good education many families are of the belief that you

have to live in an area with high property values. Additionally, public transportation limits

the territories where people live and work, which further limits access to affordable housing,

quality schools, fire/police services, and goods/services. With regard to education, members

of the privileged few learn the hidden curriculum agenda, which is learned, adopted, and

communicated through generations. Within this context, members of the status quo influence

their counterparts what to think, feel and believe. These exclusionary practices sustain the

status quo and uplift new members of the privileged few.

Interest Convergence

The principle of interest convergence or material determinism is described in the

following ways. According to Delgado and Stefanic (2001), "The majority group tolerates

advances for racial justice only when it suits its interests to do so" (p. 149). Interest

convergence serves as a mechanism to advance and reinforce White supremacy by retaining

their positions of power, control and domination. This argument is based on an analysis of

Brown v. The Board of Education (1954), which theorized that the Supreme Court made its

landmark decision due to domestic considerations as opposed to moral issues over the

oppression of African-Americans.

> The opposition shows oppression of African Americans as follows,
>
> Never in the history of the Supreme Court had the implementation of a constitutional
>
> right been so delayed or the creation of it put in such vague terms; the Court thereby
>
> made clear that it was a white court, which would protect the interests of white
>
> Americans in the maintenance of stable institutions. (Bell, 1987, p. 60)

The court decision was allowed to benefit the larger society because it coincided with the

Civil rights movement and an end of the oppressive practices of the Jim Crow era,

which provided a more positive image within international multi-media outlets throughout

the world. This shift in thinking had changed pedagogical approaches in the American

educational system. According to Gay (2000),

> The potential of teaching is grounded in multi-cultural contexts, orientations, and
>
> experiences...which give source, focus, power and direction for a paradigmatic shift
>
> in the pedagogy used with Non-middle class, non-European American students in the
>
> United States. (p. 25)

Within the structure of critical race theory, there are several paradigms that include

interest convergence, revisionist history, critique of liberalism, and structural determinism.

Revisionist history is described as events in history or events that challenge the accepted one.

The authors note, "These events provide those who are silenced with 'voice' by raising issue

with the white dominated view of history, which is indicative of many social studies and

history textbooks" (Stefanic & Delgado, 2001, p. 155). Revisionist history disputes White

dominated history and events by providing 'voice' to people, which were otherwise silent

and involves culturally relevant pedagogy by encouraging teachers to move toward

recognizing the culture of African-American students as relative strengths rather than

differences to be ignored.

Structural determinism is described as shared practices that determine outcomes

without conscious knowledge. According to West (1993), "For liberals, black people are to

be included and integrated into 'our' society and culture, while for conservatives, they

[blacks] are to be well behaved and worthy of acceptance by 'our' way of life" (p. 121). The

progress of African-Americans is stagnated by the historical and structural systems, which

create oppression on marginalized masses. West (1993) notes, "We confine discussions about race in America to the 'problems' black people pose for whites rather than consider what this way of viewing black people reveals about us as a nation" (p. 2).

As a result of the displeasure of critical legal studies, critical race theorists were unhappy with the Civil Rights Movement, particularly regarding *Brown v The Board of Education* (1954), case because it was perceived that critical legal studies proponents were more concerned with interpreting the law rather than eradicating the problems associated with racism. Further, this case caused a division among the theorists, which revealed serious shortcomings in the strategy. While desegregation efforts subsequently led to "White flight", an equally problematic phenomenon occurred --- a loss of African-American teachers and administrators (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995 p. 56). As a nation, we should look at the education debt, which consists of the historical, socio-economic, political and moral deficits. The access to educational opportunities for African-American students is not --- nor was it ever intended to be based on a level playing field. The achievement deficits accumulated over time and have caused African-American students to lag further behind in achievement. Although *Brown v The Board of Education* (1954) was a federal landmark decision, critical race theorists maintain that schools are now more segregated than ever. In fact, "Civil rights laws benefit whites more often than blacks" (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 14).

Critique of liberalism is described as finding fault with civil rights activists due to its failure "to understand the limit of current legal paradigms to serve as catalysts for social change because of its emphasis on instrumentalism" (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 13). Ladson-Billings is instrumental in coining the phrase "culturally relevant pedagogy", whereby, she challenges teachers to move beyond the colorblind cliché. She is considered as one of the early critical race theorists because she was not content with accepting class inequities and

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disparities that exists among African-Americans. Instead, she insists we delve deeper with explorations by examining issues pertaining to race and class.

Adding to the discussion, Minow (2010) observes the following,

The Supreme Court's preoccupation with color-blindness in schools is especially odd, given the persistent racial gap in achievement, the risks of mis-identification of students of color in the context of special education, and the Court's own veneration of *Brown*. (p. 29)

An exemplary example of interest convergence is the 1954 *Brown* decision eradicating racially segregated schools. As noted by Bell (1997), "Both history and experience tell us that each new victory over injustice both removes a barrier to racial equality and reveals another obstacle that we must, in turn, grapple with and --- eventually --- overcome" (p. 257). The *Brown* decision came after a 20-year campaign of sustained litigation supported by massive organizing, and was finally supported by a Justice Department brief only after recognizing that segregation could cause the country to lose its contest with the Soviet Union and possibly avoid the potentially embarrassing event of Sputnik that our country experienced over 50 years ago. Laws enacted by federal guidelines have been slow, temporary, cyclical, and contingency-based. Subsequently, the rules are changed, reassessed and maintained when it suits the interests of the privileged few. The expanded promises of *Brown* continue to impact students and today's schools, and these laws appear to uphold the rights and entitlements of the status quo.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality speaks to the complex and multiple ways subordination can come together at the same time; it can be described as an overlapping of inequalities such as

race/gender. For example, being African-American and female may serve as a dual disadvantage across multiple categories, such as race and gender.

As a legal scholar, Kimberle' Crenshaw was credited for being one of the major contributors of critical race theory. Her theoretical framework is described as "feminist pragmatist" and stems from her inquiry that views race, gender, and law as "interconnected". Within this framework, she focuses on changing situations through human participation. Through critical race theory, this theoretical framework calls for action to change the existing systems of oppression, which impact African-Americans and people of color. According to Carter (2008),

> The intersection of critical race theory and mainstream achievement ideology calls for a different kind of achievement ideology that considers how the structural condition of racism interacts with black student's individual agency in the pursuit of academic successes and upward social and economic mobility. (p. 471)

DuBois (1986) notes the subordination of intersectionality, and describes what it is like to live as a Negro and male. As noted in the following quote, "He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face" (DuBois, 1986, p. 365).

The intersectionality of property in relation to education can help us to understand inequality. Crenshaw, Gotanda, and Peller (1995) note, "By focusing on a distinct, subordinate 'other,' whites include themselves in the dominant circle --- an arena in which most hold no real power, but only their privileged racial identity" (p. 116). As a major scholar of critical race theory, Richard Delgado, is an expert in civil rights law and a critic of the law and literature movement and is known for his writing style, which is described as

very direct in laying out core issues simply and powerfully. Delgado points out the different

perspectives of African-Americans and raises serious racial issues and challenges one's

thinking about law and race. In his own words, Delgado states his theoretical position,

> We postpone confronting novelty and change until they acquire enough momentum
>
> that we are swept forward --- we take seriously new social thought only after hearing
>
> it so often that its tenets and themes begin to seem familiar, inevitable, and true.   (pp.
>
> 1-19)

 The intersectionality of African-Americans and White binary extends beyond simply

African-Americans and White, but also include Latino/as, Asians and Native Americans, to

name a few. Since other marginalized groups also experience social and legal injustices in

society similar to African-Americans, they too encounter unjust racist policies in society.

Injustices include immigration laws that impede attainment of American citizenship, policies,

gender and class discrimination in employment; housing and schooling is defined as

"marginalized experience," which is indicative of the systematic omission and obscure denial

of lived experiences of women" (p. 111). Regarding gender, Stone-Mediatore (2000) notes

the following,

> Inequalities among women are defined as 'marginalized experience,' which is
>
> indicative of the systematic omission and obscure denial of lived experiences of
>
> women. The lived experiences are documented by journals, life stories, testimonials
>
> and essays, but are discredited by "hard scientists" because the concept of experience
>
> oversimplifies experience and language. (p. 111)

Being African-American and female is as a double-whammy or dual disadvantage across

multiple categories, such as race and gender. For example, Gloria Jean Watkins (aka bell

hooks) a prolific writer, conveys in her writings how it feels as an African-American female

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and living with racism and oppression. She is deeply inspired by her writings of Paulo

Freire. Watkins (aka bell hooks), like Freire, view education as the practice of freedom and

argue in favor of a progressive, holistically engaged pedagogy. Profoundly influenced by

Freire, hooks' view of teaching is a performance with the potential of bringing out essential

elements for learning in each classroom. Through her teachings and writings, hooks shares

her lived experiences of racism and uses her writing as a method of storytelling by exposing

the inequalities in our society, as well as White feminist groups.

hooks (2009) conveys, "Many people in our nation, especially white people, believe

that racism ended ---- consequently, when black people attempt to give voice to the pain of

racist victimization, we are likely to be accused of playing the 'race card,'" (hooks, 2009, p.

71). Watkins (aka hooks) uses lower case letters as a pseudonym to symbolize her

"Challenge to a male-dominated authority" (p. 71). She accounts, in *Talking Back* her

explanation for adopting a pseudonym. hooks' given name of Gloria Watkins was difficult

for her to claim (as cited in Tookey, 2003).

According to Tookey (2003), hooks states, "One of the many reasons I chose to write

using the pseudonym bell hooks, a family name, was to construct a writer-identity that would

challenge and subdue all impulses leading me away from speech to silence" (p. 39). The

political context and structure of our country is oppressive and the intersectionality of issues

such as gender, race, and class distinctions are interconnected because separate categories of

gender, race, and class distinctions simply do not exist. She perceives the political context

and structure of our country as oppressive and encourages black women to unite and analyze

issues such as gender, race, and class. hooks (1994) notes,

> Many black nationalists will eagerly embrace critical theory and thought as a
>
> necessary weapon in the struggle against white supremacy, but suddenly lose the

insight that theory is important when it comes to questions of gender, of analyzing

sexism and sexist oppression in the particular and specific ways it is manifest in black

experience. (p. 69)

In contrast to her contributions of critical race inquiry and feminist thought, criticisms exist

regarding her work. Some of these criticisms include the perception that her work is not well

received among White feminists because they (White feminists) do not want to recognize

racial and class differences in women of color, and allegations of "black psychopathology,"

which are rooted in self-hatred among African-American males. She further perceives

African-American female scholars as 'marginalized' by racism and sexism. However, she

does not make the same allegations against White males. It is perceived that her work is

detrimental to the cause of African-Americans, and the perception exists that she is anti-

White and radical in her ideologies (Florence, 1998). The rest of this chapter presents a

literature review of themes relevant to African- American educational relocation and

African-American academic achievement. This review uses critical race theory to analyze

racial disparities in education and to give "voice" to the educational relocation experiences of

African-American families.

Critical Geographies of Race and African-American/White Binary

Critical geography can be described as the relationships between the "processes" of

urbanization and inequality (Harvey, 2001). Tate (2008) contends, "the population explosion

in suburban communities over the past several decades has led some commentators to

suggest that the suburbs have become politically, socially, and economically independent

from the central cities --- unaffected by the concentrated poverty aging infrastructure, and

high crime that plaques many of the nation's largest cities" (p. 403); thereby, leaving urban

dwellers to contend with a myriad of social, political, and financial problems which plague

cities. Thus it is imperative to critically analyze geography and its relationship to racism. According to Harvey (2001), "A critical geography might go so far as to challenge contemporary forms of political-economic power, marked by hyper-development, spiraling social inequalities and multiple signs of serious environmental degradation" (p. 208).

Despite the gentrification process occurring in most cities, Soja (2010) warns that injustices still occur and should be fought against. According to Soja (2010),

> Gentrification as a force behind the displacement of pre-existing poor populations and a vehicle to introduce exclusive uppie amenities to impacted urban neighborhoods must continue to be fought against, but the commitment to improving urban life carried by the gentrifiers stands in marked contrast to the more evasive flow of those moving into gated and guarded communities. (p. 216)

Soja further states that the study of critical geographies "can be used to promote greater interconnections and more effective coalition building between various, formerly very difficult to combine social movements, based on the shared experiences of being negatively affected by unjust geographies" (p. 209).

Beyond the African-American /White binary, other marginalized groups have experienced unjust legal and social injustices. For example, Hispanics from the U. S. borders in Florida, Arizona, and Georgia, as well as other border states, have encountered new and more stringent laws that legally remove "undesirables" from the landscape and force them to return to their country of origin. The Haitian population is another racialized group that risk deportation and denial of citizenship in the United States. African-Americans and marginalized "others" are racially displaced from their landscape and frequently left, but with little recourse, options or alternatives. McKittrick (2002) notes, "Space and place give black lives meaning in a world that has, for the most part, incorrectly deemed black populations

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and their attendant geographies as 'ungeographic' and/or philosophically undeveloped" (p. xiii).

The critical geographies of race and African-Americans /White binary paradigms surpass issues that relate to "Blackness" or "Whiteness". The controversial Elian Gonzales' case, which surfaced in 1999, demonstrated the vast inequities that are evident in issues pertaining to legal and social justice disparities. The drama that unfolded was shown in multiple media outlets, which resulted in the Immigration Naturalization Service (INS) physically removing young Elian from the United States landscape in the middle of the night and returned him to Cuba. The authorities debated as to where Elian belonged --- United States or Cuba. Additionally, legal and spatial policies raised problematic issues that addressed race and class, inclusion, as well as exclusion, which were at the heart of the controversy. The slanted role the media played was a major role in the controversy that played out like a Hollywood production. In reality, this racial debate amplified the inequities of law (critical geographies of race) and social justice (critical race theory), which related to immigration, racial discourse, belonging, socio-economic status, exploitation, oppression, politics, nationalism, culture and language. The Gonzales case brought about unanticipated allegiances among marginalized others, including non-Hispanic Whites, African-Americans and Latino/as, as they could all identify with the injustices experienced by the Gonzales family. In protest, these unanticipated allegiances resulted in shame to the nation and protesters affected the spatial landscape of a major urban city in the United States. Elian's return to Cuba tested the social and political positioning of the United States and took on a harsher stance regarding the future admittance of "other" populations seeking to migrate to the United States. No matter how many laws are put into place focus on the disparities within society, the status quo cannot deny their quest for status, superiority and domination

of racialized "others. This controversial debate was reflected across the world, and is an enthralling example of critical geographies of race and critical race theory espoused by narrative storytelling, "Whiteness as property", intersectionality, and interest convergence tenets.

The patterns of urban segregation can historically be traced to African-American migration patterns after slavery and during the Industrial Revolution. According to Massey (2001), "Two thirds of urban African-Americans live under conditions of high residential segregation; two thirds of all African-Americans attend minority-dominant schools" (p. 6). These housing and schooling patterns suggest the reason for discrimination is mainly due to racism and data appears to indicate that American society is still largely separated by race. Watts (2003) states, "The historical experience of African-Americans in our country has been shaped by the institution of slavery, dehumanization of blacks, segregation, pursuit of civil rights, and racism in contemporary American society" (p. 1).

In reflecting upon the migration of former slaves from the agricultural South to the industrialized North, the spatial landscape was forever changed in the United States. More specifically, former slaves participated in a mass exodus to the North, which was once forbidden territory. The former slaves were in search of independence, freedom and social justice leaving behind the oppressive Southern slave past. Frey and Myers (2005) note, "High levels of segregation were partly due to the draw to factory jobs that were prevalent during the mid-twentieth century" (p.10).

In previous decades, many urban cities were largely comprised of factories. The invention of automobiles, rail lines, airplanes, and weaving machines enabled mass production in factories. Newly invented machines manufactured everyday products, and were distributed throughout the United States through better and quicker modes of

transportation. The Industrial Revolution was a calling card for African-Americans to migrate to the North in search of new and improved opportunities.

The migration of former slaves from the South to the North was met with resistance from the existing Whites, which still promoted segregation, prejudice and discrimination. For example, African-Americans faced harsh requirements from the dominant power structure such as imposing literacy tests and poll taxes. These oppressive tactics were designed to intimidate African-Americans from practicing their voting rights. As the African-American populations in northern cities expanded rapidly from the influx of southern migrants, Squires (1994) notes, "Whites resorted to a variety of tactics designed to enforce the residential color line, including violence, neighborhood covenants, racial steering, redlining, discriminatory lending practices and restrictive zoning laws" (p. 458).

The Great Migration of southern African-Americans relocating to the urban north lead to the hope of securing economic opportunities for higher pay jobs and leaving behind the dwindling rural agricultural economy, low wages, poor treatment in terms of human rights, and oppressive Jim Crow laws, which favored sustaining White supremacy in the South. Martin (2007) notes, "The southern educational system as a whole was greatly inferior to that of the North, and its failings fell disproportionately on black students" (p.7). The South offered limited work for African-Americans in a dwindling agricultural economy and continuing to work in agriculture rendered limited employment, housing and educational opportunities for themselves and their families.

In the south, African-American children rarely went to school beyond the 6th grade. Crew (1987) states, "Northern states allocated more money for education and had compulsory attendance requirements that forced students to stay in school longer" (p. 36). It was the belief for African-Americans that moving North provided an educational advantage

for African-American families, in that their children had access to opportunity for a better education and improvement for their future. The migration of African-Americans to the North sent a message to Southern Whites and the nation their discontent and frustration encountered in their everyday lives, which consisted of decades of bigotry, racial inequalities, discrimination, oppression, and non-existent employment and educational opportunities for their children. The great Northern migration negatively impacted the southern agricultural economy and dwindling workforce, which raised the consciousness of Southerners and the nation.

Many African-American families were drawn to the North because many believed and hoped that life in the North could not be any worse than the oppressive South. African-Americans left the South in droves in search of a new and improved way of life only to realize a failed promise of finding freedom in employment, housing and educational opportunities. The northern migration left its racial imprint on urban cities for generations. Life for many Southern African-Americans who migrated to northern cities was not necessarily better. Although there were employment openings for skilled and semi-skilled jobs, which offered on-the-job training, these jobs were secured for Whites. Even for the semi-skilled and college-educated African- American workers, only menial or subservient jobs White workers did not want were offered to African-Americans. Still, many perceived life as better in the North than in the South. Everyday life for African-Americans in the "New Found Land" was met with much resistance by Whites. In spite of reality, The "Promised Land" of impending wealth signaled a "rites of passage" for many African-American families and quickly changed the spatial landscape of major northern urban cities. The Great Migration ended in the 1970s and by then, "Nearly half of all black Americans---

some 47%---would be living outside the South, compared to ten percent when the migration began" (Wilkerson, 2010, p. 10).

During this era and beyond, many White families enjoyed the luxury of higher disposable incomes and moved to the suburbs, while many African-Americans lived in sub-standard housing in the city and their children attended inferior schools. Crew (1987) notes, "Funneled into certain areas in most northern cities, Afro-Americans have paid nearly twice as much as their white counterparts for equivalent housing" (p. 36). While African-Americans earned better wages in the North that they had previously in the South, the extra wages were largely devoted to higher living expenses or housing, food, clothing, etc. making it more challenging to save money or move out of urban communities. The daily living limitations forced many African-Americans to remain in segregated, crowed, unsanitary and substandard conditions. Watts (2003) notes, "De facto segregation permeated in the northern school districts where restrictive covenants forced blacks in certain urban areas to live in substandard housing conditions, mostly housing tenements, apartments and rooming houses" (p.1).

As during the Northern migration, racial segregation permeated by redlining practices, discrimination and educational inequalities still exists today. McKinley, Shepherd, and McKinley (2006) state, "In the years after the Civil War, formerly enslaved people throughout the South temporarily enjoyed freedom and new opportunities" (p. 2). In reality, African- American families that were courageous enough to move into White communities were met with resistance and discrimination, as their homes were often fire bombed and burned down, signaling for African-Americans to "stay in their place". Racial tensions resulted in race riots throughout many urban cities. The following excerpt demonstrates the

level of racial tension and civil unrest many African-Americans experienced in response to the slow progress of the Civil Rights Act of 1964,

> I moved to Detroit's new west side because it was a 'nice neighborhood". Raging
> fires burned out of control for blocks and blocks so heavily they blocked out the
> vision of homes. There was agony on the faces of those who lived close to the
> burnings, afraid their homes would be burned, too. Looters drove pickup trucks
> loaded with everything from floor mops to new furniture. Rumors spread as fast as
> the flames and it was hard to know what was true. By 5 p.m.
> It was necessary to close our home to keep the smoke from saturating the house, but
> at 6:30 p.m. the electricity went out so we were forced to open the house again. On
> Linwood, three blocks west of 12th street, smoke was so thick it was impossible to see
> one block away. A man, his wife and two small children stumbled along the street
> with a suitcase and bed sheet filled with the few belongings they could grab. Tears
> streamed down the mother's face. By 9 p.m. curfew, the streets were quiet, but fear
> remained etched on the faces of those of us who had to spend the night. But the
> residents of "this nice neighborhood" were afraid that the riot wasn't over. And it
> wasn't. (Zinn & Arnove, 2004, pp. 415-416)
>
> --- Sandra A. West (A Negro Resident's Story in Urban Detroit, 1967)

White families insisted upon separation of the races; they were privy to living the American dream by providing better educational opportunities for their children and resources that afforded them a better quality of life and in the lives of their children.

During this era, federal laws were slowly changing for the temporary benefit of African- Americans such as the Housing Act of 1937, 1949, 1961, and 1968, respectfully. The 1937 federal housing act assured public housing, the 1949 act pledged a decent home for

every American family, and in 1961 the federal government provided billions of dollars in grants and loans to cities and towns for the purpose of reviving inner cities through urban renewal initiatives, which were sponsored by FHA home mortgage loans. The 1968 Fair Housing Act was designed to restrict racial discrimination in housing practices. Instead, lending institutions denied African-American families access to suburban home ownership. The result of a federal study on mortgage lending practices shows that "Minorities are more than two to three times as likely as whites to receive high-priced mortgages" (Fleishmen, 2005, p.163). Anyon (1997) notes, "FHA procedures between 1934 and 1971 fostered the decay of inner city neighborhoods stripping them of their middle-class residents --- by favoring construction and purchase of single-frame homes in suburban areas over modernization of city neighborhoods" (p. 63).

Due to the high rates of an uneducated and semi-skilled workforce among African-Americans, there is a link between the assimilation of African-Americans and an industrialized economy. The African-American family structure is inextricably linked to segregation and from the history of slavery and beyond. These factors [African-American family structure] and [segregation] are paramount to the overall benefit and success to the economy. It is of great significance to understanding the perpetuation of urban poverty in America as it has attributed to the present lack of affordable housing in safe and economically prosperous communities (Seitles, 1996). Along this line, "Residential segregation often results in disparate economic, physical and social neighborhood environments, which translate into lower educational attainment, employment opportunities, and accessibility to resources" (Massey & Denton, 1993, p. 413). Even today, the segregated, poor and oppressive South can still be found in the segregated, poor and

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oppressive North, which can be linked to the pattern of the African-American family structure. For example, family income and resources influences ones' place in housing.

Through predatory lending and redlining practices of mortgage lenders, real estate agents, attorneys, and insurance companies have all played a role in the fallout of home ownership for many African-American and minority families. Since the onset of the recession and upheaval of the real estate market, mortgage lenders have tightened restrictions for lending, resulting in increased foreclosure rates and financial instability. Consequently, many families were forced out of their homes, which often have led to mass displacement and uprooting families with limited resources from their communities and schools. Rice (2009) notes, "Biased practices in the housing, insurance and lending markets have resulted in contemporary segregated residential patterns in America" (p. 1).

Some African-American families may prefer to live in segregated housing communities through unforced segregation. Unforced segregation is defined as self-imposed segregation, or a general preference of interacting with members of the same race within the spatial landscape. These communities have historically sought out segregated housing communities, leading to segregated schools (Ladson-Billings, 1999). However, when given a "choice," many African- Americans are forced to remain in segregated communities because of redlining, unfair mortgage lending, steering practices, limited resources and the need for close proximity to social support networks. "For generations many African American families could not live in neighborhoods of their choice, regardless of their education and income because of white prejudice and discrimination" (Gibson & Ogbu, 1991, p. 278). There is little chance of those with limited resources to acquire quality housing or have access to schools outside of their distressed communities. When confronted with discriminatory practices of real estate agents (Yinger, 1995), local government (Shlay &

Rossi, 1981), and mortgage lenders (Squires & Kim, 1995) [privileged few] make false assumptions that create a racially segmented housing market, which blocks the relocation aspirations of minorities.

The persistent levels of poverty in highly segregated urban communities are primarily due to high levels of unemployment with little means of future economic viability. Examples of housing discrimination are evident in today's society that exhibit desperate social conditions, which creates frustration, despair and racial animosity. High jobless rates, homelessness, and an uneducated work force are attributed to other social problems such as crime, drugs, gang activity, and violence which further disrupts family life and institutions within the community such as schools, banks, stores, restaurants, etc. (Massey & Denton, 1998; O'Connor, 2001; Wilson, 1987) and others argue that poor minorities who live in high poverty communities are too isolated from mainstream America. The effects of having high levels of poverty concentration in urban areas are divisive among the races and contribute to further social isolation. Massey and Denton (1998) note, "Mainstream America often views them as 'other' or foreign, bearing differences or 'un-America', values and ethics" (p. 73).

Segregated Communities and Schools in DeKalb County

Since *Brown v The Board of Education* lawsuit, federal, state and local governments have continued to resist school desegregation by sustaining many discriminatory practices. For example, the U. S. Supreme Court was tasked with supervising interracial contact in specific non-compliant school districts, such as DeKalb County, Georgia. DeKalb County had been resistant to school desegregation and appealed the courts' decision, claiming racial balance had been achieved.

After achieving "unitary status," control was granted back to the local districts and many school districts reverted back to their original discriminatory practices, including

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DeKalb County. According to Clotfelter (2004), "Once a school district was deemed to be unitary, almost any race-neutral and otherwise discriminatory method of assigning students appeared acceptable, including traditional neighborhood schools" (p. 197).

DeKalb County Schools District in Georgia requested suspension of supervision by the U. S. Supreme Court in 1986, with the belief that integration of students had been satisfied. I personally witnessed supervision by the U.S. Supreme Court at a time DeKalb County School District was touted as achieving "unitary status" and disappointingly watched the district revert back to its' original discriminatory practices. The local school districts were not solely to blame. The U. S. Supreme Court interpreted the law. However, the Legislative Branch did not act in good faith to set the stage for educational equality. The U. S. federal government basically "rubber-stamped" school districts to go back to practicing business as usual. The "business as usual" practices were advantageous for the "haves" and detrimental to the "have not's."

With the passage of *Brown v the Board of Education* (1954) mandating public school integration, many White families held steadfast to segregationist practices of the "old South". As white families avoided contact with African-Americans, white families continued to resist integration and opted to relocate to outer suburban communities, which were primarily white. Desegregation measures prompted many white families to resort to "white flight". "White flight" is defined as when Whites move from places (such as urban neighborhoods or schools) that are predominately populated by minorities; this phenomenon encourages the remaining Whites in the community to follow suit and sell their homes. The pattern of "White flight" further separated whites from African-Americans in virtually every aspect of life, especially in housing and schooling. This phenomenon existed in many urban cities where the African-American population is densely populated.

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Table 1.

Demographic Housing Patterns in Urban Cities

Hyper-segregation of African-Americans

Detroit	82.3%
Baltimore	64.8%
Atlanta	61.6%
Memphis	61.6%
Washington, DC	60.5%
St. Louis	51.8%

Note: Adapted from "Racial Integration in Urban America," by L. Quinn, L., and J. Pawasarat, Revised 2003, *Employment and Training Institute*, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, December 2002.

For example, Detroit, 82.3%; Baltimore, 64.8%; Atlanta, 61.6%; Memphis, 61.6%, Washington, DC, 60.5% and St. Louis, MI, 51.8% (Quinn & Pawasarat, 2003,10). Cruse (2007) notes, during the 1960s and 1970s, it has been stated that, "So many whites in Atlanta relocated to the suburbs that Atlanta was known as the 'City too busy moving to hate'" (p. 352). Urban communities remain racially segregated since "choice" often does not exist for many of its' residents. Conversely, for whites with resources "choice" does exist. When neighborhoods reach the 30% tipping point, whites choose to abandon the cities and head for the suburbs, creating "White flight" (Holmes, 2002).

This phenomenon resulted in the development of a new housing pattern, which was racially segregated. Racism, classism, elitism, and discrimination were significant factors in examining the rate of urban decline, which developed and sustained the spatial landscape of poor and low-income minority residents. A prime example of urban decline and a high

incidence of African-Americans evidenced in Atlanta showed that housing patterns in

Atlanta are disproportionately unequal and segregated. Iceland, Weinberg, and Steinmetz

(2002) as cited in Bratt, Stone, and Hartman (2006), found five separate dimensions of

segregation, whereby the affluent Whites relocate to exclusive communities located in

northern suburbs and those with limited resources created underclass urban communities,

which continue to isolate African-Americans in the urban "black ghettos".

Table 2.

Key Factors in Community Relocation

Housing Preferences by Race

Whites	African-Americans
Whites resistance to residential segregation	African-Americans expressed a preference for mixed neighborhoods
Whites will not buy a home in existing integrated neighborhoods	African-Americans expressed a preference to be with their "own kind"
Whites reluctance to remain in neighborhoods where African-Americans are moving in	Key factor in relocating was based on the economic-status of African-Americans

Note: Adapted from "Chocolate City, Vanilla Suburbs: Will the trend toward racially
segregate communities continue?" by R. Fairley, G. Schuman, S. Bianchi, D. Colasanto, D.,
& S. Hatchett, 1978, *Social Science Research*, *7*(4), pp. 319-344.

Table 3.

Dissimilarity Index: Atlanta: 85.9%

Centralization	71.7%
Concentration	79.9%
Isolation	66.7%
Evenness	64.5%
Clustering	42.0%

Scores over 60 on 4 out of 5 dimensions represent hyper-segregation in Atlanta, GA.

Note. Adapted from "The Building Blacks in Atlanta: Racial Residential Segregation and Neighborhood Inequality, by M. Hayes, 2006, *Journal of Sociology.* Paper 10. Retrieved August 22, 2012 from http://digitialarchivergsu.edu/sociology.

Measures of Housing Patterns

There are five dimensions commonly used to measure housing patterns: evenness, exposure, concentration, centralizing and clustering. Evenness refers to the distribution of residents. Exposure refers to the potential contact among the races. Centralization refers to the amount of physical space that is to the level a population group is located in the center of an urban community. Finally, clustering relates to the degree minority groups live disproportionately in urban areas. These terms will be used in the following section to describe housing patterns in DeKalb County.

In Atlanta, the 2000 metropolitan area found the hyper-segregation for African-Americans is as follows: Evenness 64.5%, isolation 66.7%, concentration 69.9%, centralization 71.7% and clustering 42.0% (Hayes, 2006). Scores over 60 on four out of five dimensions of segregation are indicative of hyper-segregation. Hyper-segregation involves one race living in large, densely populated communities, which are packed tightly around the urban core. The data reflects that there is almost no residential contact with those that are not African-American within these neighborhoods. Hyper-segregation implies a level of extreme isolation, in that minorities have nominal personal contact with individuals outside of their own race. For example, in metropolitan Atlanta, the majority of African-Americans live in the city central of Atlanta and DeKalb County, a neighboring eastern county in close proximity to Atlanta. The African-American family structure, coupled with the need for the poor to have access to social support networks are viable explanations as to why African-Americans tend to live in urban areas. Hayes (2006) notes, "The growing concentration of

African-Americans in the urban core of Atlanta, combined with the disproportionate poverty, has resulted in remarkable economic, social and cultural isolation" (p. 33).

The dissimilarity index measures segregation between two racial groups and correlates to the isolation index, which is positively correlated in Atlanta. Hayes (2006) notes, "The majority of whites live in northern counties, such as Cobb (68.7%) and Gwinnett (67.1%)" (p. 33). To further understand the dissimilarity index, a dissimilarity index ranges from 0-100, with 100 indicating the range between two races, which in this case, indicates how much Whites and African-Americans are segregated from each other. For example, a score of 0 represents complete integration, and a score of 100 represents total segregation. The isolation index measures the percentage of one owns' group that a typical person would encounter in their neighborhood or community.

In 2000, Atlanta's dissimilarity index was 85.9% indicating an unusually high rate of segregation between Whites and African-Americans. In Atlanta, as well as in many urban areas, African-Americans tend to concentrate in the same urban communities. This pattern is likely due to the need of being in close proximity to his/her support group, access to public transportation and places of employment. In further reviewing the disparities in Atlanta housing patterns, "Over 84.1% and 44.1% of the city of Atlanta's poor are concentrated in the high poverty neighborhoods and extreme poverty neighborhoods, respectively" (Turner Foundation, 1999, p. 9).

I have come to realize the terms "urban" and "city central" are code words for "poor black ghetto". Wilson (1993) states, "Accordingly, since local acceptance dictated federal housing policies, public housing was overwhelmingly concentrated in the overcrowded and deteriorating inner-city ghettos --- the poorest and least socially organized sections of the city and metropolitan area" (p. 19). For example, public housing is a federally funded entity that

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isolates families by race and class, which is partly responsible for the creation and sustainability of urban ghettos.

Much of the growth in metropolitan Atlanta is characterized as suburban sprawl. In contrast to the plight poor urban African-Americans experience, Atlanta's most affluent families have continued a pattern of segregation by relocating to exclusive suburban communities that are abundant with amenities. In the 1990s, large counties such as Gwinnett, Cobb, and Fulton continued to grow, which resulted in suburban sprawl acceleration, urban core divestment, infrastructure decline and housing segregation by race and income. The resources moved with its residents in suburban areas with heightened resources and left urban dwellers in areas with limited resources, which further demonstrate separate and unequal access to quality housing and schooling.

The cycle of segregation is evident in urban areas with a heavy concentration of African-American residents and in suburban areas with Whites, which significantly affect the racial composition of schools and communities. The concentration of "haves" v. "have not's," further illustrate the division and disparities between race and class in Atlanta. For example, over 88% of the Atlanta regions poor African-Americans lived in south Fulton and DeKalb counties, 62% in the city of Atlanta, while the number of poor African-Americans 6%, lived in Cobb and Gwinnett counties, which are primarily White northern counties. In metro Atlanta, African-Americans are concentrated in the southern counties, while Whites are concentrated in the northern counties---creating the north/south divide in housing and schooling. Not surprisingly, segregated housing patterns are associated with segregated schools and, for African-American and other minority students, segregated schools often result in poor academic performance.

Persistent Housing Inequities

Quality of housing for minorities plays a large role in the quality of minority education. As noted by Shapiro (2004), "Understanding why people choose to live where they do is crucial to understanding racial inequality" (p. 129). The quest for social justice in education and schools is evident in a "racialized" society, which have permeated into housing. Throughout the nation, the vast inequities are prevalent in our educational system, as well as in housing.

To understand the historical patterns related to housing preferences further, racial segregation was accomplished by implementing racially restrictive covenants. The restrictive covenants were designed to control how property was developed, how it was used, controlled who lived there, determined lot sizes, specified the number of animals one could own and restricted multiple family housing. Realtors played a major role in fostering racial segregation by steering potential African-American homeowners away from White residential areas, and instead steered potential African-American homeowners to areas designated as African-American. During the 1960s and 1970s, real estate agents convinced White families to sell their homes well below market value and then resell their homes at higher prices to African-American families, exploiting African-American families, but yet substantially reaping the financial benefits for themselves.

Likewise, the federal government played a role in denying African-Americans access to housing by frequently denying federally supported loans and mortgages to African-American families desiring to live in racially integrated communities. Subsequently, the federal government developed "neighborhood security maps". According to Anyon (1997), "In 1934, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) began using the risk-rating policies of Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC)" (p. 63). The maps provided detailed descriptions

of available housing, with representations of the socio-economic and racial make-up of existing residents. The neighborhood maps were represented by grades of A through F. A community designed as "A" denoted highly desirable communities, "B" meant second best, while "C" and "D" meant racial and ethnic groups lived in the community, which indicated that these neighborhoods were at risk of African-Americans moving in (Hillier, 2005). A "D" or "F" grade community meant families were ineligible to receive government-backed loans that were intended to protect the racial stability of the community, which were further supported by the government through implementing restrictive covenants. A Supreme Court case, *Shelly v. Kraemer* (1948) ruled it was legally unenforceable to uphold restrictive covenants (Cahen, 1956). The suit sought to prevent the Shelly family (an African-American family) from owning property in an environmentally-desirable suburban area.

The United States Housing Authority (USHA) instituted further instances of residential housing segregation. For example, it built segregated housing projects for African-American families, which were located in environmentally undesirable and urban African-American communities. For over the past fifty years, the federal government has played a role in perpetuating residential segregation in federal housing projects built in poor, undesirable and segregated African-American urban areas. Pulido (2000) asserts, "Blacks exposure to environmental hazards is largely a function of severe spatial containment and the historic practices of locating hazardous land uses in black areas" (p. 562). Government-sponsored housing projects were built in industrial areas, landfills, or close to railroad tracks. Through national media coverage in 1982, a grass roots initiative consisting of minority community activists developed an "environmental justice model" in which the activists shed light on the spatial contamination practices imposed by the government in many minority communities (Holifield, 2001). The activists rallied against a hazardous landfill in Warren

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County, NC, which revealed government-imposed environmental racism practices experienced in minority communities. These practices by the federal government were clearly acts of environmental racism without regard to the health, safety, and well-being of African-American residents and community.

The Fair Housing Act of 1968, the Fair Lending Acts of 1970, and 1988 amendment to the Fair Housing Act did little to correct the disadvantages African-Americans had already suffered in the previous decades (Kaplan & Valls, 2007). The effects of high levels of poverty concentration in urban areas are divisive among the races and contribute to further social isolation. Massey and Denton (1998); Wilson (1987); and O'Connor (2001), argue that "Poor minorities who live in high poverty neighborhoods are too isolated from mainstream America, which often views them as 'other' or foreign, bearing differences or 'un-American', values and ethics" (Massey & Denton, 1998, p. 73). African-Americans with limited resources face many housing challenges and obstacles to success. For example, Gotham (2000) states, "A vast array of scholarly research indicates that whites are the overwhelming beneficiaries of federal programs and policies while non-whites, especially African-Americans, generally have been excluded from participation in state sponsored housing, finance, and education opportunities" (p. 15). With regard to the disparities in housing, finance, and educational opportunities, African-Americans have historically been removed from the mainstream spatial landscape. According to a report by the Economic Policy Program Housing Committee (2012), "Black home ownership was 28 percent points below white home ownership on 2010, a wider gap than in 1990 or 2000" (p. 6). The Hispanic population experienced housing gaps as well. As noted by Pendall, Frieman, and Myers (2012), "Hispanics saw a strong increase in home ownership during the housing boom but lost all of these gains in the bust, their home ownership rate lags White non-Hispanics by

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25 points" (p. 6). In essence, African-American and Hispanic median wealth declined by one half to two-thirds. Thomas (2008) states, "This is our basic conclusion: Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white---separate and unequal" (p. 3).

Reclaiming the South

Many families migrated to the North realized that the "Promised Land" did not offer the promises made. According to Stack (1996), "Black Americans who had spent all or part of a lifetime in large industrial cities were abandoning urban life and moving south, sometimes back to the home places of their childhood" (p. viii). In reality, many of the northern migrants never enjoyed the benefits associated with upward mobility. Stack (1996) notes, "A return migration---perhaps a Great Return Migration --- is evolving as individuals and families have responded to the destruction of American urban life by calling on the ties to home that have persisted through the generations" (p. 7). However, the same problems --- lack of quality educational and housing opportunities, racism, and wealth disparities --- African-American families experienced during the Northern Migration.

In the Twenty-first Century,

A recognition of the black southerners' ties to the South also ran counter to the emerging black-power/black pride movements of the 1960s, which focused on the roots of black culture in the African homeland, rather than in the slave South where African Americans had been dragged against their will and subjected to brutal, dehumanizing treatment at the hands of their white oppressors. (Cobb, 2004, p. 262)

Judging from the injustice and suffering African-Americans experienced, it is hard to imagine why anyone would want to return to the oppressive South. In reality, they could not make it in the North. The reasons some migrants returned to the South were associated with

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interacting with other family members more often, having close proximity to a supportive network, and a need for returning "home".

Academic Performance: African-American Males and Other
Minority Students in U.S. Schools

According to Noguera and Wing (2006), "The vast majority of those who fail, are suspended or expelled, or are labeled educationally deficient and siphoned off into remedial courses are poor and often come from families headed by parents or guardians who lack a college education" (p. 4). Children who live in poverty are prone to attend schools where poor children are in the majority. "Three quarters of African-Americans live in highly segregated neighborhoods today, whereas 90-100% of other groups experience only moderate levels of segregation" (Massey & Fischer, 2000, p. 671).

It has been exhaustively documented that African-American boys are overly represented and disproportionately placed in Special Education (U. S. Department of Education, 1998). Additional research data support racial disparities in Special Education (Artiles, 1998; Artiles, 2000; Chin & Hughes, 1987; Dove et al., 1986; Figueroa, 1999; Finn, 1982; Grant, 1992; Patton, 1998; Reschley, 1988). There are a number of factors that may contribute to the underachievement of African-American males and minority students.

In a majority White school, placing African-American boys in special education teaches them to underachieve, socially isolates them from their peers, and sends a message that African- Americans are inherently inferior to others (Conahan, Burggraf, Nelson, Bailey, & Ford, 2001). In some instances, many special education students fail to perform at a level indicative of his/her true abilities, hence, the over-used labels of "underachieving" and "at-risk". According to Clotfelter (2004), "Students who start off in a low track are effectively

condemned to slower classes, less stimulating peers, and more constrained opportunities beyond graduation" (p.128).

Once lower achieving students are labeled, students are further separated and minimally come into contact with higher achieving peers, further creating in-school segregation. When African-American students are confronted with low self-esteem, low teacher expectations and learning environments that are not conducive to their learning styles ultimately places African- American males at greater risk for underachieving. Kunjufu (2002) notes, "Eighty percent of all students referred to special education are below grade level in reading and writing" (p.78).

The 2000 Twenty-second annual report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act examined the over-representation of African-American males in the nation's schools. The report found, "African American youth, ages 6-21 account for 14.8 % of the general population, yet they account for 20.2 % of the special education population" (The Pre-Referral Process, 2002, p. 4). Consequently, African-American students, particularly males, are overly identified in three special education categories: learning disabilities, mental retardation, and serious emotional disorders. Due to their special education classification in an inferior educational hierarchy, African-American students have been provided an inadequate education, which implies and predicts --- inferior, substandard and/or marginalized roles in their future endeavors.

Explaining the Achievement Gap

Numerous scholars have attempted to explain the academic achievement gap between African-American and other students by attributing achievement differences to theories regarding genetic inferiority (Boykin, 1986; Bourdieu, 1986; Bowles & Gintis, 1976;

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Cummins, 1996; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Giroux, 1983; Hernstein & Murray, 1994; Jenson, 1969; Kohl, 1994; Noguera, 2003; Oakes, 1985; Perry, Steel, & Hilliard, 2003).

A contrasting perspective in research found,

Far too many black students are thought to perform poorly in school and thus short-circuit future options, not because they lack basic intellectual competencies or specific learning skills, but because they have low expectations, feel hopeless, deny the importance of individual effort, or give up in the face of failure. (Graham, 1994, p. 55)

Graham's research study analyzed the intrinsic aspects of the motivational processes, such as feelings and needs, and the nature and causes of African-American achievement. This study was significant in analyzing the motivation and competence of ethnic minority students as it relates to discrimination, stereotyping and prejudices when examining the academic achievement of African-American students.

Another contrasting perspective can be found in the research of Ladson-Billings (2006). The educational disparities in achievement among the races are pervasive in our schools. Ladson-Billings described the achievement gap as "misplaced" and the achievement gap has more to do with the educational debt owned African-American students. Over time, the historical, socio-political, and economic factors have disproportionately impacted and marginalized minority student populations. The disparities have more to do with the lowered standardized test scores of African-Americans in comparison to higher test scores of White students. The systemic and historical practices in the education of African-American students demonstrate that African-American students are still under-served.

Georgia has one of the lowest graduation rates in the nation. White students in

Georgia graduate at a rate of 77%, while African-American students lagged behind at 46%

(Greene, 2002).

Table 4.

2010 High School Graduation Rates by States/African-American Males/Non-Hispanic

Less than 50%	GA, AL, FL, MS, LA, SC, NC, VA, DC, NY, OH, MI, IN, IL, NE, CO, NM, NV, WA
50-59%	MA, PA, TN, AR, TX, OK, MO, WI, MN, WY, AZ, OR, CA
60-69%	KS, KS, KY, WV, NJ, CT
More than 70%	VT, NH, ME, SD, ND, MT, ID, UT
Ten Lowest Performing Large School Districts for African-American Males	Detroit, MI., Cleveland, OH., Buffalo, NY, New York City, NY., Jefferson Parish, LA., Charleston County, SC., Duvall County, FL., (Jacksonville), Pinellas County, FL., (Tampa) Palm Beach, FL., (Boca Rotan, Boynton Beach) & Dade County, FL (Miami).

Note: Adapted from "*The Schott 50 State Report Report on Public Education and Black Males*," Center for Education Statistics. Schott Foundation for Public Education (2010). Boston, MA: Schott Foundation.

In reference to Table 4 above, it is interesting to note the graduation rates for African-

American males are indicative of where they live. African-Americans from relatively

privileged backgrounds, too, experience gaps in academic achievement when compared to

White students. For example, a research study was conducted by John Ogbu in an affluent,

suburban Shaker Heights, Ohio community in 1977. It was found that a lack of African-

American student achievement was attributed to negligence in studying, completing their

homework, and school assignments (Ogbu, 2003, p. 18). This phenomenon is supported in

correlating motivational research data (Graham & Graham, 1994).

Further research by Ogbu explained a phenomenon known as "low effort syndrome," whereby, African-American students readily agreed they did not do their homework, study or work hard at getting good grades. The low-effort syndrome theorized by Ogbu, places the blame for student achievement solely on the African-American student. As African-American students become older there is pressure to just be "average" academically and popular by earning "cool points" in the eyes of their peers.

A closer examination of the under-performance of African-American students further highlight the systemic, historical, and complex nature of what is wrong with the structural make-up of educational systems in the U. S. For example, cultural racism and hegemony are often found in middle-class values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms of White school personnel. The teaching force is primarily White female teachers (93%) indicating the instruction of African-American students rests with White school personnel (Kunjufu, 2004, p. 17). These institutional constructs uplift and promote White mainstream culture through interest convergence, while simultaneously excluding the cultural beliefs, attitudes, values, and norms of African-Americans. In order to effectively address the performance of African-American students, instructional strategies must be culturally relevant and culturally responsive (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995) which focus on the interests and strengths and move away from deficit-based models currently espoused in U. S. schools. It is past time to change current educational policies and practices in favor of more effective instructional approaches for all children.

Some theorists might argue that African-American students spend more time engaging in leisurely-type activities. This phenomenon may be primarily due to influences of multiple mass media outlets. Many students, including my own, spend a great deal of time

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watching television (movies, music videos, prime-time series, sports, surfing the internet, engaging in social media outlets such as Facebook™ & Instagram).

Historically, the African-American newspapers were sources of information for African-American families, which gave "voice" to "Black America" with information particular to the values, beliefs and attitudes pertinent to African-American communities. These mediums include a variety of consumer-based advertisements. Since technology captivates and sustains the interest of many African-American students, it is important for teachers to recognize the learning styles of African-American students (i.e., highly stimulating, interactive, and culturally relevant) teaching environment. However, when the teachers and students are out of cultural sync, students become resistant to learning, become unmotivated, angered, which poses more challenges for the students and teachers become less ineffective in their instruction. Gay (2000) notes, "Television programming is always involved in constructing knowledge, creating images, cultivating consumer markets, shaping opinions, and manipulating values about ethnic and cultural diversity" (p. 124).

Today, many African-American newspapers have virtually been replaced by social media through technological advancements. Students are often influenced from the biased messages they have learned through multiple media outlets and bring this information and effects of the messages they have adopted into the learning environment. Ogbu (2003) found, "The academic achievement of African-American students from families of higher socio-economic backgrounds and professional families was lower than that of white students from similar family backgrounds" (p. 75).

It is significant to note that regardless of socio-economic status, African-American students continue to lag behind their White counterparts. The "Black/White" achievement gap has long been documented. Ogbu goes on to state that, "The academic achievement of

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blacks from families of lower socio-economic backgrounds and nonprofessional family backgrounds was also lower than that of white students from a similar family background" (p. 75). This phenomenon among African-American students may be attributed to the historical denial of equal resources, structural barriers in school, communicating in society, and unequal treatment of minority students in school in comparison to White students. Martin (2009b) notes, "A deconstruction of the racial hierarchy of mathematics ability places Asians and white students at the top and African-Americans, Latina/o, and Native American students at the bottom" (p. 298). The unevenness of student achievement is an indication that curriculum and instruction reforms are needed to enhance student achievement for African-American students, regardless of socio-economic status. These findings suggest that race and ethnic differences impact minority student's level of motivation and achievement, which ultimately decreases their intelligence quotient (IQ).

A decreased IQ is equivalent to "dummying down" the curriculum for African-American students. The research conducted by Ogbu is significant since many African-Americans, particularly males, appear resistant to school culture by opposing association with mainstream culture found in many schools throughout the nation. For example, whereas, African-American males as youth may have been excited about learning, over time, many had given up by the sometimes-negative learning environment largely comprised of majority White teachers. The learning environment may not effectively address the learning styles of African-American students. Gay (2000) notes, "Students of color who are strongly affiliated with their traditional cultures tend to be more inductive, interactive, and communal in task performance" (p. 93).

As a result of difficulties transitioning from highly interactive classrooms to oppressive teacher-focused classroom settings, many African-American males experience

behavioral and learning problems and become candidates for remedial and special education placement, which lead to detentions, suspensions and lower rungs of classroom placement hierarchy. Kunjufu (2002) states, "The classroom atmosphere created by constant teacher direction and student compliance seethes with passive resentment that sometimes bubbles up into overt resistance" (p. 78). As a result, teachers refer students they perceive as covertly or overtly resistant to other sources of instruction, namely, [remedial classes, special education, in-school suspension and expulsion] as a means of ridding themselves of students labeled as problematic. Freire (1970) states, "The oppressed are regarded as the pathology of the healthy society, which must therefore, adjust these 'incompetent and lazy' folk to its own patterns by changing their mentality" (p. 74).

Many African-Americans male students perceive schooling as an entity that is developed, sustained and ruled by the White status quo. Ogbu's cultural-ecological (CE) research is significant in that it parallels the mistreatment of minorities, as well as how minorities respond or interpret their treatment. Additionally, implications of this research suggest that many African- American students, particularly males, fail to recognize that acquiring an education is essential to their future survival, quality of life and overall success. Many of the ascribed findings mentioned in this research study, significantly affect African-American students and serve as multiple disadvantages for student achievement.

Further, African-American students from relatively privileged backgrounds experience gaps in academic achievement when compared to White students. African-American students continue under-performing (Ferguson, 2002). Ferguson researched the achievement and school culture of students in 95 school districts across 15 school districts using the Ed-Excel (Assessment of Secondary Schools). His findings emphasized the importance of curriculum content, pedagogy, knowledge and good teacher-student

relationships as necessary factors that enhance student achievement among African-Americans.

Another reason for the achievement gap among middle class African-American students may be attributed to a fear of "acting white". Many of today's African-American students [including my daughter] fear being labeled by their peers as "acting White". Being labeled as "acting White" among her peers puts her at risk of being socially isolated by her peer group. Unfortunately, earning "cool points" and not studying correlate with low academic performance. According to Ogbu, many African-American students have the capabilities of accomplishing higher academic success, but many choose to demonstrate marginal attempts at studying.

Other researchers might attribute the lack of student achievement to inadequate parenting, lack of positive male role models, inadequate learning environment, low teacher expectations, negative peer influences, lack of intrinsic motivation, etc., as reasons to explain the "Black/White" achievement gap. McWhorter (2001) states, "The 'acting white' charge---which implies that you think yourself different from, and better than, your peers---is the prime reason that blacks do poorly in school" (p. 11). This phenomenon often results in missed opportunities for African-American students in gaining pre-requisite skills, receiving financial scholarships or acquiring other means of support. Deleire and Kalil (2002) found, "Adolescents from disrupted and single-parent homes are more likely to experience lower school achievement and aspirations" (p. 394).

Other explanations of African-American student under achievement may also be attributed to research findings (Aseltine, 1996; Clingempeel, 1992; Dawson, 1991; Dornbuschetal, 1985; Flewelling & Bauman, 1990; Hetherington & Zill & Peterson, 1986; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994).

Table 5.

Explaining the Achievement Gap of African-American Students

inferior services	low quality curriculum & instruction	social isolation	segregation of peers	over-identifica-tion of African-Americans & minority students to special education
restrictive learning environments	racial inequalities	African-American males more likely to be classified as mentally retarded (especially in the South)	African-American students are under-served	lack early intervention in Pre-K & K
racial disparities in rates of discipline (African-American s face harsher discipline)	negative perceptions & subjectivities of teachers	majority White middle-class teaching force White, female & middle-class	higher incidence of poverty among African-Americans	racial bias
lack high quality teachers, teacher pedagogy	pressure of high takes testing	power struggle	disparities in placement	minority students inappropriately labeled as "disabled"

Note: Adapted from "*Racial Inequality in Special Education*" by D. Losen, and G. Orfield, 2002, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

A lack of academic achievement for African-American students is associated with future difficulties. Hacker (1991) notes, "As a result of failing to receive a quality education, poor educational outcomes of African-American children and youth contribute to difficulties in gaining substantive employment following school and entrance into post-secondary education institutions" (p. 237). These factors also continue to have an overall impact on the lack of knowledgeable, skilled and educated workforce in America today. Through sorting, classifying and tracking students, the future labor force is predetermined and the majority of

the lower tracks are often represented by African-American and poor children, thereby influencing multi-generational poverty.

Educational Transitions

Historic and modern examples of teaching and learning standards are inter-connected with classifying and differentiating student learners. Ladson-Billings and Tate (2006) states, "Professional curriculum standards policies and research, for example, recognize members of population groups of children left behind as different from all children as occupying a double space" (p. 132). Despite much of the progress today, educational learning gaps between African-American students and White students still persist. African-American students score lower on standardized tests and have experience higher dropout rates (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003). Although some improvement has been made in the integration of public schools, recent research shows that segregation in many cases is rising and that African-American students face additional challenges. African-Americans are less likely than White or Latino children are to live in a married, two-parent family and are more likely than White children are to live in poverty (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003).

Despite far-reaching improvements in effective assessment and instructional practices, African-American and other racial minorities in education continue to receive substandard services. Asa Hilliard (1991) notes, "The domination/oppression equation operates by certain rules and yields certain consequences in the behavior of oppressor and oppressed that are unrelated to abilities" (p. 11). As a result of failing to receive access to a quality education, special education is sought through educational policies as a solution (Hacker, 1992). However, solutions other than placing minority children and youth in Special Education must be explored for solving academic problems. The Office of Special

Education Programs (OSEP) and the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) have viewed the issue of disproportionate placement of minority students in special education, especially under the label of mental retardation, as an ongoing national problem (Bell, 1994).

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 1993, and 1998 were designed to provide equity to individuals with disabilities in public institutions such as schools and places of employment. In comparison to their non-disabled peers, students with disabilities are entitled to classroom accommodations through a 504 plan, which is designed to level the playing field. However, for the privileged and for those that can afford these entitlements, parents can manipulate the system, advocate on behalf of their children, and identify/label their child with a "disability" such as learning disabled, ADHD or ADD. With a completed medical impairment form by a licensed pediatrician or family doctor, children with a 504 plan acquired through these means receive an unfair advantage over those without a 504 plan. With a label designation of "disability", children of the affluent can receive classroom accommodations such as extended time on completing standardized and class tests, small group instruction, and/or modified assignments. These entitlements are likened to private school instruction, thereby creating a spatial landscape of the "haves".

Power and control exists in our educational system because it has a major role to play by expanding opportunities so everyone has access to receiving an education. However, the poor educational outcomes of African-American children contribute to difficulties in gaining substantive employment following school and entrance into post-secondary education (Alson, 2003). The educational disparities have an overall impact on developing and sustaining a skilled and educated workforce in American society. In today's economy, many poor, uneducated and disadvantaged groups are likely to work multiple low-paying and subservient jobs with stagnated wages. Many African-American youth question the merits of

Brown v The Board of Education (1954) as the means toward an untested belief that

schooling can and will serve their future interests. Coupled with the racial and socio-

economic gap, there appears to be a cultural shift in the perceived value of getting an

education. The belief system of today's youth is incongruent with the belief system many

African-American families held during slavery, throughout the Civil Rights era and beyond.

Many African-American students appear unwilling to go through the process of acquiring an

education, which is evidence in the low graduation rates among African- American students,

particularly males in many urban cities. Fairclough (2006) notes, "Disillusionment with the

public schools, reinforced by extensive re-segregation, has encouraged a tendency to blame

integration for weakening the black community" (p. 8).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY: PACKING AND UNPACKING

The tableau of racism is manifested in the everyday lives of African-American families, and is entrenched legally, spatially, economically, culturally, socio-politically, historically and psychologically. According to Bell (1987), "Race is a common historical experience and therefore, a part of our culture" (p. 4). Recognizing the centrality of racism in determining neighborhood housing options and educational outcomes, critical race theory (CRT) was used to guide the conceptualization of this research project and to inform the specific methods of information gathering and data interpretation used in this study. This chapter begins with a discussion of CRT research by Vaught and Castagno (2008), Baratan (2008), and DeCuir-Gunby (2007) as these three studies informed the ways in which African America educational relocation experiences were conceptualized, explored, and interpreted in the current study. A discussion of the research setting, participants, and procedures for information collection and analysis used in this study concludes this chapter.

Exemplary CRT Research

Vaught and Caastagno's (2008) study examined "White privilege" and "Whiteness as property". In an effort to improve a significant achievement gap among the races and stemming from pressure from parents, two school districts, Jericho and Zion, initiated professional learning workshops for its' predominately White teachers and administrators. Jericho and Zion school districts experienced wide student achievement gaps between African-American and White students. For example, "70% of white students at Jericho passed the state's standardized test, while 92% of African-American students failed" and "The expulsion rate was three times more for African-American students" (Vaught &

Castagno, 2008, p. 97). Equally problematic were similar student achievement gaps at Zion school district.

The purpose of this research study was two-fold: (1) to examine teacher attitudes and perceptions among predominately White teachers and administrators of Jericho and Zion school districts, and (2) analyze how racial inequalities impact schooling and student achievement of their diverse student learners. The workshops focused on understanding the racial, ethnic, and multi-cultural "awareness" of diverse student learners. Workshop attendance by teachers and administrators was on a voluntary basis. Although incentives were offered by the districts to enhance staff/administrator participation, attendance was limited.

CRT was used as the theoretical framework by examining "Whiteness as property". Within the context of CRT, "Whiteness as property" legitimizes power and control, which provides entitlements and benefits of [White staff], associated with institutionalized privilege. The research findings suggest that the racial attitudes of the teachers and administrators perception of diverse student learners [including African-American, Latino/a, and "others"] were largely based upon structural racism. This ethnographic study found that persistent racism is more of a systemic cultural system. Critical race theorists recognize that racism plays a major role in school structures and practices (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). For example, school staff perceived themselves as "individuals", but viewed their African-American and students of color as "other", inferior, and deficient. The staff interviews also revealed that participants stated, "I don't think I'm a racist".

From all levels, each school district failed to recognize the systemic and institutional constructs of racism that existed. The districts did not institute a system-wide policy regarding mandatory participation of the "awareness" training, as is done with other training

initiatives. Several staff members expressed the "awareness" training was a "waste of time" and given the current financial crunch, resources could have been better spent on technology or other school resources instead of "awareness" training. Interest convergence as a tenet of CRT is demonstrated in this study. For example, White privilege allows flexibility of shifting expectations and contexts when it is best suited to their [White] interests. If indeed the districts (Jericho and Zion) intentions were serious with regard to improving the student achievement gap, attendance of this initiative would have been a district mandate or policy. The "voluntary" participation marginalized the workshop training from the onset, and therefore, White staff perceived the training as irrelevant and not important to their own interests. The districts leaders were unwilling to acknowledge or address their own inequities, which would appear to require a structural transformation from district policymakers and district leaders.

Although the "awareness" training was comprised of a limited number of teachers and administrators that elected to attend, it did not change the systemic structure of racism. The attitudes, values and belief systems remained. The findings indicate pervasive racism throughout the school districts. African-Americans and students of color continue to remain under-served and their needs are marginalized and unaddressed.

DeCuir-Gunby (2007) explored the experiences of six African-American students attending an elite private school. The researcher examined how their personal experiences impacted race and class identities. Within this context, the African-American students provided counter-stories of their experiences using CRT framework by analyzing color-blindness and meritocracy. Gaining entrance into Wells Academy for the African-American students was based on stringent acceptance criteria of meritocracy, although admission to

Wells for the elite Whites was based on family wealth, 'White privilege" and family connections.

The six African-American students recognized the racial, class and meritocracy disparities, which afforded Whites with inherit benefits and privileges. The six respondents were interviewed and indicated the educational opportunities of attending Wells Academy was due to numerous factors. These factors include name recognition, smaller class sizes, rigorous curriculum, networking opportunities, opportunities for entrance into prestigious colleges and universities, and networking opportunities for future employment beyond graduation. Cole and Omar (2003) note, "Within the African-American communities, education has been viewed as the most respected and most effective mechanism for accomplishing the goal of upward mobility; the achievement of which challenges race---and class-based oppression" (p. 790). In spite of their goals of achieving upward mobility, their experiences of attending Wells were met with some challenges and disadvantages.

For example, the respondents described their learning environment at the predominately-White elite high school as closed, sheltered, exclusionary, and lacking racial diversity. More specifically, they did not feel entirely comfortable or that their "interests" were acknowledged or represented. The students went so far as to describe their learning experience at Wells as 'being in a bubble." Although the African-American students gained admission to Wells Academy due to meritocracy, they did not reside in the ultra-prestigious communities of their White peers, and therefore, were excluded from the social benefits of learning the "hidden curriculum". The African-American students perceived the governing board of the school as designed solely for the purpose of maintaining the status quo--- by maintaining class privilege, which upholds the power and dominance where [elite Whites] rule.

Even though the students in the research study sought "better" educational opportunities at the elite, White private school, the findings suggest their learning experiences were not necessarily better in terms of the cultural costs associated with diminished racial and class identities. To address the disparities of racial and class identity issues, DeCuir-Gunby (2007) suggests strengthening the support network by active parental involvement, networking, mentoring, and advocacy by formulating relationships with African-American alumni of Wells Academy.

Baratan (2008) examined how race and "institutional ableism" is used to separate and isolate others in education, which discriminates against African-American students (Baratan, 2008). For example, although the Individuals with Educational Disabilities Act (IDEA) require the least restrictive environment (LRE) mandating exclusionary practices of educational environments, it does not mandate inclusion. IDEA is yet another legal mechanism to isolate and remove African-American students from academic mainstream classes. The author examines how IDEA, which is supposed to help students identified with disabilities, is actually detrimental to African-American students in numerous ways.

First, more African-American students are disproportionately placed in Special Education programs such as learning disabilities, behavior disorders, and educationally retarded. Secondly, the researcher maintains that IDEA sustains discrimination in the following manner. For example, the definition of "disability" is not clearly defined and is based on a deficit-model; it is consequently viewed as problematic, which is a type of oppression. Thirdly, students with a special education label are already placed in a marginalized position within the educational hierarchy. IDEA has re-segregated public schools in many systematic, overt and legal ways. Examples of re- segregation can be found

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in the following research studies (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Brown et al., 2003; Gillborn, 1990; Johnson & Shapiro, 2003; Sleeter, 2004).

CRT is used in the study by Baratan (2008) to explain educational inequity of IDEA through the concepts of retrenchment and interest convergence. For example, cutting back the progress of *Brown v The Board of Education* through re-segregation describes retrenchment. Acting when it suits or satisfies the competing values and/or best interest of the "privileged few" is an example of interest convergence. In this study, CRT is used by the researcher to describe the obstructive pathways in education through patterns of systematic inequality and oppression. The researcher explains how the educational system has built in roadblocks in the curriculum to hinder educational equality for "disabled" students. A consequence of IDEA leads the way to the re-segregation of public schools by upholding the dominant interest and sustaining systemic inequality. CRT research challenges the status quo through counter-storytelling regarding issues of inequality of racism, classism, and social injustice. Deconstructing the stereotypes, perceptions, beliefs and attitudes by understanding the personal experiences of the disenfranchised and marginalized others give "voice" to the oppressed.

Summary of Relevant CRT Research

In reflecting upon the CRT articles referenced above, there are common threads in each research study that helped develop my research inquiry. For example, the study pertaining to "interest convergence" of White teacher/administrator racial attitudes and perceptions of diverse student learners demonstrated how "White privilege", allowed White teacher/administrators the flexibility of shifting their power when it best suited their interests. The marginalization of six African-American students attending a White [elite] high school demonstrate the challenges they experienced based on issues of race, class and identify

inequities. Under the auspices of meritocracy and "color-blindness," the institutional

structure of the elite, White private high school sustained power, wealth and dominance for

the benefit of [White/elite] students, and not for the acknowledgement, benefit or

representation of African-American students. Finally, the study pertaining to IDEA and

racial discrimination is evidenced by the over-representation of African-American students

labeled with disabilities. Most African-American students are categorized with a special

education "label" including learning disabled, behavior disorders, and educationally mentally

retarded. In comparison to their White counterparts, it was found that implementation of

IDEA also revealed discrimination, and significant achievement gaps through the removal

and isolation of African-American students, which is largely due to the exclusionary doctrine

of LRE. All the studies contained tenets of CRT including interest convergence, "White

privilege", intersectionality, oppression, "racism as natural" and color-blindness.

It is the viewpoint of those in power to embrace false notions of meritocracy, in that,

"others" [African-Americans] too, can work hard to obtain wealth, privilege and power.

However, CRT rejects meritocracy due to institutionalized ableism and structural racism in

society. In spite of the promises of *Brown v The Board of Education* and subsequent laws

such as IDEA and other federal, state and local policies, all the studies in this summary

demonstrate that in comparison to their White peers, African-American students continue to

be under-served. The systematic structure in education sustains the academic achievement

gap and racial disparities experienced by African-American students. The racial, socio-

economic and political inequities continue to benefit "the haves", and to the detriment of the

"have not's."

CRT was immersed in each study by providing narratives and counter-storytelling

based on knowledge of their personal "lived experiences". Marginalized groups have

otherwise been silenced, but through CRT, give "voice" to oppressed and marginalized groups. CRT works toward social justice by challenging the status quo with regard to classism, racism, and inequalities in society.

Guided by the CRT research discussed above and critical geography, particularly the work of Edward Soja (2010) and William Tate (2008), this study uses structured and semi-structured interviews of African American parents who relocated in search of improved education outcomes for their children to shed light on the under-studied topic of African American educational relocation decisions and outcomes.

Research Design

Setting and Participants

An application was submitted to the Internal Review Board Committee at Georgia Southern University to conduct this research. Once approved, snowball sampling was used to identify participants for the study. Snowball sampling is a type of non-probability sampling where study participants are used as resources for identifying additional participants for the research (Mertler & Charles, 2005). To begin the process of securing potential subjects, I developed and placed multiple copies of my human subject research fliers in surrounding churches. It was several weeks before I had secured my first respondent, Kelly. During this period, I was fearful that it might take much longer to garner interest in my study, obtain consent, and conduct the interviews. I really began to feel a true sense of social isolation and panic. Where and when was I going to get my participants? After several weeks of uncertainty, I finally was able to garner interest from four potential participants. One respondent revealed that he was in the midst of moving away from the Atlanta metro area after securing a higher paying job. Subsequently, he was not included in my study.

Contextual Background for Research Participants

According to the U. S. Census Bureau (2010), the documented median income of most African-American families is $39,988. My participants reported an annual income of well of $90,000, earning over half of the income realized by most African-American families. All of my participants felt the only way to "get ahead" was to have multiple means of garnering financial assets. The scenarios of my participants indicated multiple means of financial resourcefulness. For example, even though Shelly worked as a law enforcement officer, she earned extra income as a real estate agent by flipping houses. She had realized measurable financial success in her real estate ventures. Since the economic downturn, she diversified her approach and concentrated on buying short sale houses and renting them out to middle-income families. Grace lived in a multi-generational and female-headed household. Her mom was her primary source of social support, so she shared most of the living expenses with her mom, which offset her financial costs. Even though Grace held a full-time job and was in a mortgage management trainee program with her employer, she was also a licensed cosmetologist. She earned extra income by doing hair/make-up on the side. John had back-up support from his wife. Both were college-educated and held full-time professional careers. John and his wife, like Shelly, bought homes and rented out to middle-income families to supplement their income. According to Shapiro, "Middle-class and asset-wealthy families see assets as power and freedom to leverage opportunities" (p. 35). The participants in my research inquiry had the benefit of having additional resources, which allowed them the freedom and access to housing and schooling choices for their children.

Unlike my research participants, most African American families with lowered incomes have competing financial priorities such as providing financial support to other family members, student loans, high-priced mortgages/interest rates, and without the benefit

of having access to "transformative assets" often afforded White families. According to

Shapiro (2004), "Transformative assets are described as inherited wealth lifting a family

beyond their own achievement" (p. 10). Without the benefit of transformative assets, most

African-American families find it exceptionally challenging to save money or "get ahead"

and because of this, are often stuck in substandard housing and/or inferior schools. This

phenomenon may be attributed to the structure of the African-American family lifestyle

previously noted in the review of literature. For African-American families without

resources, real "choice" regarding schooling and housing simply does not exist.

The disparities are further evident even among African-American and White

families. To begin with, the typical African-American family has less wealth than the typical

White family. Shapiro notes (2004), "The average black family earned 55 cents for every

dollar earned by the average White in 1989, by 2000 it reached an all-time high of 64 cents

on the dollar" (p. 7). The earning potential of African-American families has historically and

systemically been to the detriment and disadvantage of many African-American families,

which perpetuates a cycle of despair and inequality.

Procedure

A survey was developed for use in interviewing the three participants for this study.

Although the survey contained structured questions, follow up questions and other probes

were used to elicit additional information from the participants. The survey questions used to

initiate interviews with the participants are listed below.

1. What is the quality of your old school?

2. What is the quality of your old neighborhood?

3. What is the quality of your new school?

4. What is the quality of your new neighborhood?

5. What are the social costs associated with the move?

6. What were the compelling factors that led you to reach your relocation decision?

7. In comparing the quality of your old school to your new school, what are the similarities/differences?

8. In comparing the quality of your old neighborhood to your new neighborhood, what are the similarities/differences?

9. Describe the impact your housing choice may have impacted your child's academic achievement.

10. What were the benefits you expected to receive as a result of your relocation decision? Were there any unintended consequences as a result of your relocation decision? What were the social costs associated with your relocation decision?

11. Do you feel your relocation decision was worth the effort?

Rapport is paramount in establishing an interview tone under which interviewees feel comfortable elaborating on past experiences (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). Establishing rapport with my participants was tantamount to the overall success of my research inquiry. Some researchers view rapport as a "degree of acceptance" for participants' cooperation in the research inquiry (Blohm, 2007). Developing a rapport set the tone to ensure that my participants were being open, genuine, and honest in their responses. In return, establishing rapport my participants created a climate for my participants to trust me and vice-versa, whereby they openly shared their relocation experiences. In doing so, my goal was to establish a mutually open interviewer-respondent relationship within a comfortable environment. Since I was familiar with some of the participants at my church, I had not put a face with a name until we actually had an opportunity to talk face to face. Our initial face-to-face meeting was arranged by telephone, and we had engaged in small talk about the

weather, our children's school events and activities. Prior to the face-to-face interviews, I

discussed my research inquiry with my participants. So my participants would feel a sense of

"belonging" and "buy-in", I had explained the purpose of the study, the nature of the

interviews, and explained why they were selected as a participants. I had devised a set of pre-

determined interview questions, but I encouraged my participants to interject comments

during the interviews. I assured my participants that their responses would be held in strict

confidence and their names (pseudonyms) would be used. During the interviews, there were

times when I asked probing questions to garner further information, instances of ambiguity,

or for clarification purposes. I explained how I came to devise my research inquiry, because

I, too, as an African-American, had relocated to a predominately White community in search

of finding better educational opportunities for my child.   I set up the interviews based on the

convenience of my participants; I interviewed Shelly at the public library, and I interviewed

Grace and John at their individual homes. The interviews were captured via audio-tape,

through my observations, and taking field notes. At the conclusion of the interviews,

participants were asked if there were any other comments or additions they would like to

make. To my surprise, we talked for over an hour regarding our relocation experiences.

Hearing their stories was enlightening and informative as my participants shared their

anecdotes that occurred during their own childhood. Discussing their relocation experiences

caused decades of feelings to resurface regarding issues of racism and inequities in housing

and schooling. The interviews simply did not end with the interview questions, but

transcended beyond that. That fact, in and of itself, bridged a sense of "commonality" and

lines of communication opened up even further. We shared our experiences in making our

relocation decisions. I came to know my research participants on a friendly basis beyond the

interviews. Our children have attended birthday parties, swimming parties and sleep-overs

since the interviews, and these relationships have enhanced our quality of life and the lives of our children. We probably would not have forged these relationships if it had not been for my research inquiry, and for this, I am eternally grateful. As typical for African-American families, I suspect these new found relationships will widen our social support networks.

As a qualitative researcher, I am a stakeholder. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) note, "The interviewer becomes an advocate and partner in the study, hoping to be able to use the results to advocate social policies and ameliorate the conditions of the interviewee" (p. 117). My role as the principal investigator (PI) is to gain further understanding of the research themes, which will lead to answering the research questions. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) note, "The topic of inquiry becomes dramatized by the focus on existential moments in people's lives, possibly producing richer and more meaningful data" (p. 135). The participant as observer is regarded as the "trusted person" and investigates from different angles. Reliability of my research depends largely on my credibility by gathering high-quality data. In order to enhance the reliability of this study, I collected multiple sources of information including observations, individual one-to-one interviews and field notes from my observations. To ensure accuracy, my notes were constructed with many notations I made during interviews and observations. In order to conduct the interviews, I met each participant individually at a location of their choosing. I began each interview with a brief description of the process and engaged participants in small talk to help them relax and feel more comfortable. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. The participant interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were coded using the constant comparative method (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). The constant comparative method is typically associated with grounded theory, though some researchers opt to use the constant comparative method

of data analysis outside of the grounded theory approach when theory development is not a research goal (Fram, 2013).

The paradox of moving in my research inquiry is mixed with reality, confusion, and nostalgia, but carries serious meaning and truth. The challenges of moving highlights the bigger structures in society by using restrictive policies and practices deeply ingrained with racism and discrimination. These practices are designed to deny, exclude and segregate the races. For example, families with wealth/assets have the freedom to create choices that those with limited resources do not have, such as moving to communities with higher performing schools and providing opportunities for social and cultural experiences (Shapiro, 2004, p. 12). Conversely, families without assets are limited in their options and are left behind.

Along that same line of discussion, some might argue that desegregation negatively impacted the black community, particularly in the educational system. Even though Brown v. Board of Education (1954) stuck down the "separate but equal" doctrine, resistance is still apparent as evidenced in housing and schooling demographic patterns and dissimilarity indexes of many major urban cities. Nationwide, patterns of re-segregation represent a significant retrenchment of civil rights progress.

In this research inquiry, my participants missed out on the multiple layers of support realized from their previous racially segregated communities, assuming support would be garnered in their new, predominately White community. Social support from their White neighbors has not occurred, which creates and sustains a sense of "disconnectedness", isolation and segregation among the races. Denzin and Lincoln, 2008; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001 support CRT research.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS: WE'RE HERE, NOW WHAT?

This study examined the relocation experiences of three African American families who relocated to improve the educational prospects for their children. In this chapter, I relate my experiences during the interview process and provide a discussion of the individuals who agreed to participate in this study, their summarized responses to the interview questions posed in this study, and my analysis of the prevailing themes that emerged from their interviews.

Experiences during the Interview Process

Once the participants verbally consented to participate in this qualitative research study, I conducted individual in-depth interviews with each participant. At the convenience of my three African-American participants, Grace, Shelly, and John, I interviewed Shelly at her community library, Grace in the family room of her home, and John in the kitchen of his home. I conveyed the topic and purpose of the study, followed by a series of events that would occur during the interviews. The participants appeared comfortable with the audio-recording process and by me (PI) taking rich field notes. Prior to the individual interviews taking place, participants signed a written consent form. Since this research inquiry is considered as low-risk, participants were asked if they had any concerns or questions regarding their participation. I advised participants if at any time the line of questioning posed any level of discomfort, or if any of the questions resurfaced any painful or hurtful memories or experiences, they were free to conclude the interview at any time. Participants indicated they did not have any questions or concerns and the interviews convened.

I again reminded the participants the purpose of my research, namely, describing their relocation experiences in search of finding better educational opportunities for their children.

I further explained that their interviews were designed to give "voice" to others by garnering new knowledge for teachers, policy makers, administration and teachers. To avoid any bias in their responses, I briefly described my theoretical framework of "CRT" which challenges racism and inequalities in society. In order to determine if their relocation experiences were worth the effort, I posed a set of questions from my interview guide pertaining to their relocation decision, and as their collective responses were derived from the questions, themes emerged from my analyses of the interviews. These themes were organized into four major categories; (1) relocation experiences; (2) impact housing choices had on their child's education; (3) factors of a good public school; and (4) mitigation techniques used to reach their relocation decision. During the course of the individual interviews, I went off script based on some of the responses by asking probing questions. Going off script may have been due to seeking clarification, or when participant responses appeared vague, unclear, or unanswered. I took field notes that included my observations, insight, and personal reflections of each of the participant responses.

I was specifically interested in my participants sharing their relocation experiences and wondered as African-American families, was their experiences similar to my own relocation experiences. I was interested in finding how they described their relocation decision. At several points during the initial interviews I sensed my participants wanted to please me; I also sensed their reluctance to discuss matters pertaining to "race." They did not want to appear to be "racist" in their responses. I could tell my participants wanted to be "politically correct" in their responses. My participants were resolute in their responses as it was clear they had made numerous personal, professional and financial sacrifices in their family in search of providing better educational opportunities for their children. It is my hope that this research will be used a paradigm for future research inquiries.

The following includes participant profiles and interpretations of my participants' responses.

Profiles of the Participants

Below I provide detailed descriptions of the three participants in this study: Grace, Shelly, and John (pseudonyms). The profiles are my interpretations of the participants based on conversations with them as well as my own observations gained over time as I developed friendships with each of them. I believe that these profiles provide additional information on the participants that is useful in understanding the socio-political context within which their relocation decisions were made. My understanding of the participants, as articulated in the profiles below, forms the basis of my analysis of their interview responses.

Grace

Grace's maternal side of the family is of Jamaican descent and her father is African-American. She is from a large family consisting of eight brothers and sisters. She is humorous, family oriented, and hard-working. Hard-working is an understatement; she works most of the time. She is currently an office coordinator by day for a mortgage company and attends school at night and on Saturday. Last spring, she was selected to participate in a mortgage management training program by her employer. She was required to go to Charlotte for six months for extensive training. By her own admission, she rarely has time to participate in any social events or her daughter's school events, but reasons that she has to maintain her current lifestyle in order to make a better way for herself and her high school daughter. Because Grace is gone from home most of the time, her mother lives with Grace and provides support by helping with raising her daughter. As a stipulation of her participation in the mortgage management training program (a year-long arrangement) she has to live close to her job. Her employer provides a place for her to stay in the Atlanta

downtown area (a 45 mile one-way commute) and she comes home on the week-ends and during holiday breaks. She has worked in the mortgage industry since college, and as a black female, has moved up the corporate ladder rather quickly. I have gotten to know Grace through a small network of parents through my daughter's school. I consider Grace to be strong-willed, determined, and independent African American woman and mother. When asked about her relocation decision, Grace decided to relocate to Georgia from the northeast United States for a "fresh start", employment opportunities in the black Mecca of the South ---Atlanta, and for better schools/housing choices. Dissatisfied with the low performing schools in the NE region of the United States, she relocated to Gwinnett County, GA. She relocated with the hope that her daughter would benefit from attending a quality school. She had done her research and found that Gwinnett had impressive academic success with its students. Armed with research data regarding quality schools/housing, she moved to Buford, GA. She had a set price of home in mind and with that found her "dream home" within one week. According to Grace, she has not looked back and is happy with her relocation decision.

Shelly

Shelly appears quiet, reserved and yet, a go-getter type personality. Shelly knows what she wants and does not allow anything or anyone to get in her way. She works as a low enforcement officer in Gwinnett County and is a part-time real estate agent. She attended Gwinnett County Public Schools and has some college background. Shelly revealed that prior to the economic downturn she flipped houses to earn extra income. Since the recession, she has concentrated on buying foreclosed and/or short sale single-family homes and renting them out to middle-income families.

Shelly and I met as a result of the "snowball" method of locating human subjects for my study. I found Shelly to be a determined mother, especially when it came to finding a school district she felt was the "right fit" for her child. Dissatisfied with DeKalb County Schools, Shelly relocated to Gwinnett County, GA for the sole purpose of acquiring "access to opportunity" for her one and only child. In Shelly's eyes, nothing was more important than finding a "quality" computer technology curriculum for her son. Since Shelly was born and raised in rural Gwinnett County, GA she was already families with the schools in Gwinnett. As a product herself of rural Loganville, GA, she was very much aware of where she wanted to relocate. She knew the real estate market had changed, but prices in the highly desired district had shown little depreciation. Shelly revealed that because she was a realtor, she was able to know when houses "hit" on the market and she had access to preview any properties she so desired. Her only concern was finding a home that she could afford within the highly coveted school district and that it was in relatively close proximity to her social support network. She previewed a newly "distressed sale" home, bid on the house, and closed all within 8 days. To hear Shelly describe her relocation decision, she exclaimed that she made a deal of the century and with no plans to sell in the future. Her son heads off to college this year majoring in Computer Information Systems. As a single parent, Shelly feels she had made multiple sacrifices for her son over the years, and now she states, "It's my turn."

John

John is the sole African American male in my study. He is a recently retired Sr. Systems Analyst with a federal agency and holds a master's degree in Computer Information Science. Even though his relatives live in South Georgia, he is close to his siblings, especially his three brothers. He loves Sci-Fi moves and enjoys being on the internet. Since

retirement, he spends a great deal of time managing real estate properties that he owns. John

is "detail-oriented" and frequently reflects about "race" and how race impact African

American males more so than any other group of people. You can see in his demeanor, body

language and facial expressions that he has grown to be quite mistrustful of others ---

probably attributed to his work experiences in a predominately white environment and

supervisors that he describes as less educated, less experienced and less qualified than he.

John feels that he hit the "glass ceiling" 20 years ago. He is reverent in his responses and

describes his relocation decision was from years of extensive research regarding school

quality and housing preferences. He makes note of his personal, professional, and financial

sacrifices that prompted him and his family to relocate. Dissatisfied with the previous

DeKalb County, GA school district where his daughter attended, he felt his world (transitory

residents, diminishing school reputation, declining property values, and community

deterioration) was crumbling right before his eyes. He witnessed "white flight" in his once

previously desirable community and over the years tried to withstand the obvious decline, but

recognized his daughter had eight more years in public school.

<div align="center">**Participant Responses to the Interview Questions**</div>

In the following section, I summarize the responses of Grace, Shelly, and John to my

interview questions. Their full responses can be found in Appendix 1 of this document.

Quality of the Previous School

No commonality was found among the responses of the participants when asked

about the quality of their previous school. While Grace discussed the large percentage of

Black and Hispanic students enrolled at the school and the lack of extracurricular activities

offered by her previous neighborhood school, Shelly emphasized a lack of parental

involvement in her previous school and the negative effect of low parental involvement on

student success. In contrast to the responses by Grace and Shelly that focused on things their children's previous schools lacked, John's response seemed to indicate a positive aspect of his child's previous school ---the nurture provided by Black female teachers. Although his wife felt that their child was not receiving what she needed from her previous school, John thought the Black teachers at his daughter's previous school were capable of providing more time, instruction, and nurturance. John referred to the additional benefits he perceived was coming from Black teachers at his child's previous school.

John perceived his daughter's black female teachers at the predominately African-American school as more nurturing to children. He mentioned that he perceived them as putting in the extra time in helping students with the instruction they needed. As opposed to following the pacing chart teachers are expected to follow, he felt the black teachers worked with the students until the children had mastered the concept. John stated, "I felt like they [black teachers] were more nurturing. Black folks just have a tendency, especially teachers, to nurture children, to help them along, to give them additional time, additional instruction, what-have-you."

Quality of the Previous Neighborhood

All of the participants in my study described their previous neighborhoods as all-Black or predominately Black. The responses by Grace and John focused on positive experiences. Grace stated that everyone looked out for each other. She was surrounded by a mixture of different races. In her predominately African-American community, there was a White family across the street, and there were Whites who had married into her family. She made a concerted effort in getting to know her neighbors and invited many of them over for dinner and vice versa. She reminisced and smiled as she reflected upon the good times she and her daughter previously experienced. For example, if she was outside cutting the grass or

went grocery shopping, Grace stated she frequently would bump into one of her neighbors and immediately a conversation ensued. She reiterated that everyone knew one another and appeared to genuinely like each other. There was a sense of community.

Grace stated, "I was surrounded by a mixture…but in my old neighborhood our neighbors were looking out for each other… you know, everyone knew each other." John mentioned that cultural diversity was evident in his previous neighborhood. He clarified his statement by stating the neighborhood was not totally black when his family initially moved in over fifteen years ago. At that time Whites, Asians, and African-American families lived in the community and, in his opinion, the community was culturally diverse. He described the majority of the homes were owner-occupied initially, but "white flight" occurred and there were a lot of transitory renters as opposed to home owners. Over time he personally witnessed a steady transition of residents within his once previously desired community. John learned that in certain cultures it was common to find two to three families living in one house. In the interview, he did not want to appear racist, but he acknowledged that the new influx of residents were primarily renters and blue-collar type workers. John categorized himself and his previous neighbors as college educated and sustained their families through professional careers, something the new residents did not possess. He felt there was a huge disparity of cultures (non-English speaking, Bohemians, and "others"), and because of these factors and felt he had nothing in common with them. He felt there were a lot of "undesirables" that ultimately impacted the neighborhood as well as the school system. As he continued to reflect upon his previous community, he indicated that they lived close to a lot of amenities, downtown Decatur, restaurants, and churches. He once enjoyed the community and after 15 years of living there he was still loyal to his particular neighborhood, even though signs of decline, coupled with safety concerns for his family were evident.

John stated, "They didn't feel safe where we were, and just quality of education for our daughter." If the community and community school had not taken such a drastic change for the worse, his family would have remained. In one sense he did not want to move. In contrast to responses by Grace and John that focused on positive experiences, the responses by Shelly seemed to indicate a negative aspect of her previous neighborhood.

In Shelly's neighborhood, she was the Home Owners Association (HOA) president. The neighborhood had 144 homes and all of the houses were occupied by African-American families. Shelly described the surrounding subdivisions were predominately African-American as well. She estimated the closest grocery store was probably 4-5 miles away. The only store that was relatively close to her community was a little mom and pop type convenience store. Shelly mentioned that as far as the crime rates, there were an unusually high number of burglaries. She increasingly grew frustrated by the little petty crimes the kids were doing in the neighborhood by destroying the property of others. She characterized the damages made to properties as eyesores, which remained unrepaired for months. Shelly described the neighborhood as a "brand new" neighborhood and the houses were brand new. It was the make-up of the community that was problematic for her. As a realtor, she decided to cut her losses before her property totally depreciated negating the possibility of ever recouping her financial investment.

Quality of the New School

The responses by John and Shelly focused on positive experiences. John mentioned positive experiences in that his daughter typically had positive experiences. John stated his daughter appeared to be happy right now although she did not have the number of friends she used to have when she was in middle school. Currently, his daughter is in the orchestra and on the track team. She had been a cheerleader previously, so the extra-curricular activities

were affording her the opportunity to meet new people. John stated that he and his wife were often on her about her grades and she promises to do better, but John thinks she looks at school as just a social outlet. His daughter likes to meet people and she likes to have friends, but when it comes to what they moved here for, her academics appear to take a back seat. He felt she perceived school as a means to socialize. John stated it is as though she feels as if she has any time left over she will get to the educational part of it. His daughter promises to do better in her studies, but she is functioning as if she were of average intelligence. He knows that she is capable of putting forth much more effort, but John reasoned that his daughter is dealing with high school people now and he is happy that she appears to be fitting in at her new high school.   John was somewhat reserved with regard to his opinion of her educational progress at her new school. He acknowledged that she has had a lot more opportunities offered in this educational environment than she would have had in the previous setting. For now, he is optimistic that her academic performance will meet county, state and federal standards.

Shelly perceived the computer technology curriculum at her son's school as great. She was impressed by the huge technology department and felt that since the world was changing over to technology; she viewed her son's curriculum choice as a benefit. Shelly indicated that she had not had any issues with the school and she had not encountered discipline issues with her son. She had thoroughly researched the school and knew the school demographic data indicated a majority White school, with possibly 35% African-American students in attendance. In the interview, she was estimating the (she was unsure of the exact percentages) student demographics. She believed there was a good mixture of students, not just one particular race, but a mixture of students.

In contrast to the responses by John and Shelly that focused on positive experiences, some of the responses by Grace and John seemed to indicate a negative aspect of their child's new school. John had some concerns about the white teachers accepting his child. He stated that he anticipated and expected some problem areas, especially going from a predominately black school to a predominately white school. He did not expect a lot of problems from the kids themselves, but he did expect some problems from the administration of the school, which he encountered some and dealt with them. John also had some concerns about the white teachers accepting his child who is black and providing her with the same opportunities, the same information, the same instruction, as her mainstream peers. In a sense, he knew they [problems] were coming and expected them so he felt he was prepared for whatever problems arose.

John stated:

In moving, I anticipated and expected some problem areas, especially with going from a predominately black school to a predominately white school. I didn't expect a lot of problems from the kids themselves, but I did expect some problems from the administration of the school, which I encountered some and I had to deal with them.

When asked about the quality of her child's new school, Grace did not discuss positive aspects of the new school. Instead, she focused on a lack of involvement of Black students at her daughter's school. Grace stated there were not a lot of black girls involved in extra-curriculum activities, especially black girls on the volleyball team. She felt the school sponsors focused on who's who and not the talent of students, whereas, if the school had more African-American students involved other African-Americans might become interested. Grace stated, "I hate to say it, but I just don't see a lot of black children as involved as they should be."

Quality of the New Neighborhood

When asked about the quality of their new neighborhood, participants emphasized different aspects of the neighborhood that appealed to them. Grace stressed the importance of becoming a member of the church community in close proximity to her new neighborhood. She also discussed limitations in the interaction with White residents of her neighborhood. When asked to describe the quality of your new neighborhood," Grace stated, "It is really quiet and clean."

The responses by John and Grace focused on positive experiences. Grace stressed church as one of the deciding factors. She indicated if she had not found a community church, she would not have moved to northern Gwinnett. Church was important in that she, her mom, and daughter could be a part of nearby church community. There were other activities that were of interest to Grace and getting to know her neighbors was equally important. Grace knew her community was predominately White, but the interaction she envisioned has yet to come to fruition. She described her neighbors as friendly in the sense of saying hello or hi and perhaps have a glass of wine. However, for any other purposes she mainly focused on her home and not on any of her neighbors. As a new resident Grace quickly realized many of the historical generalizations of the South still exist.

When asked to describe the quality of his new neighborhood, John indicated that safety measures were tantamount to his overall satisfaction. In his response he emphasized that having "peace of mind" through multiple safety measures was crucial. John stated he had encountered some incidents with the alarm system (false alarms) which caused the police to come to his residence, and he revealed that the response time was really quick. He feels safe although somewhat guarded when it comes to safety of his family. He takes additional safety measures upon himself as well. As far as being in the community and as far as police

services, fire services or medical assistance, the response time was better than the old neighborhood. For example, his mother in law had an incident at his house and he recalled the response time for the medical personnel to get to his home was very good. John admitted that his wife and daughter sold him on the idea of relocating on the premise that the move would be great for the family, the environment would be nurturing, and we would the opportunity to expand our knowledge base. The relocation decision was great for his wife's shopping and it was a great environment for their child to be raised in, great school environment, and safety…all of those things. In an attempt to make his wife and daughter happy, he consented to the move and went along with the process.

While John was impressed with the safety of the neighborhood, he did not describe his new neighborhood as welcoming.   He noted a lack of diversity in his predominately White neighborhood. John also recognized that his neighbors were reluctant to interact with him.

Shelly noted a number of positive aspects of her neighborhood including the investment of residents in their community, proximity to desired amenities, and safety. She also mentioned the neighborhood amenities. Shelly stated, "It's just like you can look at the community and see that people have really invested in the community here as opposed to where I came from." Shelly referred to her new neighborhood as the 33% because her community was comprised of about 1/3 of blacks, 1/3 of whites, and 1/3 Asian. She revealed that her subdivision consisted of about a 100 homes. Everything she needed was in walking distance of her home, such as a major grocery store, and 12 to 13 different restaurants that literally were only steps away. Shelly has been in her neighborhood close to six years and she stated that she had not experienced any issues. By issues she meant no reports of crime; she felt the neighborhood was very safe. Since Shelly lives in the city of Grayson, she has

the benefit of actually have a community patrol whereby the security officers are consistently patrolling the neighborhood and immediate areas. Shelly sounded relieved when she expressed that she had not experienced any issues at all in her new community.

In contrast to the responses by Grace, and Shelly that focused on positive experiences, another response by John also seemed to indicate a negative aspect of his new neighborhood. John mentioned the cold neighborhood. He stated, "Other than being overly-priced, predominately white, not enough diversity in my opinion." John felt that everyone kind of kept to themselves. He described his community as "majority white," with probably less than 1% minorities in the neighborhood. Although there were some black folks with some Asian wives, the racial mixture was an area that concerned him. John revealed that he had not had a lot of interaction with any of his neighbors other than the one that lives directly next door to him. He thought limited interaction with his neighbors was probably more to his resistance and not necessarily due to his neighbors. He was of the opinion that people in his neighborhood did not know how to approach him or maybe he rationalized that his neighbors were afraid to interact with him. John stated that he did not want to spend any energy with a helping hand or to reach out to others. Along than the factors John described, he felt the neighborhood was kind of cold in the sense that if one was not involved in the community activities going on such as tennis and swimming and those type activities in the neighborhood ---- you were excluded. John mentioned the HOA held meetings and sponsored activities at the clubhouse and pool, but in the five years he has never attended any of the activities or events. He believed his attitude was attributed to his work environment after serving 35 years with the federal government. When probed for clarification, John revealed that he had grown tired of an oppressive work environment and of "trying to fit in" with his mostly White colleagues who were less educated. At this point in his life, John

stated that he was happy being himself. He quipped that he does not have to pretend

anymore and that felt good. He stated, "I just feel like I need to be me."

According to Omni and Winant (1994), "There is an on-going interpretation of our

experiences in racial terms that shape our relations to the institutions and organizations which

are embedded in the social structure" (p. 60). So far as the neighborhood, John surmised that

if one is not involved in any activities--- the community felt cold and unfriendly. He stated

that his wife walks a lot so he imagined that she met a lot more of the neighbors. John was

sure the female side of the neighborhood (housewives and retirees) participated in more

activities. From John's point of view, he described his community as kind of closed and not

very friendly. He felt socially isolated in his new community.

Costs Associated with the Move

For John, one of the costs would be the lack of interaction with his new neighbors.

The social support system was another cost for John's family. Grace also mentioned a lack

of substantial interaction with her neighbors --- noting they could have a glass of wine

together, but nothing more than that. John stated, "Where we live now we have a small

support system but not the kind I'd really like or I could at least depend on --- it's basically

just family, immediate family support --- like either my wife or myself."

John stated that his social support system was limited, in that, his family did not have

anyone they could really trust with their child. When he was still working, he mentioned that

sometimes he paid the baby-sitter (laughter) an individual from the old neighborhood to

come into the new neighborhood to stay with their daughter. This arrangement was

necessary especially when his wife had to go out of town or he too, was out of town on

business. The lack of a social support system was another cost associated with his family's

relocation decision.

For Shelly, her son's naïve and nonchalant manner might be another cost. Shelly acknowledged her need of having other family members being involved in her support network. After school care was another cost of her relocation decision because she could not transport her son to all of his activities by herself. The costs in terms of time and resources of her extended family members were significant. Shelly stated, "Well, the support system that we really utilize is family."

Shelly described her family a very close- knit family. All her sisters and brothers live very close to her and her mom used to live close to her, until her recent passing in March. Shelly revealed that her family members relied on each other for support all the time, including her ex-husband's family. Her relatives do not live too far away from each other so it convenient and advantageous for her rely on her support system, especially picking her son up from school, dropping him off from school, playing football, football practices, basketball practices, picking him up, dropping him off, etc. Shelly explained there were many sacrifices in raising a teen-age son, and all the things they have to do would be challenging for her. Shelly stated, "You have to use your support system."

African-Americans have historically used a variety of means of sustaining a supportive social network whether by extended family members, community members, churches, and the adoption of fictional "kin" who are not related to the family, but play a major role in raising the children (Boyd-Franklin, 2003; Pipes-McAdoo, Thornon, 1990).

For Grace, racism might be additional cost associated with her relocation decision. Grace stated, "A little White boy said to her out loud, 'I don't like Justice because she's BLACK." Her daughter experienced racism for the very first time not long after they had moved in the new community. Grace described the incident as if it had happened yesterday. She [Justice] and some of her playmates were playing outside in the yard while the adults

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were talking on the front porch. After she heard the comment from her next door neighbor's son, she immediately went into the house with Justice, followed by her playmates. Her daughter started crying and sobbing (hysterically). She and her playmates had tried to calm Justice down and amazingly her playmates were emphatic and tried to console her. However, for Grace, the most hurtful and disappointing aspect of this incident was that the parent witnessed everything and did not acknowledge the inappropriate racial act and yet, said nothing to her son, their next door neighbor. Grace stated that she had even attended church with this particular family as a guest. The disheartening aspect of the whole incident for Grace was that if her child had said anything disrespectful like that to anyone, she would have stopped her privileges and apologized or even brought her child in to apologize.

Grace countered, as an African-American parent this incident was not something she would have ignored if it had been her daughter making a similar statement. She reasoned that she raised her child to be respectful and kind to others. However, nothing was said by the boy's parent and consequently, her daughter was emotionally distraught for quite some time. In one sense Grace was glad her daughter had experienced it [racism] because in all her years of growing up she had not. Grace turned the racial incident into a "teachable moment" for her daughter for she suspected this racial incident would not be her last. Shelly mentioned the isolation.

She stated:

But like I say, he's very sheltered out here so life here is different than life in other places, and where he may be what I call naïve, I think if he would have stayed where he was, he would recognize quickly --- you know, it's easy just to be naïve and nonchalant about what could happen to you, what may happen to you, and one of the things I'm teaching him now is everybody that smiles in your face are not your friend.

Another aspect Shelly mentioned was the social isolation. She perceived her son as being very sheltered --- too sheltered which lead her to provide an example. Shelly proceeded to lay out the series of events. At the end of last year her son failed English, so when he got his report card, he was not eligible to be at the senior status. Shelly revealed that bit of news made him cranky. He wanted to go to summer school, but summer school would cost $400. In an effort to teach her son that with every decision he made, there would be a consequence. She explained to him that she was not paying for summer school because he had every opportunity to pass English. The $400 was not an investment she was willing or going to make. Her son found himself in a financial and transportation dilemma. Shelly told her son he would have to figure out a way to make it happen. Where was he going to get the money and how was he going to get back and forth to Pace Academy? Once he realized that Shelly was not budging, he really panicked. He had missed the deadline for summer school in Gwinnett. Consequently, he begged his grandmother for the $400 and to transport him to and from Pace Academy. His grandmother consented; she took him to Pace Academy to register, paid for the class, and took him back and forth. Shelly refused to rescue her son, especially since she reasoned that this situation could have been avoided. At that point, Shelly turned her son's decision-making into a teachable moment; she allowed him to make his own decisions. He learned there were consequences behind his decision. If his grandmother had not provided the money and provided the transportation, he would have not made senior status, which would have resulted in further social isolation among his peers. Shelly felt her son was finally starting to figure things out.

Factors Leading to Relocation Decision

John mentioned the deteriorating quality of the old school and community that led to his relocation decision.

John stated:

Atlanta is a big place so for me… it was probably for a better environment
for my wife and my child to grow up in, safety because
they didn't feel safe where we were, and just quality of education for
our daughter. Then, it was economics…price of the house.

Shelly mentioned the quality of the old school in comparison to the quality of her new school that led to her relocation decision. Shelly stated, "It was just the school ---that was it--- hands down." Shelly indicated that she had done her research and an attendance line issue arose after she had already moved. She learned that Gwinnett County had redistricted the schools in her attendance zone. Luckily she had already been researching it and found out about the redistricting prior to the move.   Another issue was to make sure that she was on the right side of the street so when the attendance lines were redrawn, she was able to make sure that she was part of that school no matter what they had done with the redistricting line.

Shelly also mentioned the low graduation rate in the previous school was another reason for wanting to relocate. Grace mentioned access to a good school district was a primary factor in her relocation decision. She stated, "Gwinnett County has really good schools, good learning environment, and great location were the factors." Grace stated that she wanted to be close to everything that would enable her to quickly reach anywhere she needed and wanted to go. She wanted a quiet and clean environment that was good for the three of them including her daughter, mom, and herself. Grace also mentioned the deteriorating quality of the old neighborhood that led to her relocation decision, as well as the need of getting a "fresh start" in the Black Mecca of Atlanta, GA., and prosperous employment opportunities.

Similarities and Differences in the Quality of the New and Previous School

Grace stated, "The most glaring differences were the disparities in the level of parental involvement." Grace perceived the level of parental involvement among the African American parents in her daughter's previous school was limited. John seemed to indicate a negative aspect of his child's new school. He mentioned a lack of racial and cultural diversity. In John's previous school, everything and everyone was black. In the new school, everything and everyone is predominately white. He stated a preference of seeing more diverse student ethnic groups and reasoned that diversity might possibly ease some of his level of discomfort. John stated, "I don't see the diversity and I don't see it happening any time soon." Shelly stated, "I was looking at different things like the crime rates for a particular school and the graduation rates." Shelly mentioned that she compared the crime rates and graduation rates of the surrounding areas of the school district; she then compared the statistical data to the crime rate in Grayson. There were secondary factors, but she was mainly interested in finding the best computer technology curriculum for her son. There were others factors such as locating her "dream home" within her price range and being in close proximity to her social support system. Shelly felt school quality was indicative of housing quality; she believed the two variables were intertwined. In contrast to the responses by Grace and Shelly that focused on some positive experiences, a response by John seemed to indicate a negative aspect of his child's new school.

Similarities and Differences in the Quality of the New and Previous Neighborhood

Grace mentioned her new neighborhood lacked a "sense of community." She stated, "There was more of a sense of community in our old neighborhood." Upon reflection, Grace admitted there were certain times that she missed her old community. She felt that everyone looked out for each other in her previous community. However, she described her new

community as predominately white. She viewed her new community as friendly, but only

friendly enough to say hello or perhaps have a glass of wine, but that was about the extent of

the relationships she had with her neighbors.

Shelly mentioned that she found her "dream home" in her new community. Shelly

stated, "I didn't really feel entirely safe in our old neighborhood and even though it was a

new neighborhood --- new homes, I started to see it declining." Shelly described her need for

safety, stating that she now feels safe in her new environment. She was elated to see that her

new neighbors really invested in their homes. Equally important was the easy accessibility to

everything. She was grateful to live close to her family, and especially within walking

distance to the library, goods and services.   Shelly loves her new housing environment, and

she enjoys the amenities within her community, this was not the case in their old

neighborhood. John mentioned a lack of comfort. He stated, "In the old neighborhood, I

knew what to expect ---I knew my neighborhood--- I knew my environment."

John expressed a level of comfort in his previous community because he knew where

everything was located. Equally important, he knew the areas to avoid. He knew the areas

where he could feel comfortable. In his old neighborhood, he could walk out of his house,

walk down the street, and feel comfortable. In his new community, he had to learn these type

things all over again. John still feels uncomfortable in new community even though it's been

close to five years.

Impact of Relocation Decision on Child's Achievement

Grace mentioned that her housing choice may have negatively impacted her child's

academic achievement.

Grace stated:

My daughter often cannot participate in many after-school programs or go to after-school activities, tutoring, games, and/or events due to transportation limitations, you know, since my mother does not drive, she has to catch the bus home when the county bus leaves at 2:10 p.m.

Shelly mentioned that her relocation decision did not have any impact on her son's achievement. Shelly stated, "I mean he just transitioned from there to here, so it hasn't impacted him." John stated, "I do not see any impact our relocation decision had on our child's achievement." John felt that his daughter had not matured to the point where she would explode or develop into a brilliant-thinking person. He predicted that she would come around perhaps in her 10th or 11th grade year whereby she would get the full benefits of the educational environment.

Expected Benefits and Unintended Consequences of Relocation Decision

The research participants did not discuss specific benefits or unintended consequences regarding this research question.

Shelly stated:

I thought I would love to be downtown like Atlantic Station and that was my game plan to place my home on the market, get my son graduated and move on…but you know…I really love my home. I'm staying.

When Shelly and her son moved to their new community, it was her goal to move to Grayson for the sole purpose of getting her son in the computer technology program in the highly coveted school district. Shelly explained her relocation decision was simply to get her son in Gwinnett County schools long enough to provide her son with further knowledge in the field of computer technology at the high school level. She was hopeful her son will gain admittance into top universities and secure scholarships, which might possibly enhance his future educational and career pursuits. John stated, "I'm not really sure if she's really getting what she really needs because I kind of cater to the black experience."

John felt that his daughter might be missing out on something, such as her racial identity. He does not want her to grow up as a black female and think that she is white or she has to do something to be accepted by her peers. He added that he sometimes feels uncomfortable in this regard because he wants to protect her from harm, but he reasoned that his feeling is probably attributed to being an overly protective parent. Grace stated, "I'm truly hoping that she has the opportunity that other kids have and not be left out."

Grace stated that she wanted her daughter to have caring teachers and she saw evidence that her teachers appeared to genuinely care about her because her daughter brought up her grades tremendously. Grace felt that our [African-American] kids do not need baby-sitters or someone to watch over them, she stated they need real teachers…teachers that can relate to them…teach them what they should know and be able to do. She perceived the majority of her daughter's teacher's really wanted to educate, they really wanted to be there, and they loved their jobs. As a parent she thinks that other African-American parents should be involved and she thinks as a black parent you need to be involved…just to make sure your child does not get left behind.

Emerging Themes from the Interview Analysis

In this section, I present four primary themes that emerged from my analysis of the interview responses provided by Grace, Shelly and John. These themes are: (1) educational relocation experiences; (2) the impact of African-American families' housing choices on their children's education; (3) factors of a good public school education in their community; and (4) mitigation techniques.

How do African-American families describe their educational relocation experiences*?* Participants in this study described positive and negative experiences in terms of both their new schools and their new neighborhoods.

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Positive experiences. John did not specifically discuss positive academic achievement for his daughter that resulted from the family's relocation, but he did emphasize increased social networking opportunities for his daughter. He also described his daughter's new school as a "training ground for corporate America." For example, there is a push from teachers/administration for students to take Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes in preparation of strengthening their readiness for college and career readiness.   He discussed his daughter's high school curriculum offering a "Sports Management" course, which she has signed up for next year. His daughter has aspirations of being an attorney, specializing in sports management. Although it is a high school level course, he felt the course serves as an introduction to the field of "sports management" a course she would not have had access to at her previous school. John felt the learning environment at her predominately White high school was similar to a "corporate" environment, in that she would be prepared for the world of work.   John reasoned that since his daughter is very sociable; she is thrust in an environment to learn the hidden curriculum.   The hidden curriculum can be described as "A covert and subliminal teaching and learning thought process that works to both perpetuate power relationships, cultural hegemony, and political relationships and to impede the progress of those without the ability to identify and understand its existence" (Jones & Young, 1997, p. 93). Therefore, learning the hidden curriculum might enhance the likelihood of her fitting in very quickly to the corporate environment culture, and ultimately, ensuring her overall success.

John also expressed concerns about interactions between White teachers at the new school and his daughter. Since his daughter had previously attended predominately Black schools with all Black teachers, John hoped his daughter would quickly adjust to experiencing a new learning environment at her new high school and having predominately

White teachers. He felt that having good relationships with his daughter's teachers provided

additional support for his child. According to Howard-Hamilton (2000), "In the learning

environment, teachers that create a culturally responsive environment can be inclusive and

supportive rather than isolating and exclusionary" (p. 45). Even though John graduated from

an all-black high school and a historically black college/university (HBCU), John wanted his

daughter to have real life experiences by having exposure to the real world environment. He

felt the majority of his daughter's teachers were inclusionary and supportive in their teaching

practices and that his daughter would be the beneficiary of their teaching pedagogy.

Shelly emphasized the technological opportunities available at the new school as a

positive aspect of her relocation decision.   Shelly recognized her son was gifted and talented

when it came to computers, and she wanted nothing more than have her son enroll in the

computer technology curriculum in the highly coveted school district.   She felt the computer

technology curriculum in her son's new high school would serve as a spring board for him in

so far as entrance to prestigious universities, and would provide a solid foundation for his

college studies. For Shelly, she was impressed the computer technology curriculum; it was

the driving force of her relocation decision.

Grace moved to Gwinnett County because of its' reputation of having really great

schools. She had done her homework on the high-performing schools in Gwinnett County,

GA and identified the housing communities that met her price range. She perceived her new

community as quiet and clean. Location was important for her because she wanted to be

close to everything so she could reach anywhere in the community quickly.   Equally

important was being in close proximity to a community church that she, her mother and

daughter could become members. Secondary considerations were proximity to the mall,

grocery, services, etc. Grace was satisfied with her relocation decision but expressed some misgivings about her daughter's classroom environment.

Negative experiences. In his interview, John discussed a lack of diversity as negative experiences related to his family's relocation decision. He expressed concerns that his daughter's new environment could ultimately affect her ideas in a negative way. He felt his daughter might have a bias toward her own race because she could be influenced by her white friends and teachers, and her own racial identity could be compromised. He feared she could experience racism in a predominately white environment. For example, she could experience racial acts and behavior (e.g., a racist joke or acts of bullying). John felt his daughter might experience racial discrimination in a variety of covert and overt ways in a predominately white school. He was not sure if the white teachers would accept his black child and provide her with the same opportunities as "others." He was afraid she could experience unfair treatment or discrimination only because she is Black (e.g. grades, exclusionary practices).

Shelly and Grace discussed negative experiences related to academics. For Shelly, outside of the technology curriculum at her son's new school, she felt the remaining curriculum offerings were standard. Shelly noted that in comparison to her new school, the old school had not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the last three years. Under the accountability provisions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), schools annually measure student performance on standardized testing assessment that meet federal and state requirements (Georgia Department of Education, 2011). The abysmal graduation rate at her son's previous school along with the crime rate statistics in her previous neighborhood were factors that led to her relocation decision. She feared that if she had not relocated, her son may not have been in the appropriate environment to enhance his possibilities for academic

success. Overall, Shelly felt her relocation decision was good for her son. She did, however, note that her decision had some "drawbacks" or "unintended consequences." For example, at his previous predominately black school her son was in all AP classes. After he relocated to a predominately white high school, he dropped the AP classes and opted instead for a lower category of classes such as "honors" and/or "college prep." Shelly perceived the rigor of AP classes as preparing her son for college admission into top universities her son had other ideas and decided to opt out of the more challenging courses. Even though Shelly was not in agreement and disappointed with his decision to drop the AP classes, she realized that her son is becoming of age toward manhood and he has to make his own decisions. She is currently teaching her son to recognize that with each decision he makes --- there are consequences.

Shelly also discussed a lack of African-American parental involvement at her son's previous, as well as new school, as reasons for concern. She wanted to be involved more at her son's new high school; she wanted to have a rapport with his teachers and consult with them about her son academic progress. She wanted to know what was going on with her son. Shelly recognized that her son's sheltered life in Grayson was different than life in other places. She reflected upon the impact of her relocation decision may have had on her son, i.e. isolation from peer associations beyond school and lack of exposure to other activities beyond his immediate schooling environment. Shelly felt her son had been "sheltered" and isolated from other African-American students and as a result was naïve.

Grace perceived the after-school program influenced her daughter's academic achievement. Transportation constraints prevented her daughter from participating in many school activities and events, namely, after-school programs. Grace felt the lack of transportation possibly hindered her daughter's academic progress. Students who derived the

benefits of after-school programs are more likely to do well and fail fewer core academic courses such as reading and math (Miller, 2001, p. 6).

What impact did housing choice have on your child's education? In this section, participants described the impact their relocation decision had on their child's education.

No impact. Shelly felt her relocation decision did not have an impact on her child. She thought there were no significant differences between her son's previous school and the new school in his academic achievement. She thought that he transitioned easily from a predominately Black school to his new school. Overall, she summarized her relocation decision as being worth the effort.

John did not think that his relocation decision had any impact on his daughter. He expected more from his daughter and guessed that would come with more maturity. John believes his daughter will mature far later into her development and maturity, possibly 10th or 11th grade. In one sense John perceived his relocation was worth the effort, such as safety. However, he did not feel comfortable in his new environment due to the social isolation he experienced in his new community. He noted the personal, professional, and financial sacrifices for his wife and daughter largely influenced his relocation decision.

Some impact. For Grace, transportation constraints prevented her daughter from attending after-school programs and activities. She reasoned that after-school tutoring could serve as a source of academic support for her daughter earning higher grades. She was disappointed to learn that transportation would be such as major issue that ultimately excluded her daughter from participating in many social, sporting, and cultural events. In spite of the transportation constraints, she perceived her relocation decision as being worth the effort.

What Are the Factors of a Good Public School Education in Your Community?

Cultural diversity, curriculum, graduation rates, crime rates, socialization, and parental involvement. Armed with research data, John referenced that his wife had done her research on the various school districts in the Atlanta metropolitan area, including student demographics, teacher/student ratios, AYP scores, high school graduation rates and any trends/patterns from previous data. They had researched school districts in all the major Atlanta school districts, including Fayette, Fulton, Forsyth, Cobb and Gwinnett counties, and narrowed their search to Cobb and Gwinnett school districts. After much discussion and looking at suitable school districts in areas that met his price range, his family decided upon Northern Gwinnett County, GA and Gwinnett County Public Schools. He wanted diversity, but also did not want his daughter's first educational experience beyond her predominately Black school she previously attended to be "too white." He wanted to put his daughter in a learning environment that had some diversity to ensure that the adjustment would not be so much of a culture shock for her. John also felt that because his daughter is now participating in the school's track team, concert orchestra, and previously had been a cheerleader --- these extra-curricular activities were providing her with unique experiences that provided an exposure to meeting new people and expanding her social outlets.

Shelly felt that since the world and global economy is going to computer-based communication, she reasoned that the computer technology curriculum at her son's new school was the major component or factor of a good public school. She felt that the curriculum provided her son with a unique opportunity for exposure at the high school level. In other school settings, he might not have been exposed to this program until after graduation.

Shelly also felt that parental involvement was important to her as a factor of good public schools. Shelly complained that evidence of parental involvement of African-Americans was not apparent at her son's previous school, such as PTA involvement or volunteering for committee assignments. She was impressed that African-American parents at her son's new high school demonstrated heightened levels of involvement in their child's activities…though most of the involvement was apparent in the evenings and week-ends or outside of regular business hours.

Grace echoed Shelly sentiments regarding the lack of parental involvement and the disparities between African-American parents and White parents. Since her daughter's high school is a predominately white school, it is obvious that White parental involvement would outnumber African-American parental involvement. The disparities of involvement are simply based on White families outnumbering African-American parents.

What Mitigation Techniques Do African-American Families Do to Ensure Their Children Receive the Best Education Possible?

Social learning environment, social support network, graduation rates, crime rates, grades, extra-curricular activities. The social learning environment was important to Shelly. She liked a safe environment where her child could feel safe taking academic and personal risks in class. According to Tilman (2009), "It is conceivable that when teachers gain perspective and knowledge about the experiences and the needs of Black students that they are more likely to conceptualize and execute their teaching in ways that better and more effectively meet the needs of Black students" (p. 131). She wanted her son to feel comfortable and expected acts of kindness from his peers, teachers and administrators. In addition, she looked at the graduation rates from her son's previous school and compared to the graduation rates for Grayson. As a law enforcement officer, Shelly examined the

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crime rate. She felt the crime rates and the graduation rates are intertwined. She was satisfied with the low crime rate and the high graduation rate for Grayson.

John used grades to ensure that his daughter received the best education. He thought that his child's academic performance was "just average" as she looked at school as a social outlet. He reasoned that every child needs good grades to be successful in their future endeavors. The measuring stick for doing well in school requires that she understand the subject matter and can perform well on tests.

Shelly used family to ensure that her son received the best education possible. She emphasized that everyone in her family, including her ex-husband's relatives live in close proximity to her housing community. She thought she could depend upon her family to support her son's education. Shelly thought that family values include offering the best education for her son.

Grace used the concept of creating an "environment conducive to learning" to ensure that her daughter received the best education possible. She wanted her daughter to sit and study in a clean and quiet environment; these factors are important to her. Her response appears to indicate a high correlation with the physical environment translating to effective learning for her daughter.

Summary

The tenets of CRT assert how race and racism impact people of color and are a tool for analysis in understanding the everyday lives of African-American families. For example, there was a situation Grace revealed in her interviews when her daughter first encountered racism. On their very first day of moving into their new, mostly white community, a young white boy said to her, "I don't like like Justice because she is BLACK." More importantly, the parents witnessed the incident and did nothing to address their child or identify his

proclamation as inappropriate behavior. No apology was extended nor any attempt to correct their child's behavior. What could have easily been turned in to a "teachable moment" for the child's inappropriate behavior was instead ignored and marginalized. This learning experience can be tied to the "normalcy of racism" of the parents, as well as the child. This incident was the first time her daughter had experienced racism. While Grace was saddened by her daughter's hurt and pain, this incident laid the framework for Grace to discuss with her daughter what racism feels like for African-Americans. Grace turned this racial incident into a "teachable moment" for her daughter.

Another example was from Shelly when "her white neighbor questioned how she could afford the new house." Shelly's experience can be tied in with the tenets of CRT such as whiteness as property, white privilege, domination, and property rights. Her lived experience also is tied in with exclusionary practices of removing "undesirables" from the spatial landscape.

Another example was from John when his African-American family first relocated into their predominately white community. According to John, the neighbor across the street came over to welcome him to the community. However, his welcome included an invitation to go "shoot some hoops" on the basketball court. John was offended by his welcome; he perceived the invitation as stereo-typing him i.e., the stereotype that all black guys play basketball. In the interview, John revealed that he rarely even watches basketball games (with the exception of the finals) no less play basketball. He reasoned that if his new neighbor wanted to get to know him they could discuss the stock market; if he was privy to such information he could share some stock or real estate tips with him. John felt his neighbor assumed that he played basketball, which he does not. Based upon my interviews, observations, field notes and participant profile, John is more of an intellectual, white-collar,

conservative, and professional black male. John explained in the interviews that after thirty-five years in a predominately white and oppressive work environment, coupled with reporting to White individuals that were less qualified and less educated…. he was tired of "trying to fit in." In retirement, he felt that he could finally have his freedom. Intersectionality can be tied in with this example of John being black and male, which serves as a double-whammy for African-Americans.

The African-American families in my inquiry told their stories relating to their relocation experiences that reveal the historical and systemic inequalities and injustices in society, namely, in housing and education. Even when African-American families, such as my research participants have resources to relocate to more affluent areas with higher performing schools, African-American students are still being underserved. This phenomenon can be tied in with white supremacy, interest convergence and intersectionality.

According to Bell (1992), "The fact that, as victims, we suffer racism's harm, but, as a people [we] cannot share the responsibility for that harm, maybe the critical component in a definition of what it is like to be black in America (p. 155).

In the following chapter, Chapter 5 will address the implications for future research and significance of the study for parents, public policy makers, schools and society.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION: SURVEYING THE LANDSCAPE

In this chapter I will describe the findings that emerged from my qualitative research study. The purpose of my research inquiry was to shed light on the relocation experiences of African-American families that relocated in search of finding better educational opportunities for their children. The research questions outlined below address the following thematic categories: (1) African-American educational relocation experiences; (2) impact of the participants' housing choices on their children's education; (3) participants' perceptions of factors good public education and; (4) mitigation techniques participants used to ensure their children received the best education possible.

Much has been written about the historical struggles African-Americans have gone through to obtain an equitable education in the United States. Little, however, is known about the 21st Century struggles African-American families continue to experience as they search for better educational opportunities for their children. This research sheds light on my participants lived experiences, which can provide new information and knowledge for policymakers, administrators, teachers, and society.

The intent of chapter five is to present the findings, implications, recommendations for future research based on the results of the research study (Creswell, 2004). My findings are presented from emergent themes from the interview analysis and are outlined in the following order. In the course of my inquiry, numerous revelations became evident:

(1) African-American students, regardless of their socio-economic status, are still underserved in their educational pursuits through racial segregation and exclusionary practices;

(2) African-American families require an active social support network for

maintenance and survival of the family; and

(3) African-Americans still experience systemic and historical racism in society,

 particularly in education and housing practices.

I recognized that my research would not only be of benefit to other African-American families but, I too, would personally benefit. In my role, I have come to realize that the results of my research might influence social policy and possibly change the face of disparate education policies that currently exist. I realized too, that as a racialized society, I must reverently challenge "white privilege," "whiteness as property," and the "normalcy of racism." One's race, class, and culture create a social and educational society where many Whites feel victimized and respond by protecting their "privilege" and "place" (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997, p. 1).

Finding 1: African-American Students Are Still Being Under-Served.

The irony of it all is that even in majority white schools, minority students are not being served well. Even after African-American families with enhanced resources have the *opportunit*y to relocate to better school districts, as with my research participants, African-American families still go through many hurdles and are still getting an education that is inferior to that of white children. Access to adequate resources and decent facilities to relevant curriculum to opportunities to reflect on and think critically about the world --- are all unevenly distributed along predictable lines of class and color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2006, p. 87). Two of the African-American participants noted in their interviews and supporting scholarly research data in the review of literature point to a lack of opportunity for access to curriculum offerings. Shelly expressed positive experiences with regard to the technology curriculum at her son's school, but little else. Upon reflection, the significance of

the Moynihan Report regarding African-American education created a deficit-oriented paradigm (Moynihan, 1965, p. 51). African-American students' lack of access concerns are primarily due to school policies that espouse ability grouping which categorize, sort , track and racially segregate African American students from their white peers in remedial classes, college prep classes, special education (LD, EBD, MR) and through discriminatory practices such as suspension/expulsion. According to Clotfelter (2004), "Students who start off in a low track are effectively condemned to slower classes, less stimulating peers, and more constrained opportunities beyond graduation" (p. 128). Further, African-American students are further excluded from before/after-school programs and activities, as indicated by Grace, a participant in my study. The disproportionate effect of grade retention on low-income students of color has been to place them at greater risk by increasing the drop-out rate and having little positive effect on achievement (Fine, 1991; Grissom & Shephard, 1989; Holmes, 1989; Hong & Raudenbush, 2005; House, 1989; Luppescu, Byrk & Deabster, Easton & Thum, 1995; Shephard & Smith, 1989).

Despite the promises of educational equity brought on by passage of the 1954 Supreme Court decision in Brown v. The Board of Education and through my own lived experiences as an African-American educator taught me that the promises of Brown remain unkept for many African-American students. For example, I am reminded of a time, more than twenty-five years ago, when I taught special education in an urban setting. There was a class-action lawsuit, Freemen v. Pitts (1992) that required more equitability of staff in the district between the northern white staff in comparison to the southern black staff. During this time the teaching staff assignments were simply based upon race. Racial diversity simply did not exist. Now we see a pattern of re-segregation, which is evident in urban areas with a heavy concentration of African-American residents and in suburban areas with Whites,

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which significantly affect the racial composition of schools and communities. The urban metropolitan school district utilized a lottery system to distribute equitability among staff due to a federal court order demanding desegregation. Failure to desegregate as mandated by the Supreme Court meant stiff financial sanctions. Prior to this mandate the school system had been resistant to any type of desegregation efforts and only enacted the lottery because it was forced to act.

Today, we still see a cycle of underachievement facing African-American students in urban as well as suburban school environments. Under-achievement is a persistent problem in our nation's public schools regardless of socio-economic status. A supporting perspective found, "Cultural attitudes, academic tracking, curricular access, and after-school activities serve as sorting mechanisms that set students on paths of success or failure" (Nogura, 2006, p. 1). Shelly stated, "Well, I was looking at the curriculum for the school system that he was currently in and felt that it wasn't up to par." As Shelly's statement attests, African-American students are still not making adequate gains (Massey, 2001; Noguera, 2007; Greene, 2002).

Finding 2: African-Americans Families Need a Social Support

Network for Survival.

An active social support network is necessary for the maintenance and survival of African American families. As African-American families have relocated to "better schools" they can ultimately feel *socially isolated* in a new educational *environment*. Grace stated, "She was isolated, but it wasn't like in your face as it is here in the South."

Soja, 2010; Harvey, 2001; McKittrick, 2002; Tate, 2008; and Cresswell, 1996) challenge "space" and "race" by examining contemporary forms of political-economic power by highlighting the social inequalities and "unjust geographies" experienced by African-Americans and people of color. Critical geographies of race adversely affect African-

American children (Massey & Denton, 1998; Rice, 2009; Squires & Kim, 1995). A new educational *environment* coupled with adjusting to a new housing *environment* can serve as a realization of not having opportunities for interacting with peers, which lends itself to racial, cultural, and social isolation. For example, Grace's daughter was further isolated from her peers and unable to participate in before/after-school tutoring due to transportation limitations. Grace stated, "I'm truly hoping that she has the opportunity that other kids have and not be left out." She relied solely upon bus transportation to and from school, which was provided by the school district. Similarly, Shelly would have encountered the same transportation dilemma for her son if not for the support she garnered from her immediate family members. Shelly was quick to note that it if had not been for the support of her family members, her son would not have been able to participate in football, i.e. taking or picking him up from school for practice, attending his games, and other school-related events. For John, the identical issues Grace and Shelly encountered persisted prior to his recent retirement. John planned his retirement based on the challenging high school schedule of his daughter and learned that the instructional day began at 7:20 a.m. and ended at 2:10 p.m. He, therefore, eliminated the transportation issues his family previously experienced prior to his daughter going to high school. He currently takes and picks his daughter up from school daily based on her track practices, meets, orchestra practices, and performances.

Historically, African-American families have used a variety of ways of maintaining a supportive social network whether by extended family members, community members, churches, and the adoption of "kin" who are not related, but play a major role in raising the children (Boyd-Franklin, 2003; Franklin, 2003, Pipes-McAdoo, 2004; Thornton, 1998). For example, in my field notes, it was revealed by John that he is a source of support for many of his daughter's peers for transportation needs. In the examples referenced above, one can

readily recognize that transportation issues exclude many African-Americans students from participating in school programs, (such as tutoring) activities, and events. The feeling of belonging is tantamount to successful learning and over all well-being (Warnock, 2005, p. 6). Within this context, the exclusion and isolation of African-American students can significantly impact levels of achievement and school success that further contribute to the inequalities in the educational system.

Along that same line of discussion, it is my belief that an active social support network was necessary in successfully completing my dissertation program. Prior to my acceptance into the doctoral studies program in Curriculum Studies I was concerned about child care. My husband traveled on his job and was frequently out of town. I was also concerned about the impact the financial costs would have on my family, as well as the psychological costs me and my family might experience. Would I be able to juggle the demands of family, work and school? I was optimistic about the whole prospect of achieving my life-long dream of earning a doctoral degree and subsequently garnered much support from my family, colleagues, and friends.

In my doctoral cohort, all ten of us were African-Americans "coined the Mafia 10" and lived in the Atlanta metropolitan area. We shared many commonalities and quickly became a close-knit support group of each other. We car-pooled together, shared hotel rooms, devised alternate driving schedules for the long distance from Atlanta to Statesboro on those late Friday afternoons, and engaged in much discourse regarding our classes and program of study. We supported each other in every way.

Issues of race and racism were always the elephant in the room in our classes. As we embarked upon our first semester at Georgia Southern University, it was predicted by a white professor, that only 40% of us would finish the doctoral program. Wow, what a racist

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comment I thought. I knew my support group members must have shared the identical

thoughts. I, nor any of my cohort members, expected the welcoming address we received.

Upon reflection, the comments could have easily been a deterrent to some. However, what

would ordinarily have been perceived as just a "racist" comment by many, instead served as

a source of inspiration and further determination that our professor's prediction would turn

out to be a falsehood. Little did I know in this dissertation journey that race and racism would

so openly be discussed; issues of race and racism served as a major component of the

curriculum. It disturbed me to acknowledge that in class after class, Whites sat on one side of

the long rectangular table and African-American students sat on the other side. Over time it

became clear that the curriculum itself challenged our Southern racial platitudes regarding

the subjectivities, prejudices, and biases regarding race. These revelations (though still

difficult to actually say out loud in mixed-company) led us to a class experiment. At the time

there was a nation-wide initiative sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League in Atlanta

known as "No Place to Hate." The goal of the organization was to take a stand against

bullying by celebrating our differences. In an effort to celebrate diversity (an activity we had

done at my school) I suggested we "mix it up" in our class. "Mix it up" simply involved

sitting next to someone you did not know, which in our doctoral class meant a white/black

seating arrangement. I am ashamed to say that in the 21ˢᵗ Century only a few white classmates

were willing to disturb the "fixed" racial make-up of the class. I was perplexed and left class

wondering, was the resistance due to "white supremacy", "whiteness as property", or "white

privilege?" Was this a signal for the "Black Mafia" to stay in our place? Was this suggestion

too upsetting to the social order? Would a new, though temporary arrangement serve as a

symbol of "equality?" This quasi experiment certainly solidified my perception that the

majority of my South Georgia, white classmates felt uncomfortable and had no interest with

even the "idea" of sitting next to blacks, no less sitting beside someone of another race. Even the White students I had initially perceived as "friendly" toward me did not budge from their seats. How can we, I reasoned, call ourselves seasoned educators and role models for children when we cannot even sit next to someone of another color?

This experiment left me feeling that we have a long way to go to conquer racism. Throughout my many classes I have become much more critical regarding issues of race and racism and how the historical and systemic practices are threaded throughout our educational system. I am still learning how to navigate through issues of racism and have become more critically aware of the power of the tenets of CRT such as "white privilege", "normalcy of racism", and "whiteness as property." These tenets serve to legitimize domination, power and control, which provide entitlements and benefits associated with white privilege. This Curriculum Studies experience coupled with other incidents since then has solidified my belief that African-Americans need an active social support network now more than ever. This research seeks to challenge dominant cultural and social constructs regarding intelligence and culture, and "leads toward the elimination of racism, sexism, and poverty and empowering marginalized minority groups" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, p. 5).

Finding 3: African-Americans Still Experience Systemic and Historical Racism in Society, Particularly in Education and Housing Practices.

According to Kincheloe (1991), "The South is a place where people gain a special sensitivity to the struggles of our national experiences through the medium of strained racial relations" (p. 148). No matter how many laws were put into place that focuses on the disparities within society, racial inequalities still exist. Noted sociologist, W. E. B. DuBois (1903), asserted that "The problems of the Twentieth Century are traced to the problem of the color line" (p. vii). The "status quo" cannot deny the social injustices many African-

Americans have experienced due to a series of oppressive historical events in U. S. history. These events, namely, lynching, bombings, and beatings were indicative of the domination, power and control exerted over a race of people. Since slavery and beyond, African-Americans have historically sought racial equality in their quest of advocating for human and civil rights. The myriad of laws since slavery have been slow, temporary, cyclical and contingency-based, which serve as legal means of upholding the rights and entitlements among members of mainstream society. Many of the laws have served to the benefit of Whites, such as "separate but equal", Brown vs. The Board of Education and the Fair Housing Act, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), to name a few. Subsequently, the rules were changed and reassessed when it suited the interests of the "privileged few," an example of "interest convergence." African-Americans have historically sought racial equality among the races, but mainstream society has systemically and historically resisted acts toward racial equality. When I revisited the government document entitled, "No Child Left Behind", I saw evidence that students, mostly poor, special-education and students of color, continue to be left behind with separate ability-based programs, while the privileged few or the "haves", far exceed in their academic achievement, which further creates a separation of socio-economic classes and an increasing widening of the achievement gap. These discriminatory practices tend to ignore the neediest of student groups. For example, students perceived to be at risk have difficulties passing the high-stakes standardized tests, further widening the achievement gap.

There is compelling evidence of racism in my review of literature and through the lived experiences of my African-American participants.   For example, Grace's daughter experienced racism first-hand when she, her mom and daughter relocated to a predominately White community.   It was communicated to her daughter by a young white boy that she was

not liked because "She was black." Although the mother, (Grace) was hurt and disappointed that her daughter had experienced racism, she felt that it was a crude, but necessary experience for her daughter. Grace felt she had shielded her daughter from racism prior to this incident. Shelly communicated in the interviews that she was met with "in your face" racism and cited the incident when a white neighbor questioned her ability to afford her new home. This incident served as an example of "white supremacy." John experienced racism when a white neighbor assumed that he liked to play basketball. In the interview, John indicated that he felt insulted and perceived the statement as a stereotypical assumption that whites make of African-Americans males. This example of racism is indicative of intersectionality. According to West (1993), "To engage in a serious discussion about race in America, we must not begin with the problems of black people, but with the flaws of American society --- flaws rooted in historical inequalities and longstanding cultural stereotypes" (p. 3). Through its focus on residential patterns that contribute to educational outcomes, this study connects to the work of other curriculum scholars focusing on curricular of place (Kincheloe & Pinar, 1991; Pinar et al, 1995).

Summary

Chapter 5, "Surveying the Landscape", examined the historical and systemic practices encountered by African-Americans dating as far back as slavery. We see that the institution of slavery and resultant discrimination and its' implications have impacted decision making in education and housing practices. The continued discrimination and shaping of our schools and communities has led to a legacy of inequality and a failure to effectively educate a large percentage of African-American children.

Curriculum as racial text implies understanding debates over what is taught to children and whose knowledge is most worth (Castenell & Pinar, 1993 p. 2). Curriculum

represents identities as social realities. Race, text and identify in education are intertwined concepts that represent "difference" and the "differences" of African-American students must be addressed through culturally-relevant pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1998, 1999, 2006, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, 2006). These examples highlight the significance of understanding curriculum as a racial text. Race influences how other perceive you and believe they think they know you. This research extends scholarship that understands curriculum as racial text (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, Taubman, 1995).

Throughout my chapters, I shared numerous laws that were passed to seemingly create an equal playing field resonant of a democratic society, where all people can participate and benefit from the ideologies of equality. However, unless all students, regardless of race are provided a quality education, social institutions such as public schools will continue down the same path of inequality through racial bias, prejudice, and discrimination, thereby, sustaining division among the races.

As I reflect upon racial discriminatory practices in an urban school district in metropolitan Atlanta, I am reminded of the time when DeKalb County School System was under a racial discrimination lawsuit, namely Freeman v. Pitts (1992). Historically, DeKalb has been resistant to racial desegregation. The pattern of resistance was a phenomenon I personally witnessed. Specifically, the system was charged with equalizing faculty assignments and equalizing allocation of resources. These issues were two problem areas for the school system. As the lawsuit persisted, the school system implemented various means of "relief" namely, busing and the movement of teachers through the establishment of magnet and theme schools. The lawsuit resulted in the majority to minority (M to M) busing program and the re-assignment of White teachers from white communities in north DeKalb to African-American communities in South DeKalb. White teachers left DeKalb in droves

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and White families resisted their children attending school with African-American students. This phenomenon led to a mass exodus from DeKalb and significantly disrupted the social order, which resulted in housing patterns known as "white flight."

With regard to housing, "the undesirables" have been removed from the spatial landscape and often forced out of their communities and excluded from mainstream society, indicative of racial housing patterns throughout the United States. I have shown in the review of literature and hyper-segregation patterns in major urban areas such as Atlanta, Detroit, and Washington, D. C., and my own lived experiences that African-Americans with limited resources are often relegated to inferior and substandard housing and subsequently inferior schools. In my findings, I have recognized that "school choice" often does not exist for African American families, as they are often stuck in distressed urban areas. The development of major highways and interstates, gentrification, urban renewal initiatives, and razing of housing projects has served to isolate interaction among the races, creating hyper-segregation housing patterns.

In the findings, I recognized that the "privileged few" keep coming up with restrictions to keep the "undesirables" of the population out of sight. I also found that economic devices are also used to create and sustain communities that are designed to separate the races and serve as pathways that are only accessible to those within certain socio-economic groups. As noted by one of the participants in my study (Grace) revealed that transportation limitations denied her daughter the opportunities from participating in after-school programs, activities, and events. Her daughter's only source of transportation was limited to the school district's bus transportation to and from school. Additionally, I found transportation constraints tend to limit where many African-Americans can live and work, which further limits access to affordable housing and quality schools. I also found that

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an active social support system was crucial to upholding and sustaining many African-American families.

In terms of CRT and critical geographies of race, those among the "privileged few" perceive "Those with better properties are entitled to better schools" (Kozol, 1991, p. 83). For many African-American families, the quest for acquiring the ethos of the "American Dream" continues to be symbolic in nature. The "American Dream" typically ascribe to the following characteristics: getting an education, homeownership and having a family (Steele, 2006, p. 50). Yet, the hope of achieving access to opportunity, upward social mobility, and success remain an unobtainable dream for the oppressed and marginalized "others". "Whiteness" inherently benefit from the rights and privileges in the intersectionality of social, cultural, and economic entitlements (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). "Whiteness as property" speaks to the quality and quantity of the schools of intellectual property, which often translate to more and better choices among the "privileged few". Kozol (1995) states, "Affluent people, it has often been observed, seldom lack for argument, to deny to others the advantages that they enjoy" (p.135).

Today, we see major changes and movements backwards to the pre-Brown era. For example, public schools became are more segregated in the 1990s as illustrated by Milikien v. Bradley where the court ruled for continued desegregation in school districts surrounding Detroit; the state of Texas' battle for unequal funding of certain school districts; DeKalb County Georgia maintaining unequal funding and desegregation based on racial imbalance in neighborhoods (Cashin, 2004; Frenkenberg, Lee & Orfield, 2003). In any given urban school district, there is a tale of dual-school systems. African-American students and "others" are relegated to high poverty, overwhelmingly minority public schools that are

characterized by poorer test scores, less experienced teachers, and fewer resources than the public schools most white children attend.

Historically and systemically, African American children continue to receive substandard services. For example, in comparison to white students, "Black students are 14 times more at risk of being labeled as learning disabled, emotionally disabled or mentally disabled, which correlates with restrictive placements and/or disciplinary constraints" (Soodak, 2000, p. 175). Coupled with the deficit model and the nuances of cultural biases, misconceptions, and stereotypes of African-American students likely impact their academic achievement, regardless of where they live. My findings suggest that African-American students are still under-served.

I am also reminded a racial incident my family experienced. My husband, daughter, my parents, my brother and sister-in-law were in the sitting room of our home discussing current events. I was busy in the kitchen preparing lunch. We were having some electrical work done in our basement and I wanted to wait until the contractor finished the job before calling everyone to eat. After about 40 minutes, the electrical contractor called up the stairway for my husband to let him know that he had completed the work. In turn, my husband called down for him to come upstairs and offered him a soft drink. In the process, my husband motioned for him to have a seat at the island while he retrieved the checkbook from our upstairs bedroom. As most families, we have pictures of our family members on our refrigerator. My daughter noticed the contractor looking at the pictures and she took it upon herself to identify everyone in the pictures. "That's Tiffany… Mason… Christian… Jarian…Hannah…Myles…Mia… Briana. With an inflection in his voice, the contractor questioned how Briana was a relative. "She's your what?" "Yes, she's my cousin, my daughter exclaimed." The contractor impulsively replied, but "She's white, and you're

black." I saw my daughter's eyes dart toward me and I sensed her heart dropped. "Yes, she's my cousin and she's bi-racial."

At that point my husband re-entered the room and you could just feel the level of racial tension in the room. I think at that point my daughter was hurt and disgusted, but I was so proud of her for handling the situation with style, graciousness and class. My husband presented him with the check for the work done and escorted him out of the house unaware of the incident that had just occurred. Before my husband could get back in the house, our daughter immediately shared the incident with my husband, generating a flurry of discussion for all of us and theorized that the contractor was "just a racist." This incident served as a life lesson for all of us how much we need each other in our social support network. It also served as a reminder that racism is alive and well and still exists in the South. I cannot help but wonder if this incident would have had a different ending if my husband had been present in the kitchen. We will never know, but what we do know remains the same. Here was a situation that an elderly black man (my father) was in the room and a middle-aged black male (my brother) was in the room, and yet the white contractor had no regard for others and felt entitled to question my daughter. He seemed oblivious to the inappropriateness of his comments, further serving as an example of "white privilege", "white supremacy" and "normalcy of racism." The fact remains that we live in a racialized society and racism is alive and well.

As I reflect upon this incident, I, in hindsight should have challenged the contractor's inappropriate statements. Yet, I am still learning from unanticipated consequences of racism. Even though I will probably not ever encounter this white contractor again in life, I cannot help but wonder how many other white people within the general population share and support his racist attitudes. This story as well as other experiences throughout my inquiry,

allow me to give "voice" to marginalized others through descriptive story-telling.   Hooks

(2009) conveys, "Many people in our nation, especially white people, believe that racism

ended --- consequently, when black people attempt to give voice to the pain of racist

victimization, we are likely to be accused of playing the "race card" (p. 71). Even though my

daughter recognized his comments were racist, I wonder how many of her white peers feel

the same way as the contractor. I also wonder if he could have been the brother, father,

grandfather, or uncle of one of her classmates. I have solidified my belief that race and

racism will likely be a part of the equation in my life and in the life of my child and perhaps

for generations to come.

Future Research and Recommendations

Although my research was limited to three African-American families in northern

Gwinnett County, GA, I would like to see future research to include a wider spectrum of

African-American families of other major urban areas, such as Detroit, Baltimore, and

Washington, DC. Secondly, although the families I studied are of high-school age, it would

be interesting to follow African-American students from elementary, middle and high school

and include responses regarding their relocation experiences. As with my inquiry, a

longitudinal study of this nature may also be helpful for other African-American families, as

well as teachers, policy-makers and society. Research of this nature might possibly impact

changes in curriculum development relevant to the interest, strengths and needs of African-

American students by advocating and promoting a "culturally relevant pedagogy"

curriculum. Thirdly, through action-based research, advocating for policy change that

provide transportation for after-school activities, since transportation services for African-

American students beyond the instruction day remains as a conundrum of exclusion.

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More generally, the following areas are important for further study: (1) More research needs to be done to help African American students in majority White settings succeed while not robbing them of their cultural heritage. (2) We cannot forget the plight of African-American families who are unable to move from urban areas with poor performing schools. (3) The political intersections of space, race, and education have historically impacted people of color negatively and should be further studied to determine the full implication on educational achievements for children of color. (4) Despite criticism, CRT is an effective tool at exposing the systemic inequities due to racism.

Success in All Settings

Education has been at the heart of black protest thought and action from the plantation to the demand for integration onward to the demands for equity and access (Watkins, 2005). Today, racial segregation and unequal resources are returning to the pre-Brown past. According to Thernstrom and Thernstrom (1994), "Despite No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, which was supposed to close the achievement between advantaged and disadvantaged racial/ethnic gaps remain" (p. 241). The inferior resources relegated to schools where minority children attend is a clear indication of sustained racism. Cashin (2004), notes, "The resilience of civil rights groups is praiseworthy, but future litigation is not going to change the dire nature of urban schools where most poor children attend" (p. 226). This inquiry also indicates that moving to more White suburban areas with better schools is not the answer many middle- and upper-middle class African-American families had hoped it would be.

It is evident today that a great number of White families, including many with otherwise liberal views on race, do not want their children attending school with more than a "token number" of African-American and Latino students. Their opposition is not as violent

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as during the Civil Rights era, but for those of us who are exposed and experienced, we know resistance to racial desegregation is widespread. In education and housing, we see the residual effects of slavery, white supremacy, discrimination and "scientific racism" have impacted institutional decision-making policies. The continued discrimination and shaping of our schools and communities have led to a continued legacy of inequality and failure to educate a large percentage of African-American children and students of color. According to Bell (1992), "The racism that made slavery feasible is far from dead, and the civil rights gains, so hard won, and are steadily eroded" (p. 3). More research needs to be done to help African American students in majority White settings succeed both academically and socially in ways that do not rob them of their cultural heritage.

We Can't Move

African-American families that are uneducated, unemployed, under-employed and living in sub-standard, urban communities are often relegated to work in low and multiple-paying jobs that can only provide a means of minimal existence. Often times, these families are just trying to survive. Thus relocating out of these depressed communities is often out of reach or unrealistic given their low-economic status and/or lack of viable resources. According to Shapiro (2004), "The residential color line means that blacks have greater difficulty overcoming problems associated with poor communities, especially crime, violence, housing abandonment, unstable families, poorer health and higher mortality, environmental degradation, and failing schools" (p. 141). He further states, "In 2000, three-quarters of blacks lived in highly segregated communities" (Shapiro, 2004, p. 141) and this segregations is "a powerful force undermining the well-being of blacks, who are concentrated in communities with weak public services like hospitals, transportation, police and fire protection, with decreased housing appreciation, and with inferior schools" (p. 141).

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We can no longer leave these students behind and must develop ways to for them to succeed despite their environment.

Space, Race, and Education

Issues of space have historically been linked to issues of access and equity for persons of color (Roseboro, 2013). The phenomenon of removing marginalized others out of sight from mainstream society exclude people of color from spaces considered to be of value. For marginalized "others", the systemic and historical struggles many African-Americans experience can also be applied to some of the discriminatory practices many Native Americans encounter. Although the majority of Native Americans live on reservations and the majority of African-Americans live in hyper-segregated and urban housing communities, both racial groups continue to experience oppression, discrimination, and social injustices in society. For example, dating as far back as post-slavery for African-Americans and the Indian Emancipation Act for Native Americans, these discriminatory practices limited access to "space" and excluded both racial groups from obtaining citizenship in the political community, thereby existing as "foreigners," "property" or interlopers in their own country. Although Native Americans had already owned their land, the government also took land away from them (Takaki, 1993, p. 236). This is an example of a social injustice that can be perceived as being analogous to the relocation of Native Americans to reservations, similar to slaves residing on the plantation... to the present day practices of housing gentrification and reclamation, which displace many people of color from their communities (D. Roseboro, personal communication, April 10, 2013).

Many African-Americans are still living and attending schools that are largely hyper-segregated, urban and out of sight of mainstream society. Likewise, Native Americans live and attend community-based schools in segregated communes on the reservations, which

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also serve as a means to segregate Native Americans out of sight from mainstream society. According to Mills (1997), "Race links space with race and race with personhood; the white raced space of the polity is in a sense the geographic locus of the polity proper" (p. 50). The politics of space, race, and education are worthy of additional study.

CRT is Essential

CRT is a useful tool for identifying and dismantling "The structural and material determinants (race, class, gender) and effects of experience" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 33). The historical social processes allow racism and racial discrimination to persist. For example, "The disproportionate number of Blacks who are stuck in 'ghettos' are there because of factors intrinsic to them (e.g., differences in values and habits within the group) rather than because the social structure provide different groups with unequal opportunities" (Williams, 2000, p. 219). Housing patterns of racial isolation, coupled with hyper-segregation in urban communities, and poverty are social realities that many poor and urban African-American families frequently experience. These housing patterns further exclude the poor and racially segregated from the economic mainstream of middle class jobs and quality schools (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Kozol, 1991); in reality, poor African-American people are not privileged to have the option of real choice (Kozol, 1995, p. 82).

Proponents of CRT espouse that racism is pervasive in American society. Under the auspices and tenets of CRT, it is easy for the majority of Americans to believe that racism is normal--so normal, in fact, that it appears nonexistent to some. Yet, we know this not to be true. Therefore, we must continue educational research in areas which will allow us to share the stories of African-Americans of all socioeconomic levels and continually find ways for our children to be successful.

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INTERVIEW #1

PI: **Thank you for agreeing to participate…..to do now is to ask you some questions pertaining to my dissertation topic which is entitled Housing Patterns, Academic Performance and School Choice: A Narrative Inquiry into the Relocation Experience of African-American Families" and you meet the criteria for the subject that I want to…. The first question is how many years have you lived in northern….occupation and job title.**

Int. #1: Office coordinator.

PI: **With…?**

Int. #1: With Department of Justice…she's 14.

PI: **Your current housing community process…**

Int. #1: The process I use?

PI: **How you go about.**

Int. #1: The …and also with the area. If it's quiet, if it's clean, but mostly….

PI: **What were the compelling factors that led you to reach your…..**

Int. #1: Gwinnett County had really good school….location. I wanted to be close to where…environment where I can reach anywhere I want to go, I can get to quickly.

PI: **Okay….malls.**

Int. #1: The mall, the grocery store, …services and just little things like that.

PI: **What were the benefits you expected to receive as a result of your relocation decision?**

Int. #1: For the schools just to make sure that my daughter is getting good grades in school. That's important. If not, I wouldn't have moved here. Church. That was important to me just to make sure it's not just….it's hard to say. It's a way of being able to go to church so I can bring my mom to church and my daughter can be a part of the church community. Also just little activities and getting to know my neighbors also was important. Our community is predominantly….friendly but not, I should say friendly enough to say hello

and hi to and maybe have a glass of….for any other purposes. I mainly focus on my home, not on them.

PI: **Okay. And what's your opinion….**

Int. #1:   I like the school. I think there should be even activities, meaning that I wish there were more other opportunities for the black kids to be a part of.

PI: **Such as?**

Int. #1:   Such as cheerleading. There's not a whole lot of black girls, or volleyball. You know, I see that they're more focusing on who's who and not say the talents are really there whereas if you have more—I hate to say it, I just don't see a lot of black children as involved as they should be. (inaudible)

PI: **Okay, and ….**

Int. #1:   Black history being taught, where it derived from, where they come from. I think that should be important in the schools. Not just to say it's just a black thing, I'm just saying that it should be taught. This is how everyone is being taught about, you know, the American history, and black is a part of the American history so I think that should be taught, not just Malcolm X or Martin Luther King. It should be more. More of who—you know, who invented the light or electricity. Things like that I think should be taught in the school.

PI: **Okay, alright….**

Int. #1:   My first year at Middle Creek so…my third week there so I really don't know exactly.

PI: **Okay. Describe….**

Int. #1:   …was predominately black….or, you know, either shoveling the snow in Maryland, so if we need to help each other to shovel the snow and our kids were involved, you know, dancing or they're more involved. If it's cheerleading, of course there were white kids a part of it, too, but there was a lot of black kids that are involved mainly because they brought it into the school. The school that my daughter went to, I would say 50-60% was black.

PI: **….the community?**

Int. #1:   Across the street there were white people and white people in my family so (inaudible). I was surrounded by a mixture but my neighborhood was pre…..and our neighbors were looking out for each other. So I would try to get to know our neighbors, to have them over for dinner, we would do that, but we looked out for each other. When I'm cutting the grass or if I'm

grocery shopping, Hi Miss Gray, Hi Mr. Smith. You know, everyone knew each other.

PI: **There was a sense of community.**

Int. #1:   Exactly.

PI: **Where you moved from.**

Int. #1:   Exactly. Not only black but there was a lot of Hispanics. There's a few whites. Again, it was black, Hispanic, you know, Africans and there were a few whites there. So it was a—

PI: **Okay….outnumber the whites.**

Int. #1:   Mm-hmm.

PI: **Okay.**

Int. #1:   I was happy but I wanted, again, I wanted my daughter to experience out there other, you know, and being from where I'm from there was—it's more culture shock for me to see Chinese where I'm from. So I wanted her to experience that. And when we moved here, she definitely experienced this and even though she—let me explain the experience she had. We came here during July after June and she didn't have to go to school until August so we went to the Martin Luther King museum. Came back here, she never—you know, she read about Martin Luther King, read about hanging but she didn't really see like in depth of the history than when she went to the Martin Luther King museum. She came back and there were—again, my neighborhood is predominately white, the kids are outside playing. A little boy said to her I don't like Justice because she's black. Justice experienced that. She came in, the other girl came in with her and she was crying, "Mom, he said he doesn't like me because I'm black" and the other kids were saying, "well I like you Justice". ….And the whole thing is the parent was out there and didn't even say one thing. Invited me to church, I've been in church with him, I've been in church with their family, but my whole thing is if my child said that, I would have come in and apologized or even brought my child in and said, you know, I didn't raise you like this. But it wasn't said. And so in one sense I'm happy she experienced it because in all her years of growing up she hadn't.

PI: **She was isolated.**

Int. #1:   She was isolated, and maybe because it's not—maybe—I mean it's in Maryland where we're from but it wasn't like in your face as it is here in the South. You know what I mean?

PI: **Yes.**

Int. #1: Because you see so many mixed couples and mixed relationships there where if you come here, especially here in Buford you don't really see any of that. Maybe if I go downtown, maybe one or two but here in the South you hardly ever see any or you'd be frowned upon. And I didn't want my daughter to experience that. If she falls in love with anybody, she should be, you know, whoever. But I'm really happy she experienced that. But also experienced that in school where she missed one performance in chorus and she was 97 percent and the teacher dropped her grade all the way to 83. And it didn't make sense to me because she didn't—

PI: **A whole letter grade.**

Int. #1: A whole letter grade. And I jumped on it and, you know, the teacher apologized. This is after summer after getting the grade, you know. And I said, you know, she said I can change her grade. It's not that. I said, you don't understand. How could she get to the performance if she didn't have anyone to take her there? And this is one performance. She's been to every performance, she's even helped out with the kids—you know, the slow kids in school and bring them to the classroom and help out with that, and she had a 97 but you drop her a whole grade? I could see if you drop her to 93 but a whole grade? And she said, well I can still change—I said, no, I don't want you to change it, I want my child to see or to experience what type of people are out there. And I wanted her to see that because no matter how you work hard or no matter how the (inaudible) how you dress or how you look, you're always going to perceive a certain way. I'm not saying that was prejudicial, I'm just saying you just have to work even extra harder—

PI: **Mm-hmm, to prove herself.**

Int. #1: To prove herself. Those are the experiences, those are the few experiences and I want, I really want her to experience some of that. It might be hurtful but it will wake her up a little bit.

PI: **Mm-hmm. We can't teach them.**

Int. #1: We can't teach that. We can cry and feel their pain.

PI: **Right. I'm sorry in a sense that it happened but then, as you said, it was a good experience for her because now she saw….**

Int. #1: Well, I came here a few years back because my sister lived here and I really love Georgia. I don't know what it is about it, it was just like okay—and I wanted to get away from my big family, just you know, get away from the headaches. Nothing really specifically, I just I was able to transfer.

PI: **So you transferred out from Maryland here.**

Int. #1:   Mm-hmm. I know my neighbors, they know me, they know my mom, they know my daughter. So we kind of look out for each other.

PI: **That was one of the things I commented about. It was really quiet.**

Int. #1:   Trust me, they're looking out.

PI: **They're there.**

Int. #1:   They're there, trust me and they call me and say, Grace, either someone pulled up in front of your house, or I could be cutting the grass and someone pull up. You know, we look out for…. I really—I'm concerned and maybe because I'm just new there I'm just looking out for it but it's not predominately black and I'm not just looking for just a predominately black school, I'm just hoping that she has the experience that other kids have. I'm truly hoping that she has the opportunity that other kids have and not, like I said, be left out. It doesn't have to be cheering or to be sociable, I just want her to say mom, I want to do this, and be able to have the opportunity to do it. She really enjoys it so far and I was able to—you know, for orientation I was able to mingle especially in math and she brought up her grade tremendously last year. Her teacher last year….she recommended another class that already she had I think, like at least I saw a teacher care and I think being a parent that you are involved and I think as a black parent you need to be involved just to make sure your child doesn't get left behind. Because I'm involved, I love to introduce myself to all the teachers letting them know that I am here. I was not there for you to baby sit or to watch over so if she's not doing good, I'm gonna get involved even if I have to come to the classroom and see what's going on because if my daughter is acting up, I need to know, you know? I think so. But I don't know, I think so and then again I might think—I think so. I really do. I think it has. I want to be in Gwinnett County (inaudible)….educators that are really—number one, educators that really want to educate but really want to be there who really love their job and not there just to collect a paycheck but want to see kids succeed. ….community involvement and (inaudible).

PI: **Okay. …..Are you happy with the quality of your community schools?**

Int. #1:   I feel good.

PI: **Are you satisfied?**

Int. #1:   I think—I mean in some classes yes but in others no. …I would say if anything happens my daughter can run to my neighbor's house but …yeah.

PI: **Do you have….are there any unintended consequences of you or any of your family? That was a welcome right there, right?**

Int. #1:   Yeah, that was a fairly(?) good welcome. Yes, it has.

PI: **Okay.**

Int. #1:   It has. I mean I guess I'm okay with….even more blacks maybe or maybe people who would understand, you know, us better or…

PI: **What were the compelling factors that led you to reach your relocation…all the houses in the Atlanta metro area?**

Int. #1:   I wanted to bring up my daughter ….(inaudible)

PI: **(Inaudible)**

Exactly.   I'm not saying that (inaudible) it's just that all day everyday, you know, …a Sunday afternoon she can sit and study and that was important to me. Where I live in my community, I don't even want to move back to Maryland. I don't want to go anywhere else unless it's—I don't know, I don't think I want to go anywhere.

PI: **Alright, do you have anything you want to add?**

Int. #1:   That was the last question?

PI: **Mm-hmm.**

Int. #1:   I appreciate you coming by asking me these questions. It's interesting.

PI: **It's really enlightening for me, too. Thank you.**

END.

INTERVIEW #2

PI: Okay, hi, Kelly.

Int. #2:   Hi.

PI: How are you?

Int. #2:   Good.

PI: The reason I've asked you to meet with me today is so that I can interview you on my research study which is entitled "Housing Patterns, Academic Performance and School Choice: and it is A Narrative Inquiry into the Relocation Experiences of African-American Families" and based on our prior discussion you fit the criteria for my research study, so I appreciate you agreeing to meet with me and for me to interview you on this topic.

Int. #2:   Okay.

PI: Okay, and I do have some questions to pose to you about your relocation experience so if you're ready to being we can start now.

Int. #2:   Okay.

PI: Okay.   Alright, the first question is how many years have you lived in Gwinnett County, Georgia?

Int. #2:   Six years.

PI: And what is your occupation and job title?

Int. #2:   Police Officer.

PI: Alright, and that's with Gwinnett?

Int. #2:   Yes.

PI: Okay. And what is your highest level of education?

Int. #2:   Associate's degree.

PI: Alright. And the median income of your household?

Int. #2: $90,000 to 105,000.

PI: Okay. And what are the ages and grades of your children?

Int. #2:   I have one son 18 years old and he's a senior this year.

PI: Okay, in high school?

Int. #2:   Yes.

PI: And what was the process you used to select your current housing community?

Int. #2:   I based it strictly on the school system.

PI: Really?

Int. #2:   Yes.

PI: And what were the compelling factors that led you to reach your relocation decision?

Int. #2:   Well, I was looking at the curriculum for the school system that he was currently in. It wasn't what I felt was up to par. It had a high number of students that were not passing. They were part of the—they had not passed the AYP in three years.

PI: The school?

Int. #2:   The school had not passed the AYP in three years. So I wanted to let him attend a school that was going to be beneficial to him so when he gets ready to apply to colleges or what-have-you, he would be on par with other students at the school. I didn't want him to have to struggle and be left behind.

PI: And the compelling factors that led you to reach your relocation decision was solely on the school?

Int. #2:   Solely on the school system.

PI: Okay. What were the benefits that you expected to receive as a result of your relocation decision?

Int. #2:   Just the school and the curriculum, a better school system, technology. I mean it was just a vast difference between what Grayson High School had to offer and what—he would have been attending South Gwinnett High School, what they had to offer. So it was just basic, just the school curriculum and better curriculum all the way around.

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PI: Mm-hmm. And South Gwinnett is on the fringe of DeKalb County, correct?

Int. #2:   Correct.

PI: So how would you describe the differences? What were the differences?

Int. #2:   Well, I mean again it was schools—I was looking at different things like the crime rate for a particular school, I was looking at the crime rate in the surrounding area of the school, and I was comparing that to the crime rate out here in Grayson. I was just—it was just a whole bunch of different factors, just looking at the schools, the graduate rate for those schools compared to graduate rates for Grayson. It was just various things.

PI: It was a vast difference and you compared.

Int. #2:   Yes.

PI: And the benefits for your relocation decision?

Int. #2:   I just wanted him to get the better school.

PI: Any benefits that you might gain from relocating?

Int. #2:   It didn't matter to me. No, it was strictly—

PI: About him.

Int. #2:   Yeah, it was about him and it had nothing to do with me because I was fine where I was at.

PI: What is the opinion of your housing community you're in now?

Int. #2:   I think it's a lot better. When you just look at different—in the community you have (inaudible), you have more like you say, libraries, you have different restaurants, you don't have to travel as far, you can look at the differences just in the community makeup of itself where you may have small convenient stores, here we have large grocery stores, we have several large convenient stores, not just the mom and pop stores. It's just like you can look at the community and see that people have really invested in the community here as opposed to where I came from.

PI: You noticed a different investment in your previous community?

Int. #2:   Yes.

PI: And what about the school, what's your opinion of your son's high school?

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Int. #2:   I think it's great. I mean they have a huge technology department and especially with the world and everything changing to technology and everything, and I think that's a great benefit. I haven't had any issues out of the school at all.

PI: And how many years you've been—

Int. #2:   Four. We've been here six years but he's been in high school for the last four.

PI: What is the opinion of the curriculum choices?

Int. #2:   I think it's a good curriculum. I think it's very competitive when you compare it to—Gwinnett County, I think they have the best school system hands down. I really do. When you compare that to DeKalb, hands down. And I don't even think they're in the same ballgame.

PI: What is your opinion of the administration where your son is?

Int. #2:   I think that the administration is very good. I think that they work with the students. In our previous school area I think a lot of times, especially with my son being a little black boy, that a lot of times that's the (inaudible) by itself. But I don't necessarily feel that way here in Grayson, and even though it's Grayson High School, it's not a predominately white school.

PI: You feel like he's getting what he needs.

Int. #2:   Yes.

PI: Okay. Describe the community you moved from. I know you touched on it earlier but can you go into a little more detail?

Int. #2:   The neighborhood, I can tell you exactly because I was the HOA(?) president. The neighborhood had 144 homes. Of the 144 homes all of them were black, African American, the whole neighborhood. The surrounding subdivisions, they were all predominately black. The closest grocery store was probably within 4-5 miles. The only thing that we had was the little mom and pop convenient store. As far as crime, it was a—I wouldn't necessarily say a high number but for that neighborhood it was a high number of burglaries. It was a lot of the little petty crimes with the kids, you know, property damage, just little petty things the kids were doing. It wasn't an old neighborhood. It was a brand new neighborhood and the house was a brand new house but it was just the makeup of—

PI: The structure of the community. Okay, and describe the ethnicity and race of the residents. You said all black?

Int. #2:   Yeah.

PI: Did you notice a transition maybe in five years prior to that? Was it still totally black like five years prior to you moving there or did it transition?

Int. #2:   It transitioned because when I first moved there it was a mixture. But again, it was a brand new subdivision. So in the first part of the subdivision it was a good mixture. It was black and white and everything. But the subdivision had four phases and I was in the first phase. By the time they had completed the fourth phase, all of the other races that were living there prior had sold their houses, got on and moved.

PI: And then that's when you (inaudible)?

Int. #2:   Mm-hmm.

PI: Okay. Describe the community school you moved from.

Int. #2:   Well, the school again, it was predominately black. Um, as far as crime, I mean nothing major. I can't quote any type of major crimes that took place but I mean just the—I guess the typical school issues, kids skipping school or kids—I mean nothing really bad.

PI: Okay, and the ethnicity of the residents—

Int. #2:   Predominately black.

PI: And the safety of the community. I heard you mention earlier there were some petty things going on from the kids.

Int. #2:   Right.

PI: Were you happy there?

Int. #2:   I really was. I was happy there to a certain extent. When it gets to a situation of—I left strictly because I didn't want my son to attend that school so that's why we moved. So the more important that became to me, you know, the less happy being there you are. When he was smaller, I was okay because I was actually driving him back and forth to school. It didn't really bother me then. So because of the school was so important to me, then being there made me less happy.

PI: Okay was there a specific event that finalized your decision?

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Int. #2:   **No.**

PI: Did you have any concerns or fears associated with your move?

Int. #2:   **No.**

PI: Describe the neighborhood you live in now, the race, the community and safety of the community.

Int. #2:   **I call my neighborhood the 33% because we have—there's probably about 1/3 of blacks, 1/3 of whites and 1/3 that are Asian. So it's a mixture. It's only a hundred homes in the neighborhood. Again, like I said, in the community I'm in walking distance to everything I want to. It's walking distance between a grocery store, major grocery store, and probably 12 or 13 different restaurants that literally (inaudible) I'm only steps away from that. Gray area, I've been in that neighborhood now for six years and we've never had an issue. You know, no issues of crime, no reports of crime, the neighborhood is very safe. We actually, because I live in the city (inaudible) we actually have a community patrol where they're consistently patrolling the neighborhood, the area, what-have-you. I haven't had any issues at all.**

PI: Describe the school that your child attends now, race, socioeconomic status, etc.

Int. #2:   **I think the school; it's a predominately white school. I would say probably maybe 35% black. If I had to (inaudible) which I mean I don't know what—**

PI: The number of (inaudible).

Int. #2:   **Yeah but it's a predominately white school, probably about 35% are black. I would say most of the kids are part of the upper socioeconomic class. I mean when you just look at the area of Grayson and the areas that the neighborhoods that feed into that school, I would say they're part of the upper socioeconomic class.**

PI: Have your child's experiences in the community school been positive?

Int. #2:   **Yes. The whole high school (inaudible) haven't had any issues. Him being lazy, but other than that we haven't had any issues.**

PI: (Inaudible).

Int. #2:   **Right.**

PI: Do you feel your relocation decision was worth the effort?

Int. #2: Absolutely, absolutely.

PI: Did your housing choice impact your child's academic achievement?

Int. #2: I think, you know, in the long run I would say absolutely.

PI: What components or characteristics are indicative of a good public school?

Int. #2: I think the curriculum just in and of itself is probably the most important thing. The technology. I think the help to students, the people that are willing to help because I have a lot of friends that are teachers and you can see anything. You can see the good ones and you can see the bad ones and you have those ones who are willing to go that extra mile, they want to go that extra mile and they want to genuinely help your kid. Then you have some it's like, oh well, that's their fault, this is what you get. And even I was very active at school so I felt like for my son—because when you're active and they know you, they're willing to work a little bit harder for you or with you, but when you have a student whose parent is not active in the school, then it's just like oh well, you know, I don't never see their parents and what-have-you, so.

PI: Would you say that you had that same feeling when you were in your previous school?

Int. #2: No.

PI: That was a missing link?

Int. #2: Yeah. And that was another thing in the previous school that was missing is parent involvement. I think that's very important for a school is the actual parent involvement with the school so you know what's going on. And they didn't. And I mean you run into (inaudible) it's a lot of things that I think the parents add to the, you know, the school year that helps the kids and when you don't have that, if you have a school that don't have that and the parents are not involved, I think the kids miss out so much.

PI: So are you happy with your relocation decision?

Int. #2: Oh yes.

PI: Okay. Are you happy with the quality of your community school?

Int. #2: I am.

PI: Are you satisfied with your child's level of academic performance?

Int. #2:   **Him, no. My son is—he was an AP(?) student. Very, very, very smart, borderline brilliant. But like he's very, very lazy so and then that transition from childhood to adulthood and he wants to be a man and he wants to be this, that and the other, but at the same time he wants to be lazy, he wants to take shortcuts, he wants to do what he wants to do and not what he's supposed to do. Now his friends are a major influence in his life and where school should be your number one top priority, that's not his number one priority. So those things, his grades have suffered because he puts so many things in front of his school.**

PI: The priorities are different than the way you want them to be for him.

Int. #2:   **Yes, right. I mean he's no longer an AP student. He dropped out of all of his AP classes because in his mind he figures I can take the honors classes, still look good on my transcripts but I don't have to put so much effort and do so much reading as I'm doing in my AP classes and I'll just take the class when I get out. That's his mindset. So with his performance, no.**

PI: This is not on the questionnaire sheet or interview sheet but how much do you think his peers have played a part on that?

Int. #2:   **I think (inaudible). I think his peers, 90%--at least 95%. But again, I kind of (inaudible) too, because he led a very sheltered—you know, and one of the things that I'm learning is, you know, like all parents is that we want them to go to high school, graduate, go to college and all of a sudden we want them to be able to make these decisions and good decisions. But the thing that I just realized is that their whole entire life we've made every decision for them. We tell them to go to bed, we tell them to go take a bath, we tell them to eat, we tell them everything. And then all of a sudden one day we want them to make decisions on their own when they've never had to. So that's one of the things that I realize now so I'm allowing him to make these decisions. When he goes to school, if you want to do your homework, you can do it, if you don't want to do it, you don't have to do it.**

PI: But there are consequences.

Int. #2:   **Right, right and be clear. I mean be clear he understands what's the consequences behind not turning in paper working assignments. For example, at the end of last year—you know, he's a senior this year, but he failed English because he didn't want to write two papers, and I didn't make him write them. So therefore he failed English, so when he got his report card, (inaudible) report card is the fact that hey, you know what? You're not eligible to be at the senior status and that made him**

cranky(?). So now he wants to go to summer school. Well, to go to summer it costs $400. And I was like, you can go to summer school but do you have $400? And he was like, no. I said, because my money don't pay for summer school so I'm not quite sure what you're gonna do. So he missed the deadline for summer school and ultimately he begged his grandmother and she took him to Pace Academy to sign up, she paid for it and took him back and forth because I don't do that. My car don't even drive to Pace Academy, not for that reason (inaudible). So I'm allowing you to make decisions and then you gotta know that there's consequences behind that decision. And I think he's starting to figure things out.

PI: But he had to pay a penalty for that.

Int. #2:   Oh, absolutely. He was like, mom I'm not gonna graduate. I was like, I know. I said, I know. He was like, but if I'm not gonna graduate then I have to go to school a whole other year. I said, I know. You're gonna do that? Yes! So when the deadline for him, and he saw I wasn't moving, I mean he really got—he was just rampant. So this year, I mean of course they've only been back to school for two weeks; it seems like he's okay. He's an office aid, he's helping out the office and stuff like that so maybe he's getting it, who knows.

PI: Do you have any concerns or fears with the community that you live in now?

Int. #2:   No, none.

PI: Do you have a support system in the community you live in now?

Int. #2:   Well, the only support system that we really utilize is family. Again, we're a very close-knit family. Like all my sisters and brothers live very close to me and my mom used to live close to me, she just passed in March, but we use each other all the time. And his father's family, everybody lives in the community so we use each other.

PI: So they're not too far away from you.

Int. #2:   Oh, no.

PI: That's important, that support system.

Int. #2:   Oh, absolutely because I mean picking up from school, dropping off from school—

PI: Extracurricular activities.

Int. #2: Yeah. He can play football, he went to practice, and basketball practices, picking him up, dropping him off, you know, all the things they have to do. You have to use (inaudible).

PI: Were there any unintended consequences as a result of your relocation decision?

Int. #2: I don't necessarily call them unintended consequences but like I say, he's very sheltered out here so life here is different than life in other places, and where he may be what I call naïve, I think if he would have stayed where he was, he would recognize quickly—you know, it's easy just to be naïve and nonchalant about what could happen to you, what may happen to you, and one of the things I'm teaching him now is everybody that smiles in your face is not your friend. So the only other thing would be just—

PI: The isolation.

Int. #2: Yeah. He's very sheltered. Too sheltered I think.

PI: Have you or any of your family experienced any racial tension or incidents that you perceived as racism in your housing community?

Int. #2: Well, for example, nothing really major but like one of my neighbors across the street, when we first moved into that house, I don't know what his problem is, just (inaudible) still do the same exact thing. But one of the things, he immediately went to my neighbor's house with "How can she afford to live here? What is she doing?" And I couldn't believe it. You know, so I didn't get mad, you know, but again I'm from—I was born and raised in Loganville where there were no blacks. All the blacks, when I was growing up you knew every single black person that lived in the area. Every single one of them. So I have never—I don't think my son has ever. And that's one of the things when I say sheltered, that's one of the things, too, because I don't necessarily know if he's 100% sure that it exists because he's never experienced it. But I don't know if he's prepared for when it does happen, when something does happen. And that's one of the things I've taught him, too, is that you can't do everything your peers do and get away with it.

PI: What about your community school? Any racial tension or anything that you may question…?

Int. #2: No. I mean, again, he don't get in trouble or nothing that I consider to be racial. Nothing.

PI: Has your relocation decision impacted the curriculum choices or participation in extracurricular activities or programs for you son?

Int. #2:   **No, it didn't have any type of impact on it. I mean he just transitioned from there to here. So it hasn't impacted at all.**

PI: You would describe it as a smooth transition.

Int. #2:   **Yes.**

PI: What characteristics do you perceive as "ideal" in your community?

Int. #2:   **Explain that one.**

PI: In other words, when you decided to move from your previous community to where you are now, what were some of the characteristics that you were looking for that was like, oh yeah, this is it, I really want this.

Int. #2:   **To be honest I had a budget of what I could afford and I had a school that I know I wanted my son to attend. So I had to find something that I could afford in that area. So realistically the community, it really wasn't a factor other than the location of being within the area so that my son can get on his school bus going to that school. I mean that was really it. And even for me because I was so adamant, the house that I'm currently in—I'm a licensed real estate agent, too, I went to look at the house across the street and then the house that I'm in, there was a for sale sign so I saw the agent and said can I take a look at the house. And she was like, yeah but the people—they're out of town but the house is under contract. I said, I just want to get an idea of the floor plan so I can compare it to the house that I just saw. So I went in the house, looked at the house, loved it, and called the agent and said, hey, if something happens, call me and let me know, I said I'm approved, I'm ready to close, I can have the loan closed in eight days. And she was like, well there's no need, they're gonna close. The loan fell short, they went to close and the people backed out at the closing table. So she called me in a panic and because I knew the people who owned the house were getting a divorce and they wanted to hurry up and separate and get done with it and I could close it in eight days, I was able to get my price to fit in the community that I wanted to be in. So it wasn't so much—there was nothing in the community other than finding a house that I liked that was in that school district and that was it. So it wasn't that, oh, okay certain stores or certain, you know, being close to the library or park or any of that. None of that played a factor. I wanted him to go to Grayson High School and that was it.**

PI: And what characteristics do you perceive as "ideal" in your school?

Int. #2:   **Great curriculum. I mean technology. I think a good mixture of students. Not just one particular race. A mixture of students. Very, very low crime. And I think a school system that's made up of upper**

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socioeconomic classes and the reason why I say that, let me clarify, the reason why I say that is because—I'm trying to think of a way to put it. If you just compare it to a lot of schools, and when you say a good school versus a bad school, what makes a school bad, and it's typically the community that makes the school bad. So that's why I say that.

PI: What were the compelling factors that led you to reach your relocation decision?

Int. #2:   It was just the school. That was it. Hands down.

PI: Upon reflection, do you have any misgivings or regrets regarding your relocation decision?

Int. #2:   No, I like it. I mean I like it. Even now that I'm in the—this move was only to be here, this inner city(?) school and then I was like, I can go and explore and do everything because truly I would love to be downtown like Atlantic Station and that was the game plan. Like this year my house was supposed to be on the market his senior year, to be on the market so that by the time he graduates I would have sold, bought, moved because he'll be moving off to college and even if he's not moving off to college, he'll be in the service and even if he ain't in the service, he's still gonna be at my house. But that was my whole game plan. But I do like it. I love my house and now I'm not gonna sell it.

PI: You're gonna stay. If given the opportunity and you had to do anything differently regarding your relocation decision, what would it be?

Int. #2:   Nothing. Because I did all my homework before I (inaudible) and like one of the things after I had moved, they redistricted the school. But luckily I had already been researching it and found out about it prior to my move and that was another thing to make sure that I was on the right side of the street so that when they had the preliminary where they were going to (inaudible) and being able to make sure that I was part of that no matter what they did with the redistrict line.

PI: Yeah, I kind of recall that time when they were talking about re-drawing the
line.

Int. #2:   Yeah, they did. They opened up a new high school.

PI: What's the name?

Int. #2:   Archer High School, Grayson Highway. If you're on the left hand side of Grayson Highway, you're going to Archer. If you're on the right hand side of Grayson Highway, then you go to Grayson High School.

PI: So is the verdict out on Archer in terms of their AYP and (inaudible)?

Int. #2:   **I haven't even looked. I used to be—prior to the move that's all I did. All my friends were like, oh my gosh she's obsessed. I was like, no, I just want to (inaudible) because he used to be in private school when he was younger. And then….you want them to have the best opportunities that you can possibly provide for them, but now he's been where he's making decisions on his own, so not the best decisions that I would make…(inaudible).**

PI: Anything else you want to add?

Int. #2:   **No, that's it.**

PI: I appreciate your time.

Int. #2:   **No problem.**

PI: And your willingness to come and meet with me and share your feelings.

Int. #2:   **No problem at all.**

PI: Okay, thank you.

END.

INTERVIEW #3

PI: **The reason we're here is I wanted to see if I could interview you regarding my dissertation research on "Housing Patterns, Academic Performance and School Choice: and this is A Narrative Inquiry into the Relocation Experiences of African-American Families"……**

PI: **How many years have you lived in northern Gwinnett Georgia?**

Int. #3: This past March 2012 was four years. I guess we're going on five years now.

PI: **And what is your occupation and job title?**

Int. #3: Well, I did work for DOD but I am retired now. At that time was a senior supply system analyst.

PI: **When you say DOD, what is that?**

Int. #3: Department of Defense.

PI: **How are you enjoying retirement?**

Int. #3: I work harder now than I did when I was working for the Department of Defense.

PI: **Okay. And what is your highest level of education?**

Int. #3: Master science degree in computer science.

PI: **And the median income of your household?**

Int. #3: Retired or before? Because both my wife and myself are retired right now.

PI: **So what would you estimate would be your median—**

Int. #3: About $160,000.

PI: **Okay. And what are the ages of your children?**

Int. #3: I have one child. Right now she's 14, 9th grade.

PI: **What was the process you used to select your current housing community?**

Int. #3:   Well, one might say it was more my wife than me. I was happy where I was but my wife was on this kick about getter quality school, better amenity, better home value, crime free area—I guess a community that she could feel safe in and walk and enjoy the pool, tennis, amenities.

PI: **So you were really looking for better schools and better quality housing when you relocated to northern Gwinnett?**

Int. #3:   In a sense, yes. Better quality of living.

PI: **And what were the compelling factors that led you to reach your relocation decision?**

Int. #3:   For me it was probably three things. It was probably a better environment for my wife and my child to grow up in, safety because they didn't feel safe where we were, and just quality of education for our daughter.

PI: **Okay. What were the benefits that you expected to receive as a result of your relocation decision?**

Int. #3:   Probably those things I just named. Probably a safe community for my wife and child to grow up in, to enjoy the amenities, quality of living, quality of education, which I sometimes have a tendency to disagree with my wife on which she always corrects me.

PI: **What do you mean by that?**

Int. #3:   The quality of education thing I think, me personally I would like for my daughter to have had a black experience somewhat more so than the integrated school she's in right now. She's becoming an individual that has a exposed her father, I guess, to some things that he wasn't used to dealing with, with her selection of friends or selection of activities or her whole educational experience.

PI: **So would you say that you've benefited from relocating?**

Int. #3:   In a sense. I guess it forced me to deal with some things that I probably did not have to deal with in my past and my experiences growing up. All of my friends were black, all of my interactions were with black folks and what have you and now it's a whole different environment.

PI: **So were there benefits once you actually chose to live in northern Gwinnett that you feel like you weren't experiencing where you were previously?**

Int. #3:   I think yes and no because I'm still trying to hold on to the old neighborhood and at the same time trying to enjoy the new one and having some issues, some personal issues I guess with myself and dealing with those in the new neighborhood, the new environment.

PI: **So when you say issues in comparison to the old and new, can you be a little bit more specific?**

Int. #3:   Well, once you become comfortable with what you know and the older you get the harder it is for you to change.

PI: **So you felt comfortable in your mostly black neighborhood?**

Int. #3:   Yes, I did. I knew some of the people, I knew what to expect, I knew my neighborhood, I knew my environment, I knew where everything was, I knew areas to avoid, I knew areas that I could feel comfortable in, I could walk out of my house and walk down the street and feel comfortable.

PI: **So you felt safe but your wife and your daughter, you were concerned about their safety?**

Int. #3:   That's correct.

PI: **What is the opinion of your housing community you're in now?**

Int. #3:   Overly priced.

PI: **And what about the community school, what's your opinion of your community school? Now, she's in high school, middle school?**

Int. #3:   When we first moved over here she was in elementary, then she moved to middle school and now she's in high school, 9th grade freshman year. In moving, I anticipated and expected some problem areas, especially with going from a predominately black school to a predominately white school. I didn't expect a lot of problems from the kids themselves but I did expect some problems from the administration of the school, which I encountered some and I had to deal with them. But I knew they were coming and expected them so I was prepared in a sense.

PI: **So when you say problems with the community school, can you be more specific?**

Int. #3:   The white teachers accepting my child who was black. Providing her with the same opportunities, the same information, the same instructions and what have you.

PI: **Some of your feelings in that regard related to perhaps your own experiences when you were in school?**

Int. #3:   Not basically school because I attended a predominately black high school, middle school, elementary school and I also attended a predominately black college. My master's degree was with a white institution but I didn't have any problems in the sense that I worked during the day and I was taking evening classes so I didn't have a lot of interaction in the school atmosphere but I did have a lot of interaction with people of different culture in the work environment. So I had something to regulate or something to prepare me for dealing with those.

PI: **So what's your opinion of the housing community that you're in now?**

Int. #3:   Other than being overly priced, predominately white, not enough diversity in my opinion. Everyone kind of keeps to themselves. I have a lot of discussion with my wife in the sense that during Christmas time I always put up black decorations. It's a discussion as to why you're putting up black decorations. I feel like sometimes I'm not keeping my black heritage.

PI: **Your identity.**

Int. #3:   Right. I'm forced to do things that I really don't want to do. If I want to put up a black Santa Clause, I feel like I ought to be able to. They put up a white one. Nobody raises any conversation on that. So.

PI: **What about the curriculum choices your child has?**

Int. #3:   I'm 50/50 on that. I'm not really sure if she's really getting what she really needs because I kind of cater to that black experience. I hate it because (inaudible). That's what got me to where I am and I kind of feel like she's missing out on something. I don't want her to grow up a black person and think that she's white or she has to do something to be accepted. I just don't feel comfortable because I want to protect her from all of that and I guess that's being a parent, I guess that's probably not good in the environment we're in.

PI: **So you feel like maybe if you had stayed in your black community you felt like she would have been getting more nurturing from her teachers?**

Int. #3:   Yes, but don't get me wrong, there probably was some (inaudible) there as well. Probably would have been something that she was missing out on being that totally black experience. But I would like more of a 50/50 rather than a 80/20 environment.

PI: **Your daughter is in high school. What are your opinions about your daughter's high school?**

Int. #3: She appears to be happy right now. Well, if I can—

PI: **(Inaudible) …..**

Int. #3: Yes, if I can get her past boys I can probably—you know. But since it's only been about two or three weeks since she's been in the school, I really can't give an impression of her experience today. I'm still waiting. But she appears to be somewhat happy although she doesn't have the number of friends that she used to when she was in middle school because the school is a lot bigger, a lot more people there, a lot more students. She's dealing with high school people now and she appears to be fitting in but I'm somewhat reserved right now as to giving an opinion of her experience there. But I hope it's a great one.

PI: **What is your opinion of the administration……?**

Int. #3: That's still out, too. I've been to the school a couple of times, I've checked her in and out and my dealings with the few people that I have appears to be cordial, appears to be okay. Actually haven't had a lot of involvement to determine whether they're good or bad or whatever. But I'm still in that phase where I'm expecting problematic situations of some sort.

PI: **You're kind of holding your breath waiting.**

Int. #3: Well, not holding my breath, I'm just expecting it because of my work experience with people, sooner or later you're gonna run into a problem. Sooner or later.

PI: **Okay. Describe the community you moved from.**

Int. #3: Predominately black although mixed. There were some cultural differences there in the neighborhood. It wasn't totally black. We were located close by a lot of amenities, we were close in to town, close in to restaurant, what-have-you, churches. I enjoyed it. I guess after about 15 years of living there you kind of become loyal to that neighborhood. In a sense I didn't really want to move for financial reasons. We could have had a lot more money that we spent on the new house which probably would have afforded us to buy a lot of other things that we wanted to do in our retirement years. There again, the cultural difference moving from black to white. As a black male you see problems that perhaps your wife and daughter does not see that you're probably going to end up having to deal with. To me it was like once you move into a neighborhood you become a part of that neighborhood. Now you've gotta relocate just like you got to do it all over again. Starting over. Finding a place that's worth getting to know people, getting to know your neighborhood, expecting problematic situations, dealing with that all over again.

PI: **What's your opinion of the safety of the community that you moved from?**

Int. #3:   That's kind of comical in a sense to me. We were in an old neighborhood and my child had people over, friends, what-have-you; my wife had her friends and children over. I felt comfortable in that environment. I did not feel like I had to protect myself in a sense. I didn't have to regulate whether she's having a sleepover whether I had to leave the house or whether I had to make sure in a sense that I wasn't doing anything or in the wrong place, in the wrong atmosphere, whatever. In the new environment I always have to pay attention to that because her groupings of friends changed. She had a lot of white friends over. And I remember joking with my brother once when they were up here that it's just was too many black folks in the house for them, especially being a black male. You always had to make sure that you were not in the wrong place or that you didn't walk in the bathroom on them or they didn't go home and tell mom and daddy something wrong. So you pay attention from that perspective. If they came over and my child was not home and they had to wait, I felt uncomfortable.

PI: **More on guard.**

Int. #3:   On guard all the time.

PI: **Looking back on your old neighborhood were you happy there?**

Int. #3:   Yes, I was happy but I knew that we had outgrew that dwelling. So I knew we had to move but I was not expecting to move into a totally, totally different environment from the other side of the scale.

PI: **Earlier you mentioned there were some compelling factors that made you select this particular community you're in now. In other words, Atlanta is a big place.**

Int. #3:   I have to say my wife sold me on this idea that hey, it's gonna be great for the family, the environment was going to be nurturing, we were going to expand our knowledge base, our whole world. It was great for her shopping, it was a great environment for our child to be raised in, great school environment, safety, all of those things. So in an attempt to make the wife and daughter happy, as a black male I kind of like, okay I'll go along with the process.

PI: **So in your old neighborhood didn't offer the same type of amenities and services and quality of education that she's receiving now?**

Int. #3:   I think in a way. My personal opinion was I thought the school she was in that the black teachers—you know, my wife informed me that our child is not getting everything that she should have been in that school. I felt like they

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were more nurturing. Black folks just have a tendency, especially females, to nurture children, to help them along, to give them additional time, additional instructions, what-have-you. And even though she might be in a better school now, I kind of question that nurturing factor. I don't think she's getting the nurturing (inaudible). White women and white men just don't nurture black children.

PI: **Okay was there a specific event that finalized your decision?**

Int. #3:   Yes. My wife told me it was time to move.

PI: **How long had you been looking?**

Int. #3:   We looked about three years or better. I mean, you know, knowing my wife—you have to know her, she has her particulars and until they are met, especially school system, she did an in depth study of the school system in this area and she even went as far as the percentage of black kids in the school, the percentage of black teachers in the school. So she did her homework very well and once she determined that hey, this will be a good environment for my family to move into, it was a done deal.

PI: **Did you have any concerns or fears associated with your move?**

Int. #3:   The only fears I had, the real fear I had was the safety of my family, especially my child going from a black environment to a majority white environment, and she's fit in very well thus far. Up in the high school though, I'm gonna wait to see what high school has for her. But my main concern was safety. I did not know how my wife or my child was going to be received. I can deal with it myself because I've been exposed to it and I'm ready for it but I did not know how I would react to my wife and child being exposed to that because I don't think in the neighborhood we were in before they had to deal with that.

PI: **Describe the neighborhood you live in now, the race, the community and safety of the community.**

Int. #3:   Majority white. My wife has informed me that it's probably less than 1% minority in the neighborhood even though we see some black folks with some Asian wives and what-have-you. The mixture concerns me somewhat. I haven't had a lot of interaction with neighbors other than the one directly next door to me; probably more my resistance than theirs probably but I get the opinion that sometimes people in my neighborhood don't know how to approach me or may be afraid to, and I don't extend any energy or any action on my side to extend a helping—

PI: **To reach out.**

Int. #3:   Yeah, to reach out. But other than that the neighborhood is kind of cold in a sense if you're not involved in activities going on. I guess they have some tennis and swimming and those type of activities in the neighborhood. They have meetings and stuff which I don't attend and I guess that has something to do with my working relationship that after 35 years I'm kind of tired of that, trying to fit in and I just feel like (inaudible) I need to be me. But the neighborhood—if you're not involved in activities—my wife walks a lot so I guess she gets to meet a lot more of the neighbors than I do and I'm pretty sure the female side of the neighborhood more so than the males, I don't see a lot of males out and about like the females are in the neighborhood. It's kind of closed, not very friendly from my point of view. We've had an incident or two in the neighborhood where we had to call in the association to resolve those issues. I think that about sums it up. It's somewhat cold and not very friendly. Of course, I wouldn't know what we was talking about anyway, the cultural difference. When we first moved in I had a neighbor across the street when we first moved in that came over to greet us and he asked me did I want to go play basketball and I think I sent somewhat of an insulting answer back to the fact that although I can't play basketball I don't want to play basketball but if you want to (inaudible) give me a few stock tips where I can secure the financial side of my household, I'll be glad to meet with some of your friends on that aspect but playing basketball, no sir.

PI: **Did I hear you saying he was kind of—**

Int. #3:   It was insulting. I perceived to be insulting. You know, you ask me do you want to go play basketball, I guess that was his way of trying to be friends.

PI: **The stereotype of black—**

Int. #3:   Yes, those stereotype of blacks, all of them want to play basketball. And I hope I'm not sounding racial when I say that.

PI: **No, that's how you feel. Okay, the safety of the community, would you address that?**

Int. #3:   Yeah. With our lawn system we've had a few incidents here, whatever. I feel safe although I'm guarded when it comes to my family. So I take safety upon myself as well but as far as being in the community, as far as police services, fire services or medical assistance, what-have-you probably better than the old neighborhood; the respond time. My mother-in-law had an incident here at the house and I think the respond time for the medical people to get here was very good.

PI: **Describe the school that your child attends now, race, socioeconomic status, etc.**

Int. #3:	Like I said, she's only been here, this is her third week of high school and the only thing that I can probably use to rate the school as far as economics is the kids I see and what they drive. The school itself, the neighborhood it's in is a newly built school. I'm thinking it's an upscale school with individuals probably what, $150,000 (inaudible) average income.

PI:	**And what about the ethnicity and race?**

Int. #3:	Ethnicity kind of bothers me somewhat because I think my wife informed me that it's about 3,500 to 4,000 students somewhat. I don't know the size of the administration but it appears that the administration is predominately white. I haven't seen a lot of black administrators although I'm sure they have some. From what I can gage and what I can see from my interaction with the school (inaudible) secretaries and a few administrators and they were all white. And picking up my child during the day, I see a majority of white kids although I see a larger percentage of black and other minority children coming out of the school as well.

PI:	**Overall, what would you say would be the predominate?**

Int. #3:	I would say it appears to be somewhere between 80 and 20 predominately white middle class.

PI:	**Have your child's experiences in the community school been positive? I hear you saying the verdict is still out on high school but what about when she was in middle school?**

Int. #3:	She always has had a positive experience. She looks at school more as a socializing event more so than….(laughter). My wife and I are always on her about her grades and she's always promising to do better, but I think she looks at, especially middle school, as a social outlet. She likes to meet people, she likes to have friends but when it comes to what we moved here for, it appears that that takes a backseat where she's looking at it and what she desires to do.

(Both talking at once)

Int. #3:	…..and if I have time left over I'll get to the educational part of it, but I promise you I'm gonna do better.

PI:	**But overall you would say that her experiences in the school have been positive?**

Int. #3:	Yes, and she has a lot more opportunities there that she probably could take advantage of but she doesn't. She has a lot more, I guess, opportunities offered in this environment than she would have had in the old—

PI:	**Such as?**

Int. #3:   Activities related to school; concerts, choir, archery, sports, baseball, track, which they have a lot more to offer here.

PI: The curriculum and sports?

Int. #3:   Yes, the curriculum and sports.

PI: Do you feel your relocation decision was worth the effort?

Int. #3:   No. Like I say, I like having money even though I don't do anything with it I like. The possibility if I wanted to go out and buy something I could, if I wanted to go pay for this cash, I could. So if we stayed in the old neighborhood I'd have a lot more money and a lot more opportunity to go out and buy more rental property, pay for it cash. Like I say, it forces me to deal with a lot of things that at my age I probably don't want to deal with in the community, especially for my child's friendships. She has a variety of different, I would say a lot of different cultures in her life that I didn't grow up with that I'm forced to accept and deal with, and probably some of those situations I probably won't have answers for and that puts everything on a different level as well.

PI: Her having a—

Int. #3:   Yes because she's going to be (inaudible) situations that I haven't had to deal with and me coming up with the answer is probably going to be hard.

PI: Did your housing choice impact your child's academic achievement?

Int. #3:   Yes. My wife and I differ on that. I think she hasn't matured to the point yet where she's going to explode or develop into this brilliant-thinking person. I think it's yet to happen and it will happen. I expect something around 10th or 11th grade where she gets the full benefits of the educational environment that we've put her in.

PI: What components or characteristics are indicative of a good public school?

Int. #3:   For me—my wife probably thinks (inaudible) it's a great school. Great opportunities. Oh, my child should take advantage, full advantage of all opportunities offered to her. Me, I'm still stuck on that black experience. I don't want my child to grow up not knowing who she is or lose her identify. You look at the political environment in today's world, I wonder sometimes what she's gonna be faced with and knowing that I won't be around to provide her with answers probably in her later years. I don't know if the experiences are going to be great for her or I don't know if it's gonna be a hindrance. I just don't know. I'm undecided at this point in time.

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PI:	**So what are the things that you look for in good public school?**
Int. #3:	My wife is gonna say curriculum and that's a good choice. Opportunity is a good choice, opportunity to be exposed and to move on to a higher education, college perhaps. But I see things a little different. I see things (inaudible). If you're gonna build a foundation, you need to build a foundation outside of education right now if you're going to pass something on to your child that she's going to be able to use in her later years. With the political system the way it is now with the (inaudible) educational system or the ability to recognize people who have benefited from the educational system and move on into the workforce are (inaudible). I don't think that's going to be afforded to my child in her later years. I think the (inaudible) is going to change. The environment in the world is going to change.
PI:	**So are there any characteristics that you look for in a good school?**
Int. #3:	My wife and I have had discussion a lot of times on what the educational system prepares you for and I have some flaws. I just have some flaws with the educational system from my perspective. That it doesn't prepare you for ownership(?), it prepares you to be a worker. So if I was gonna look for a characteristic in a school, is that it provides opportunity in areas that in the past it has not. I would like for it to teach kids on how to become wealthy (inaudible) how to become a worker for someone else. And the curriculum in all school systems, even in college does not afford individuals that opportunity to accumulate wealth but it does afford them the opportunity to go find a job with somebody and work for somebody else.
PI:	**Okay so the schools are sort of a training ground.**
Int. #3:	It's a training ground for corporate America. That's all it is. That's my perspective.
PI:	**So are you happy with your relocation decision when you look back on the past four or five years?**
Int. #3:	For my wife and daughter's benefit probably yes. For my own, no.
PI:	**Okay. Are you happy with the quality of your community school?**
Int. #3:	Like I say, early through middle school, although there were some problematic situations that I had to deal with or were forced to deal with. I think the overall experience of my child and my wife was probably good at best. I wouldn't say it was great.
PI:	**So you're saying you're sacrificing your own happiness for the sake of your child and your wife?**

Int. #3:   Most men do. If it were left up to me, if I had to move to a community like the one I was in, I would like to be out a lot more distance between my neighbors and myself. A lot more, I guess, black businesses, black cultural things to get involved in. Even the church now, when you go to church just in generality it's an all white church.

PI: **In the community?**

Int. #3:   Yes. For me it's a totally different change because I haven't been exposed to it. It ain't that I dislike other cultures, it's just I like mine a lot better.

PI: **You feel more comfortable.**

Int. #3:   Yeah, I do.

PI: **With what we know.**

Int. #3:   Yeah.

PI: **So the new community really doesn't offer you the opportunity—**

Int. #3:   It does but it forces me to deal with I guess a lot of personal likes and dislikes and it puts me in a situation where it forces me to make decisions that I normally don't want to make.

PI: **I understand that. So are you happy with the quality of your community school?**

Int. #3:   Yes, I guess I am. My child appears to be happy there and seems to be benefiting from it. I don't know what affect it's gonna have on her in the higher educational arena but for right now it's providing her with (inaudible) I feel like she should be getting. It provides her with a lot more opportunity. Maybe she's not taking advantage of all of them but the opportunities are there.

PI: **Are you satisfied with your child's level of academic performance?**

Int. #3:   She could do a lot better. I mean as I stated before I'm expecting a lot more out of her and I guess that comes with maturity. In our family, the boys appear to be a lot more outgoing and a lot more educational when it comes to grades than the girls are but I'm expecting big things out of her, I'm expecting her mind to explode around 10th or 11th grade.

PI: **So you think that light bulb is gonna come on.**

Int. #3:   I expect it's gonna switch on. I think it's gonna switch over.

PI:	**With maturity.**
Int. #3:	Yeah. Women in our family are very smart, very intelligent. It's just that they don't take advantage of the opportunities offered. They have a tendency to get sidetracked and distracted with other things.
PI:	**Especially social stuff?**
Int. #3:	Especially social stuff.
PI:	**Do you have any concerns or fears with the community that you live in now?**
Int. #3:	Probably in the next five to ten years I'm expecting it will be all black and then we'll probably—my wife will probably be expecting us to move again, which I told her now.
PI:	**Why do you think that's so, that it will be all black in the next five or ten years?**
Int. #3:	Because I have the impression that we as a minority have a tendency to follow neighborhoods like the one we're in because of safety, education, quality of living. But I get the feeling that people who are here now, they don't want anything to do with us, with others in the community.
PI:	**You mean the white neighbors?**
Int. #3:	White. So they have a tendency because when we move in, those things have a tendency to decline or go down, quality of life, educational school system, grades go down, and property values. So when they get to that 20% that we speak of sometimes, the decline of the neighborhood, they have a tendency to move further out or move away and then we have a tendency for additional blacks who want to move up on those scale, quality of living, education and so forth, have a tendency to move in, especially with economics. I guess since we're on a downturn we've got probably another five years before that happens, but the neighborhood declines. All the whites move out, move out further in the suburbs. We move in and here we are with the same thing we moved away from we have again.
PI:	**Yeah, it follows. Not only that, it's pretty far out (inaudible)….**
Int. #3:	We have another county ….. Gainesville and Hall County—
PI:	**Jackson.**

Int. #3:	They have no fear of moving further out. I guess with the gas prices that might have something to do with the economics right now but it hasn't stopped it in the past.

PI: **There's a trend now where the whites are moving back into the in-town communities for that very reason. They're reclaiming the in-town neighborhoods because they're tired of the long commute and the gas prices hitting them in the pocketbook really hard with the SUV's, 8 cylinder gas guzzlers. So you find that, and then a lot of the young college graduates like the urban so they can be closer to all the amenities and restaurants and things.**

Int. #3:   ….and parks and sports arena's and what-have-you, (inaudible) what-have-you.

PI: **So the housing pattern, from what I hear you saying, is even though now where you live it's a predominately white neighborhood, you're predicting that over time it will be saturated with mostly—**

Int. #3:   Then you'll be faced with the same situation that we just moved from.

PI: **Did that happen in your previous community where it was mostly white?**

Int. #3:   Yes, it did. When we first moved in, we had an Asian and a lot of white neighbors. I would say within three to five years, totally black almost.

PI: **Why do you think that's so?**

Int. #3:   Same thing. We expect quality of living, education, property values. Same thing.

PI: **Why do you think all the whites moved out?**

Int. #3:   Because they did not want to utilize the educational system, the schools. They did not want to lose money with their property because once all of us moved in, property values decreased, which they did because now you have a lot of black people walking the street when you didn't have that prior to their (inaudible) their families Same thing I was. Or drugs, crime.

PI: **And with that you have the (inaudible) the people that are renters.**

Int. #3:   Yes. People who when we first moved there were owners, now you got a lot of renters in there, that's correct. Sometimes even with certain cultures you have two or three families in one house.

PI: **The neighborhood or the community became undesirable because of what was going on around you.**

Int. #3:   Yes.

PI: Not so much the house itself but the community.

Int. #3:   Not so much the house, the community, yes.

PI: And the schools.

Int. #3:   Mm-hmm.

PI: What impact did it have on the schools?

Int. #3:   Well, the same thing. I mean I hate to say this but if you have a less quality individual who is coming from a non productive neighborhood into your neighborhood or someone who's not culturally—I shouldn't say culturally, of a different culture, or non-English speaking because you have a lot of Bohemian, a lot of (inaudible) and it just, it has an impact on the quality of the neighborhood as well as the school system, mostly of the school system.

PI: Do you have a support system in the community you live in now?

Int. #3:   Where we moved from we had more of a support system because we were probably closer to a lot of my wife's friends and what-have-you. Where we live now we have a small support system but not the kind I'd really like or I could at least depend on. It's basically just family, immediately family, support like either my wife or myself. That's about it. We have no one we can really trust with our child. We do sometimes pay individuals from the old neighborhood to come into the new neighborhood to baby-sit.

PI: To baby-sit the high schooler.

Int. #3:   Baby-sit the high schooler. And sometimes since she's in high school now we kind of depend on her a lot more and leave her by herself a lot more than I would like to.

PI: What were some of the unintended consequences as a result of your relocation decision?

Int. #3:   Like a (inaudible) that I have depended on that I grew up with. My interaction with or my comfortability level.

PI: You comfort zone.

Int. #3:   Comfort zone. All those have changed (inaudible).

PI: **Have you or any of your family experienced any racial tension or incidents that you perceived as racism in your housing community?**

Int. #3: No. None other than the situation I spoke of earlier when my brothers, my siblings or some of my family members come together. I'm sure they feel basically the same way I do but they haven't been exposed to a lot of this as well so it's probably exposure for them as well because they're probably having to deal with a lot of different experiences that they haven't in the past especially with my daughter because all of her friends—it probably puts them in a situation that they didn't have to deal with.

PI: **They feel awkward.**

Int. #3: Yeah, they feel awkward.

PI: **Has your relocation decision impacted the curriculum choices or participation in extracurricular activities or programs for you child?**

Int. #3: As I said earlier, she's afforded the opportunity to deal with a lot more opportunities in school but I don't think she's taken full advantage of them right now.

PI: **Has she been in any extracurricular programs or activities?**

Int. #3: Yes, she has but she's in the orchestra and she's in choir. She's been a cheerleader. So that was affording her the opportunity to meet people. She's been into what they call (inaudible) which is somewhat separate from school which afforded an opportunity to get involved. Overall I guess it's probably been beneficial for her although I'd like to see some additional exposure for her.

PI: **Okay. And that can come from the parents.**

Int. #3: Well, at this point in time it's more the child. The parents are pushing but she's not around herself to be pushed.

PI: **Got it. What characteristics do you perceive as "ideal" in your community and in your school?**

Int. #3: Ideal for me would be a lot more diversity, and I don't see that and I don't see it happening any time soon. But I would like to see a lot more diversity. I'd like for her to be exposed to a lot more than just one aspect of the community which is predominately white right now. To me, I'm getting the impression that she's being forced into that environment and she's missing out on something and I think in the long run it might affect her ideas. Diversity.

PI: **So what would be your ideal in terms of 50/50 or 80—**

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Int. #3: I'd like to see somewhat of a different diversity other than just something like 80/20. I'd like to see something like a 20/20/20/20. Twenty black, 20 Asian, 20 Indian, 20—you know? Because (inaudible).

PI: **Right. So what were the compelling factors that led you to reach your relocation decision?**

Int. #3: Economics. Price of the house.

PI: **In the sense of?**

Int. #3: It was affordable.

PI: **You'll get more house for the money?**

Int. #3: Not necessarily that ….It's a nice neighborhood, don't get me wrong, it was affordable and it got my wife off my back.

PI: **I heard you mention earlier you all had been looking for quite a few years so I would imagine at that point you were ready.**

Int. #3: I was ready. I was ready to get it over with and move on to the next stage of my life.

PI: **Upon reflection, do you have any misgivings or regrets regarding your relocation decision?**

Int. #3: Just the impact it's gonna have on my family, my wife and my daughter. And my dog. I forgot, I left my dog out.

PI: **Any regrets?**

Int. #3: I don't know how to answer that because I like my old neighborhood. Sometimes when I'm on my way back to Albany, I drive through and just look at it. I miss my old neighborhood. You know, after 50 years of living there, it just feels good. I just like the old neighborhood.

PI: **If given the opportunity and you had to do anything differently regarding your relocation decision, what would it be?**

Int. #3: A community that was a lot more diversified and that probably would make me feel a lot more comfortable.

PI: **You know, Atlanta is a big place so if you moved maybe closer in, do you think—**

Int. #3:   I'd like to have a lot more distance between my neighbors and myself.

PI: **What did you find when you were looking at houses and looking at the schools? What were the—**

Int. #3:   My wife probably was more into the school than I was. I just wanted to make sure that my daughter was happy and could fit in.

PI: **Anything else you want to add?**

Int. #3:   Not at this point in time. I think we covered most of it.

PI: **I appreciate your taking the time out to interview. At this time we can have you sign the consent form.**

Int. #3:   Sure, be glad to.

PI: **Thank you.**

END.