

**Removing the Colonizer's Coat in Deaf Education: Exploring the Curriculum of  
Colonization and the Field of Deaf Education**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my Little One. You have been with me every day of this PhD journey from the womb to Earth side. There were many days I wanted to give up, but your spirit and energy pushed me forward. This dissertation is to show you that you can push barriers and systems that try to shut you out, if you choose, but I'm just happy to know that you have the choice.

I also dedicate this dissertation to all the communities that have supported me in every event that has led up to me going into the PhD program; to those who joined my journey during the PhD program; and those who were willing to invest in my emotional, psychological, and physical well-being. Because of you, I was able to survive this and time will never be kind enough to let me repay what you all have gifted me. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation theorizes the curriculum of colonization in relation to the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing population within the United States' schooling system. Critical indigenous pedagogy and critical race theory are explored as theoretical frameworks to address the curriculum of colonization and schooling. A decolonizing-intersectionality framework was developed as a praxis methodology also drawing on critical indigenous pedagogy and critical race theory. As a methodology for this dissertation, the decolonizing-intersectionality framework is used to elicit qualitative narratives from twenty-five contributors to the study, to integrate, and to present the data in the form of composite critical personal narratives. Three major themes emerged from this inquiry which explain the experiences of doubly- or multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals within formal schooling spaces in the United States. The experiences of the twenty-five contributors demonstrate the devastating and unyielding effects of colonial schooling on the populations of doubly- and multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing persons. Future explorations for using critical indigenous pedagogy and critical race theory, particularly for hearing professionals in the field of Deaf Education, for the purpose of analyzing how they are implicated in the colonization of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students are discussed. Implications for the theorized curriculum of colonization and decolonizing-intersectionality framework are also discussed.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The premise of revolutionary consciousness-rising is that we must change our own conscious levels “if we want to change oppressive structures of domination...or colonialist hegemony.”

—Fiorenza (2001, p. 16)

This dissertation is about education, but not the education that is usually written about. More accurately, this dissertation is about schooling, though many may wonder how schooling and education are distinct. Both Paolo Freire and Henry Giroux differentiate “schooling” as a mode of social control and “education” as a process which engages learners as active subjects committed to self and social transformation (McLaren, 2003). Therefore, the dissertation presented here is an education, if you will. Through the engagement of this work, I hope to lead you on what bell hooks describes as revolutionary consciousness-rising wherein colonization is brought to the conscious mind. Colonization, not in the form we have conceptually confined it to; as solely impacting Indigenous Peoples. What I seek to accomplish with this dissertation is the removal of the limited frame on colonization, and the application of colonization to the construction of dis/ability and the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. I do this by applying decolonization and intersectionality frameworks by embedding them throughout all aspects of this study; from exploration of the history of schooling Deaf, DeafBlind, Deaf, Disabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in the United States, to the theoretical framework, to the qualitative research design, and to the data collection and analysis processes. Though the guiding question forefronts the experiences of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals with formal schooling spaces in the United States; what follows is an education process that should lead to reflection on all of society’s implications in how the approaches of schooling multiply-marginalized Deaf,

DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations has been and continues to be carried out as a method of colonization.

### **Background and Problem**

Much of what is published about Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in the United States revolves around schooling. One of the reasons for the unbalanced focus on schooling is because schools are the primary place for language and identity development, in addition to academic skill development, for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children. Solomon's (2012) discussion of *horizontal* and *vertical* identities provides some clarification for why school is the primary place for identity development for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children (Nikolarazi & Hadjidakou, 2006). Solomon (2012) defined *vertical identities* as those that are passed on directly from parents to children across generations, both through shared DNA (e.g., race, hair color) as well as through shared cultural norms (which can include: language, cultural practices and behaviors, and religion). Contrastingly, *horizontal identities* are those that must be acquired from a peer group because that trait is different from, and generally unknown to, the parents. This can include, but is not limited to, recessive genes, genetic mutation, physical dis/ability, and intellectual exceptionality. Children with horizontal identities must learn from a different cultural group that is separate from that of their parents. With approximately 95% of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children being born to hearing parents, who generally do not self-identify as Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, or Hard of Hearing (Kurtzer-White & Luterman, 2003; Mitchell & Karchmer, 2005), these children find themselves among the population of people who will not have all their identities transmitted vertically from their parents. For the majority of this population, Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing languages and

cultures are among the identity aspects that must be learned horizontally. Typically, this horizontal transmission occurs in schools where Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing spend much of their time.

Unfortunately, the problem is not limited to the matter of horizontal transmission of language identity and identity related to hearing thresholds; there are other complicating factors. Of note is the fact that the majority of the hearing parents to whom Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children are born have no prior experience with the cultures of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples (Hauser et al., 2010). When considering other groups of children who receive their cultures through horizontal transmission, LGBTQI children or transracial adoptees as examples, their parents may have some knowledge of or experience with these communities. However, this is rarely the case in regards to Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children and their families. Additionally, when referring to the transmission of culture and identity to Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children, the discussion is always centered around the hearing/\*Deaf\* dichotomy. The reality is that identity is multifaceted for the majority of the United States population. A Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing child could also be a Person of Color, LGBTQI, gender non-conforming, and/or many other identities. Therefore, the minimization of culture to language and hearing status is one that does violence against the majority of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children. Both of the aforementioned points are indicative of a larger issue within this country. This issue is rooted in the lack of understanding of dis/ability and difference; the lack of valuing of any cultures outside the normative Eurocentric hearing cultures; and hegemony—the acceptance and/or enforcement of dominant-group experiences and perspectives as the societal standard (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008).

The larger issue is colonization; and schooling is not exempt from colonization and its effects. Though I will discuss colonization in depth in this dissertation, at this point, colonization can be defined as the “formal and informal methods (behaviors, ideologies, institutions, policies, and economies) that maintain the subjugation or exploitation of...peoples, lands, and resources” (Waziyatawin & Yellow Bird, 2005, p. 2).

In 2017, the United States Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities celebrated 200 years of schooling Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, Hard of Hearing individuals (The Daily Moth, 2017). Those 200 years have been marked by the debate of whether to school Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, Hard of Hearing students through spoken English only, or through bilingual American Sign Language (ASL)/English educational philosophy. The “language wars” have shaped the entire history of schooling Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, Hard of Hearing students in the United States. Research in the field and teacher preparation programs have directed most, if not all of their attention to providing Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, Hard of Hearing students with tools to achieving English language proficiency and/or literacy; with advocates for ASL citing evidence of its transference to English language development, and some (mostly Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, Hard of Hearing individuals themselves) fighting for ASL as the cultural and linguistic right of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, Hard of Hearing students. The “language wars” have resulted in the ignoring of other issues in the field and the further neglect of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students with other marginalized identities (e.g., LGBTQI, Person of Color, gender non-conforming, rearing in a family that uses minoritized language, combination of any of the aforementioned identity markers).

A step toward finding viable solutions and educational liberation for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students, is shifting the dialogue from the language wars to colonization and how it manifests in the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. As a professional who holds both dominant group and \*minority\* group memberships in the field of Deaf Education, it is my moral and ethical responsibility to address the forces and mechanisms that maintain hearing-normative dominance in the field. As an individual evaluating the effects of colonization in my own life, it is my moral and ethical responsibility to also seek the healing of those whose sufferings are similar to mine. It is with this spirit that I undertake exploring the effects of colonization in the context of the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in the United States.

### **Locating My Position**

I write this dissertation from both privileged and oppressed positions. I grapple with how much of my minoritized self I can reflect upon in this context. So, I share what is here, with the protection of my personal relationships and individuals dear to me at the forefront of my mind. As a multiethnic Black Cherokee growing up in the South, as one of the few Black kids who spoke Spanish, and living in the Bible Belt with strong Christian influence, I was constantly confronted with my identities by force. I constantly had identities imposed on me and stripped away from me. As an individual with female genitalia, I was imposed the identity of female and my role as secondary to male was taught from early childhood. Growing up in a strong Christian family and community, I was taught that our religion was superior and infallible. I was imposed the duty of “correcting” others to bring them to the “light.”

Simultaneously, I lived the experience of having my Cherokee identity erased methodically and intentionally through Christianity. I can vividly remember how my Cherokee

identity was aggressively Christianized. The stories I'd loved that had been passed to me seated at the feet of elders, the wise tales to protect us from dangers, they all faded over the years. As more members of my family became Christian, those aspects of our Indigenous identity that were incompatible, simply were wiped away; treated as if they never existed. Yet, I remember holding dearly to some things and finding ways to keep them as part of me. I had no words to describe feeling like I was disappearing and I had no explanation for why I felt that way. It wasn't until my 20s that I came to discover the words for why I was 'disappearing'. I was colonized. I was being colonized. I am still being colonized. I remember in my preteen years moving to our town to be closer to my cancer-ridden maternal grandmother and witnessing White people rapidly moving out of my neighborhood as more Black and Spanish-speaking peoples moved in. Without anyone telling me, I remember clearly understanding why the White people were leaving. It was because of me, because of us. Again in my twenties, I would learn this phenomenon was called "White flight."

My schooling experiences were also a cite of wrestling with identities and social positions. I was constantly reminded of our lower positions related to socioeconomic status when my parents filled out paperwork for free and reduced lunch. I remember wanting to feign paying for lunch just so I could be like my other classmates. My family was poor. My school was also poor. I grew up in one of the poorest schools in our state and in a state that was ranked 48 out of 50 for quality of education. Yet, the majority of my teachers were People of Color who had mostly grown up in our community and returned after obtaining their college degrees. Those individuals who weren't People of Color were international teachers from Europe, South America, and the Middle East. Therefore, I had the privilege of being instructed by role models

and witnessing successful and passionate teachers who looked like me. I also had the privilege of access to international perspectives during my schooling years.

My placement in the “gifted” program, willingness to date outside my race and religion, and stereotypical “you’re not just Black” physical features made me both a target for individuals within my community and those outside my community. I existed in this perpetually constructed and re-constructed world of “this is the United States, we speak English here”; of history textbooks about how Christopher Columbus ‘discovered’ my people’s land, yet no mention of the genocide, rape, and stripping of my people’s culture so that these ‘United States’ could be called the land in which we “speak English.” I existed in a world of “you’re not Black enough because you have ‘good hair’” and “you’re too smart” and “you speak Spanish.” I also existed in a world that was sometimes silent and other times not. I grew up in a space of the deaf/ hearing dichotomy. Having a fluctuating hearing loss meant I existed outside of that dichotomy. So my world also consisted of “you’re not deaf; stop ignoring your teachers” and “oh she think she’s stuck up so she’s ignoring us” from my peers.

In 2007, I left home and moved 1,000 miles away to the Midwest to attend college. After being raised and educated in a context that was predominantly People of Color, I experienced a major culture shock of being at a large predominantly White institution. There, I was one of 4% People of Color. Besides the kitchen staff in my dorm, I could go days without having contact with another Person of Color. I sat in lecture halls of over 200 students and I was either the Black girl who had to speak up for the experience of “minorities” or I was just invisible to everyone. I was the target of White missionaries because I stood out as someone who needed to be saved. Over and over I was forced to confront my multiply-marginalized identities as a Black person, as a woman, as a student who struggled to hear in large lecture halls, as a person 1,000 miles from

family with no support system, as a poor person. My privileges of access to languages and education through cultural role models, granted me the opportunity to wrestle with my experiences of marginalization and areas of advantage most of my life. My experiences with hearing loss and needing to find a ‘safe place’ led me to the field of Deaf Education.

Unexpectedly, my polarizing experiences in the K-12 and the higher education contexts reinforced for me the critical role of the identities of our teachers and other school professionals whom students interact with on a daily basis.

The experience of navigating higher education as a multiply-marginalized individual and living in a place with minimal cultural representation were influencing my perspectives in the field of Deaf Education; a field I had yet to enter. It was my points of societal marginalization that have allowed me to enter this field with a different lens. When I entered the field of Deaf Education as a master’s student, I was already in a position unlike most of my classmates. I had completed 5 semesters of ASL coursework taught exclusively by Deaf persons; during the summer I volunteered at the bilingual Deaf charter school; during the semester, I used independent study courses to volunteer in deaf classroom within the public schools; and used every opportunity to attend Deaf events (Deaf plays, release of short Deaf films, etc.). For my Bachelor degree thesis, I wrote about the challenges of \*minority Deaf\* students; specifically, first-generation Deaf students from Spanish-speaking and Hmong-speaking families. Now that I am a doctoral teaching assistant in teacher preparation for the field of Deaf Education, I am now able to appreciate that all the things I did before applying for admittance to the Deaf Education Master’s degree program are an exception to the norm. Most applicants have never met a \*Deaf\* person; most applicants have never been taught by a Person of Color; most have never left their home state or been forced far out of their comfort zones, therefore, their worldviews are pretty

set, making it difficult to reckon with other perspectives and life experiences; and most applicants are White.

My own journey has forced me to be consistently analytical of the Deaf Education field; a field in which 90% of teachers of the \*deaf\* are White and 90% of teachers of the \*deaf\* are hearing (Simms, Rushner, Andrews & Coryell, 2008). My privilege of being educated by persons who were from my communities and share many of my cultural backgrounds affords me the understanding of the implications of being largely educated by individuals who are not from your community or cultural background(s). Furthermore, when those individuals come from dominant group perspectives, the power differential between teacher/student plus dominant/non-dominant group identities, makes schooling a context where colonization and indoctrination into social positions are routinely on the educational agenda. As a Person of Color, I belong to only 10% of the professionals in this field. My race and societal perspectives that my youth is equivalent to professional inexperience, have routinely been cause for others to dismiss the perspectives I lend regarding colonization and social positioning. On the other hand, as a person with hearing privilege I make up 90% of the professionals in my field. These demographics have not changed in over 20 years (Andrews & Jordan, 1993; Simms, Rushner, Andrews & Coryell, 2008). This indicates that not many Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing perspectives have been allowed to enter the field and therefore the larger problem of why this is the case needs to be addressed.

To analyze the Deaf Education field, I must also analyze myself and my role in this field. My privileges have allowed me to become one of the few People of Color in the Deaf Education field, and of an even smaller group at the PhD level. However, my journey in the field has also not been perfect and I have not gotten it right everyday. Even going back to my Bachelor's thesis

eight years ago, there were two major shortcomings that I address explicitly in this dissertation. First, I discussed the educator's and parents' perspective of challenges to schooling \*minority Deaf\* students from Spanish- and Hmong-speaking families. Second, my terminology use was still representative of the colonizer's voice. In this dissertation, I have endeavored to attend to the voices of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals and present findings from their perspectives. I have also been intentional about word choices and ensuring that my use of terminology is representative of the colonized voices instead.

### **Challenging the Labels**

The use, avoidance, and replacement of specific terms has been very intentional throughout this dissertation. For many in the professional world who may be disconnected from grassroots movements and/or individuals from particular cultural and linguistic groups, the politics of language may remain elusive as it did for me those many years ago. However, every use and replacement of terms make a very explicit political and social statement to the reader. In other words, I want to explicitly challenge the discourse that has been presented in our society and professional fields as neutral and accepted/acceptable. Foucault (1972 as cited in Pennycook, 2010, p. 121) described discourse practices as “things we do with languages that produce our ways of thinking about the world.” Gee (2005) expanded on this by describing two types of discourse: Discourse and discourse. Uppercase ‘D’ discourse refers to our social habits, specifically the ways of thinking, believing, and valuing (Gee, 2005). Lowercase ‘d’ discourse refers to the language we use. Both types of discourses work together for individuals to be recognized as certain types of people as well as to represent themselves to others.

In my own journey, all of my learning regarding labels and struggles within various communities have come exclusively from outside the professional and academic communities.

This realization is daunting, knowing that most professionals who work with students in this field have never met a \*d/Deaf\* person prior to entering the field and few have relationships with \*d/Deaf\* persons that are not education and/or research related. Therefore, I think it is one of my responsibilities to make these politics of language—these discourses— clear so that any reader of these writings will understand the power of word choices to oppress or liberate.

Oftentimes, dominant group members including professionals in the field, are those who assume the power to name and to label; they construct the discourses. Therefore, I push back on those labels, while simultaneously recognizing my power to do so. Because I have been thus far referring to my oppressed/marginalized and privileged positions, I think *kyriocentrism* and *kyriarchy* are a good starting place for addressing how subjectivities can shift depending on context. For example, in locating my position in this work, with specific \*Deaf\* populations I occupy an outsider position. With \*Deaf\* populations of color, I often occupy an insider position. My shifting hearing thresholds also change my position with these groups. Therefore, subjectivity is not a stable construct, but one that shifts granting me positions of privilege at times and denying me privilege at other times. Understanding kyriocentrism provides some insights as to why subjectivities may shift and why simple dualisms such as insider/outsider are insufficient because I am constantly in process in relation to this work every time I think, sign, write, speak. (Orner, 1992; Weedon, 1997).

I recently learned of kyriocentrism and kyriarchy through associations in social justice spaces on social media while enrolled in my doctoral program, they were coined by Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza in 1992. Drawing from the work of Black feminists such as bell hooks, Fiorenza (2001) expanded on her original concept to define kyriarchy as a “complex pyramidal system of intersecting multiplicative social structures of superordination and subordination, of

ruling and oppression...built on elite male property rights as well as on the exploitation, dependency, inferiority, and obedience of \_\_\_\_\_ (name oppressed group)” (p. 118). Kyriarchy is not limited to binaries of domination (e.g., male-female, hearing-\*deaf\*, etc.). Instead, kyriarchy focuses on the “complex pyramidal political systems of superiority and inferiority; of dominance and subordination” (p. 119). Kyriarchy provides the framework to examine how our society largely assigns us social and structural positions at birth that are stratified by race, gender, class, religion, sexuality, age, ability, etc. (Fiorenza, 2001). Therefore, kyriocentrism holds that elite White men with no disabilities are the standard by which the rest of us are defined in society. Though social positions may change over time and across history, these changes typically result in multiply-marginalized individuals being oppressed in various other ways. So for example, as I became involved more in Disability Justice work, I learned of how the definition of disability had changed over time. The results of those changing definitions have been the further marginalization of individuals whose bodies and minds function differently from the elite White male normative standard. Kyriarchy explains how I can be marginalized and oppressed in society for my race, gender, age, class, and language use while still being privileged due to my hearing threshold and physical/mental ability in the context of being a professional in the Deaf Education field.

As shown in *Figure 1*, kyriocentrism operates on four levels: the grammatical-linguistic level, symbolic-cultural level, ideological-cultural level, and social-institutional level. The grammatical-linguistic level is concerned with how language use and practices put White, upper class men in the center while marginalizing White upper class women and lower class White

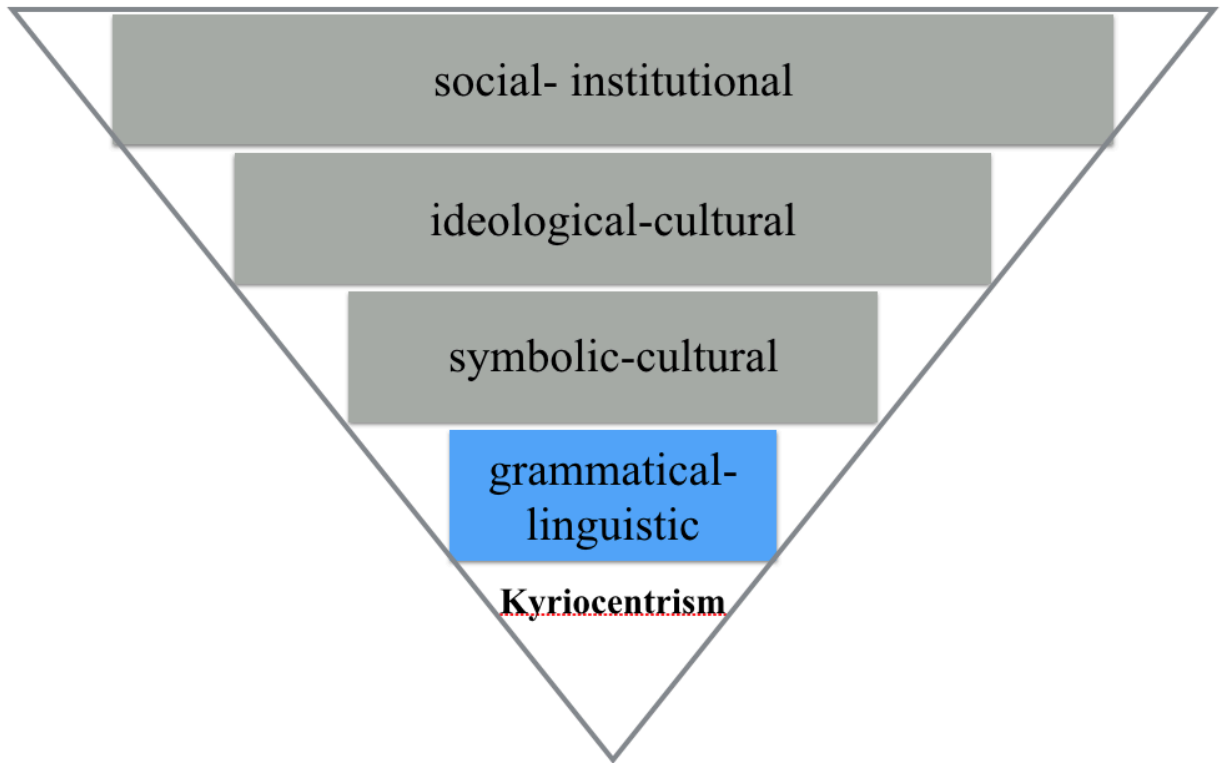


*Figure 1. Four Levels of Kyriocentrism*

[image description: large inverted triangle with grey outline. Inside triangle at the bottom is the word “kyriocentrism” in black bold text. There are 4 rectangles that stack above “kyriocentrism” with each rectangle increasing in length to fill the triangle. First rectangle is shaded blue with black text “grammatical-linguistic.” Second rectangle is grey with black text “symbolic-cultural.” Third rectangle is shaded grey with black text “ideological-cultural.” Fourth rectangle is shaded grey with black text “social-institutional.”]

men, and makes others doubly/ multiply oppressed. My selective language use throughout this dissertation is an attempt to address kyriocentrism at the grammatical-linguistic level because “language is a site of struggle, where subjectivity and consciousness are produced” (Orner, 1992, p. 80). As may have become evident, I have used an asterisk surrounding the words *minority* and *d/Deaf*. I can recall growing up in K-12 schools that were predominantly students and teachers of color and we were still labeled as “minority.” Though the term “minority” always bothered me, it wasn’t until recent years when I had the language to describe my experiences of oppression that I came to reject this term. Henceforth in this dissertation I use the term *minoritized*. Minoritized refers to languages or groups of individuals that are subjugated by dominant society despite the fact that these languages and/or individuals may quantitatively outnumber the members of dominant language and/or cultural group. As opposed to “minority”, *minoritized* places the action, the subjugating on the dominant group. I treat this as an active and intentional subordinating of individuals who are not White and languages that are not English, in the United States.

Similarly, I use the term *racialized* to describe people of color who experience oppression based on the color of their skin. I use this term to reinforce that race is a social construct and that individuals who are racialized experience the negative effects of this social construction. This can occur both externally (from dominant group members) or internally (members within the same ethnic group). Generally, within ethnic groups, racialization serves to reify power; granting it to those who have lighter skin and subordinating those with darker skin. Like *minoritized*, I treat *racialized* as an active and intentional subordinating and discriminating against based on the color (and darkness) of one’s skin in contrast to whiteness.

Related to race, there are two distinctions that I make in this dissertation. First, I use *People of Color* to refer to entire population(s) of people who are marginalized and/or oppressed due to not being White, or who belong to an ethnic group that has traditionally been excluded from White privileges. I use *Black* to refer specifically to those who are of African/Afro descent, Black/African Americans, and those with darker skin who may be racialized as Black within the United States. This distinction is important when considering the distinction between anti-blackness and racism because being racialized is a function of whiteness. For example, beginning in the 1940s Mexicans were to be reported and considered as “White” on the United States census for political reasons—the need for their labor to work on railroads and for immigration policy changes to support the U.S. economy (Hayes-Bautista & Chapa, 1987); although it’s important to remember that anti-immigration sentiment still placed Mexicans in a socially inferior position and resulted in discrimination, marginalization, and oppression). However, when they no longer benefited those in power, they were once again excluded from the White race and lowered to People of Color status where they have remained since. As a result, our immigration laws began to reflect this social demotion and anti-immigration rhetoric against Mexicans grew in the United States (Blakemore, 2017). This is also one example of how anti-blackness can be manifested framed as oppression and discrimination against those who fall outside of the socially constructed “whiteness” and how policies for or against People of Color are leveraged to benefit whiteness. However, separating *People of Color* and *Black* within this dissertation also allows me to address issues of colorism and how the lightness (proximity to White and perceived proximity to whiteness) affords these individuals differential (generally more positive) treatment in contrast to those who can never be considered White because of their darker skin tone.

Second, I differentiate between anti-blackness and racism. *Figure 2* presents major concepts and implications of anti-blackness, without taking into consideration how anti-blackness can intersect with other identity markers such as ability, class, sexual orientation, etc. Anti-blackness is the onto-epistemic condition of negation wherein racialized peoples (i.e., People of Color, including Black people) are forced to disappear into whiteness (Smith, 2014). Anti-blackness also involves the indifference to the suffering and experiences of Black peoples, with whom other Peoples of Color are often grouped because of their distance from whiteness. It is important to note that though racism and anti-blackness have nuanced differences, anti-blackness can and often does entail racism. Racism can be defined as “prejudice, discrimination, violence, and institutions that reproduce racial inequality and injustice” (Jeffries, 2014). “[R]acism is about institutional power, and People of Color in the United States have never possessed this form of power” (Solórzano, 1997, p. 8). Unlike racism alone, anti-blackness accounts for the external racialization of People of Color, as well as how People of Color internalize racialization and impose it on one another. For example, an Afro/Black Latinx is generally not perceived to be Latinx and is instead assumed to be and treated as Black or African American by White people (external racialization) and other Latinx peoples who have lighter skin (colorism; internal racialization). The Afro/Black Latinx is therefore discriminated against and thought to be inferior by other Latinxs. This example clarifies that anti-blackness is not only practiced by White people in the United States; it has global implications and explains the treatment of black peoples from dominant society (external) and with one another (internal). Therefore, anti-blackness encompasses racism while simultaneously addressing the experiences of People of Color under colonialism; both are taken up in this dissertation where appropriate.

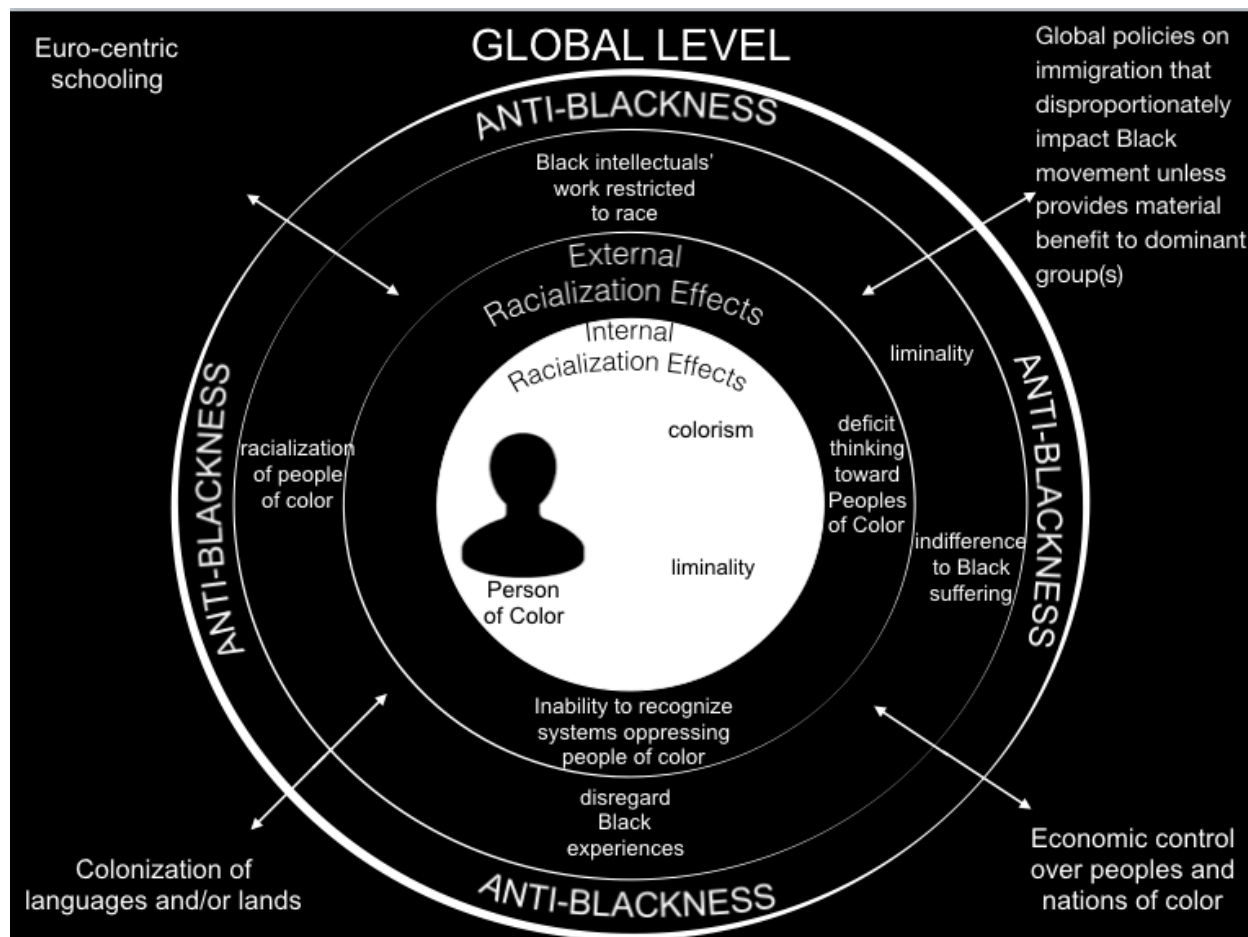


Figure 2. Anti-Blackness

[image description: black background with all-capitalized white text at top-center that reads “global level.” White text in four corners of the background read “Euro-centric schooling” (top left), “colonization of languages and/or lands” (bottom left), “global policies on immigration that disproportionately impact Black movement unless provides material benefit to dominant group(s)” (top right), and “economic control over peoples and nations of color” (bottom right). At the center of figure are four layers of circles with white outline. Outer layer 1 reads “anti-blackness” four times at top, bottom, left, and right. Circle layer 2 inside of layer 1 reads “Black intellectuals’ work restricted to race” (top center), “racialization of people of color” (left midway down), “disregard Black experiences” (bottom center), “indifference to Black suffering” (right midway up), and “liminality” (right midway up). Circle layer 3 inside of layer 2 reads “external racialization effects” (top center), “deficit thinking towards peoples of color” (right midway down), and “inability to recognize systems oppressing people of color” (bottom center). Circle layer 4 inside layer 3 is filled with white background and contains a Black shadow of a genderless person on the left off-centered with black text that reads “person of color” under the image. Other text inside the circle reads “internal racialization effects” (top center), “colorism” (to right of genderless person), and “liminality” (to the right of genderless person).]

Anti-blackness is a central point to be considered in the understanding of colonization, particularly because of my own identities. Who I am and how I am positioned in society cannot be separated from my approaches to this dissertation. As shown in *Figure 2*, scholars and researchers of color experience liminality through anti-blackness in relation to their work. This manifests as limiting the breadth of their work and expertise to issues of race. As a Black woman, though my work centers colonization, there will be those who without a doubt read this dissertation and only understand it to be about race and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people. Furthermore, this type of liminality disregards the fact that for scholars and researchers of color to succeed, we must combat racism and how it intersects with other systems of oppression against us, in addition to becoming knowledgeable within our areas of expertise. Therefore, our fight is always against social institutions that seek to marginalize and oppress us in addition to the work that must be invested to become a scholar. Social power then, involves how our work and perspectives are (de)valued in addition to the power of controlling our movements, and the power to name ourselves.

Likewise, without the social power to name themselves, many individuals within the \*Deaf\* community were forced to conform to labels. The more I connected with Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals who were not in elite and privileged positions, I came to understand that the labels \*deaf\* and \*Deaf\* were in many cases, imposed on them. In this dissertation, I use the phrase *Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing* instead of *deaf* or *Deaf*; except in instances where I discuss the work of other authors, in which cases I enclose *deaf* or *Deaf* within asterisks. Professionals have also played a role in asserting their power to name Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. For example, “Deaf Plus” or “Deaf with Disabilities (DWD)” (see Guardino & Cannon, 2015) to

refer to individuals who have disabilities in addition to being d/Deaf. The communities of individuals with the lived experience of being Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing (DDBDDHH) collectively created this label address what the literature considers to be \*deaf, Deaf, and Deaf Plus/DWD\*. This is the members' way of resisting being named by those in power (hearing, abled professionals) as well as serves as an act of solidarity with the Disabled community (see Burke's, 2013). Though typically written in English as DDBDDHH and in other spaces, as DDBDDHHCI—to include cochlear implant users— and DDBDDHHLD — to include late-deafened individuals; I write the full meaning throughout this dissertation. I do this because the acronym is always used in its expanded form in ASL. I also use the expanded form for potential hearing audiences who may come across this dissertation. I do not want my use of the acronym in written English to become a vehicle for removing the human-ness of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations from the discussions within this dissertation.

Furthermore, in this dissertation I attempt to move beyond the essentialized group of \*Deaf\* people and into explorations that are not often addressed in Deaf Education. Namely, I look at doubly- and multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing persons. Those who are minoritized and marginalized due to race, ethnicity, skin tone, language use, immigration status, ability, socioeconomic background, gender, and sexual orientation are centered in this dissertation. The purpose of this is because though each identity marker may have been discussed from the White \*Deaf\* perspective, those who have intersectional identities—those who are oppressed and marginalized due to a combination of the aforementioned identity markers—are generally essentialized into one group. They are either discussed in relation to their race, or their ability, or their socioeconomic status. Yet these

identities cannot be separated and categorized into neat labels. Therefore, this dissertation centers the gray space that is often ignored for doubly- and multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing persons.

The power to label and name is not limited to the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities. This has been a repeating theme with many marginalized, racialized, and minoritized groups. Another example is the terms *abled-bodied* and *disabled*. Both terms that carry with them a great deal of power. These were terms I also previously used without deep reflection. It wasn't until I became more involved in disability rights and disability justice movements on social media that I was able to learn the perspectives of various persons who considered dis/ability as part of their identity as well as a social construction by which they were oppressed. To affirm the experiences of and consequences of physical and/or mental difference and the oppression that comes from societal barriers, I too have adopted the term *dis/abled* and its variant *dis/ability*. I also used *Disabled* to refer to persons who embrace dis/ability as part of their identity.

One Disabled Autistic individual that I have continued to learn from and that signal boosts other Disabled individuals, uses the Twitter handle @EbThen. On March 21, 2017 @EbThen posted a thread about the use of the term *abled-bodied* which is widely used on social media and within the literature to refer to anyone who does not have a disability. @EbThen explained why the term *abled-bodied* is incorrect; including that it generally focuses on apparent disabilities and negates the subject of the mind. Apparent disabilities are those that are obvious based on physical characteristics or obvious differences in behavior. Relating to the mind, many mental health illnesses and the effects of trauma are oftentimes not considered when referring to disabilities. As opposed to the term *abled-bodied*, the term *abled* refers to both the body and

mind; regardless of whether the disability is apparent or not. I use *abled* in this dissertation to avoid placing a contrast between what may be considered a *healthy* body and mind and an *unhealthy* body and mind. I also want this word choice to reinforce that society accommodates bodies that are perceived to be *normal* in ways that continuously disables bodies perceived to not fit society's norm. Here I have made explicit the grammatical-linguistic component of kyriocentrism and how it is addressed throughout this dissertation. In Chapter Two, I explore the other levels of kyriocentrism and situate kyriocentrism within colonization.

### **Motivation for this Work**

In the book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, Smith (1999) defined decolonization as a research methodology which “engages with imperialism and colonialism at multiple levels. For researchers, one of those levels is concerned with having a more critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations, and values which inform research practices” (p. 20). As a researcher from colonized communities, who is also being molded in academia, engaging in my own decolonization process was a necessity for this project. Smith states that a component of the “critical pedagogy” of decolonization has been ‘coming to know the past’ (p. 34). As a hearing and abled researcher in the field of Deaf Education, ‘coming to know the past’; “criticiz[ing] and demystify[ing] the ways in which Western science and the modern academy have been part of the colonial apparatus”; and the influence of hearing-ness in the schooling of and research regarding the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations was essential.

A severe result of colonialism was the disruption and breaking of relationships. This brokenness encompassed relationships with landscapes, with languages, and social relations. Therefore, another part of my decolonization was to actively seek to heal relationships within

myself and with Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples. This entailed returning to my own community members (through personal conversations) to wrestle with what it means to be a member of a colonized (Indigenous) nation and Person of Color who must excel in academia (using the colonizer's methods); referring back to the literature on Indigenous ways of decolonization from Western ways of knowing; and engaging with DDBDDHH People of Color who have also struggled with their positions in academia. Returning to my own communities as well as engaging with Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples was important because of what Nandy (1989) described as the 'shared culture' of colonization. Colonized peoples "share a language of colonization, shared knowledge about their colonizers, and...share the same struggle for decolonization" (Smith, 1999, p. 45). Therefore, understanding the epistemic and political struggles of my own peoples better would also allow me to understand the struggle of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples better. This allowed me to become vulnerable to Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing community members and be willing to be guided by their communities' desires, even if those desires contradicted the methods of academia.

This dissertation was not easy for me to write. It was not easy for me to daily sit with my colonized past, read this literature, make sense of it and my place in it; make sense of what I lost and begin to fully understand how much I have lost. Yet, everything I bring to this work, all of who I am and all that I have not been allowed to be, grants me a place on the outside-inside. Wherein, I have been outside of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities all of my pre-adult life. Other professionals in the field make assumptions about my hearing threshold and assign me outsider status (I have disclosed my hearing loss to very few hearing people). My assumed outsider status has been a gateway for me to be "recruited" several

times to wear the colonizer's coat in the Deaf Education field. I have been able to observe, understand, and at times been unconsciously involved in the colonization of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. I have observed the war waged against bilingualism for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals and how strategic this assault has been. From the inside, I have lent my eyes, hands, and body to understanding the experiences of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals; the fight for community survival; the fight for identity development; the fight to overcome the effects of a schooling system that sought to remove some or all aspects of who you are. From both these perspectives as outsider and insider, I have been able to understand just how pervasive colonization is and how heavily it continues to impact the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities in the United States.

So my motivation for this work is to reveal colonization and provide as complete of a picture as I am able to at this point in my journey. I do not come to you as an "expert" on the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. I do this work as someone who is able to leverage my education privilege, my hearing privilege, and my "this work is important despite the consequences I will encounter" privilege. The motivation for this work is to also describe how schooling is a prime context for the colonization of all students, but specifically I focus on the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing student populations. In correcting a past wrong, I present the perspectives of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing adults who have had contact with and/or experiences of schooling in the United States.

"From the vantage point of the colonized, the term 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism" (Smith, 2012, p.1). As an individual born into colonized

communities, my lived experiences are often challenged by the research and academic communities. Living in communities that do not follow Western ways of living and knowing, has provided a perspective of scientific research that is vastly different from the majority of those who continue at the doctoral level in the academy.

Many researchers, academics, and project workers may see the benefits of their particular research projects as serving a greater good ‘for mankind’, or serving a specific emancipatory goal for an oppressed community [in this case the DDBDDHH communities]. But belief in the ideal that benefiting mankind is indeed a primary outcome of scientific research is as much a reflection of ideology as it is of academic training. It becomes so taken for granted that many researchers simply assume that they as individuals embody this ideal and are natural representatives of it when they work with other communities. (Smith, 2012, p. 2)

In my own journey of ‘talking back’ to power, it has become clear that part of the work of being an outsider (being a hearing person) in the field of Deaf Education is to own the responsibility of ‘researching back’ and ‘writing back’ (Smith, 2012, p. 8). There is a responsibility to challenge the institutional and structural systems in place that continue to oppress Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples.

Yet, like non-Indigenous scholars researching Indigenous peoples (Bishop, 2005), hearing scholars researching Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples tend to address the concerns of hearing researchers. Similarly, those who do not experience marginalization based on multiple identity markers, tend to address issues of oppression from an individual and/or single-issue lens. Their research agendas tend to be defined based on their own

(hearing or single-issue) cultural worldview(s). Being part of the minority of educators and researchers of color working in the Deaf Education field, brings its own challenges (i.e., having positions on teaching and research that are different from the dominant (White) majority; having my positions and knowledges devalued, ignored, and challenged; etc.). However, having the ability to obtain a PhD in this field, perpetuates the dominant (hearing and abled) forces in Deaf Education. Although many diverse Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people permit hearing researchers to enter their circles, this granting of access should not be taken for granted. The mere presence of a hearing person makes their spaces less *safe* and less *liberating* for them, at times. Therefore, all researchers must engage in perpetual self-reflection about how their participation in this field has the potential to cause harm. As a hearing researcher, it is my responsibility to remain accountable to Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities and maintain a research agenda and approaches that align with Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples' goals for liberation. At any given moment, I must be/am willing and prepared to step down from my positions (employment and research included) if it means Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals can become more active in, serve in leadership capacities, and/or contribute to the field of Deaf Education. I lay the contents of this work at the figurative and literal table of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals to critique and/or reject openly and freely. I acknowledge that my identity as a hearing person presents limitations to the perspectives and analyses I can bring to the discussion that is presented in this dissertation. As such, my perspectives should be scrutinized by Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities. As an act of solidarity and an act of practicing social justice in my work and research, I place this dissertation

at the mercy of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities and I thank you for allowing me the honor of working with and for your communities.

### **Being Real about My Struggle**

There are several factors that have made writing and approaching this dissertation difficult. In attempting to challenge institutional and structural systems, I have had to engage in politics and negotiate playing the game. For example, I have tried to be intentional about who I cite (citational politics); trying my best to forefront the work of (Black feminists), Deaf scholars (of color), social media activists, etc. While engaging in citational politics, I have also had to negotiate the fact that I am a minoritized doctoral candidate, who must gain University approval to do this work and ultimately obtain a degree. Playing the institution's game has meant that I have had to cite individuals, even though through this work I am attempting to build theory and lines of inquiry, for the simple fact that my epistemic stance is not yet valued in academia. I have also had to rely on research paradigms (i.e., qualitative research), despite the tensions between said paradigms and indigenous epistemologies.

Additionally, writing this dissertation has been difficult because of the tension between producing a dissertation with a traditional structure and what is presented in the following pages. Unlike many dissertations, what follows is a work that is highly theory-based. Though a theoretical framework is presented in Chapter Three, I build and weave theory throughout the entire body of this work. The heavy focus on theory is largely because colonization in the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities of color is largely under-theorized, particularly as it relates to intersectionality and schooling.

Lastly, writing this dissertation has been a struggle because although I have tried to move myself outside of the cycle of hearing researchers centering “deafness”, and into centering

intersectionality and structural systems that cause Deaf, DeafBlind, Deaf Disabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals to be doubly-/multiply- marginalized, there are some who may read this dissertation and say that I have failed to move beyond what other hearing researchers have done in the field. There may be some who argue that because of the amount of space I dedicate in this dissertation to describing the colonization of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing, that the “Deaf” experience has once again been centered at the expense of exploring how living at the intersections of multiple identities has had traumatic and devastating effects on these populations. I acknowledge that my attempts to ‘research back’ and ‘talk back’ to the typical hearing-dominated narratives may have fallen short.

However, I feel it is my duty, as a person living at the intersections of multiply-marginalized identities to exclaim, as others have done in the past, that our lives are negatively impacted on a daily basis, across so many contexts. Though some would try to co-opt intersectionality to explain their individual instances of discrimination, or so-called reverse racism, audism, sexism, ableism, etc.; intersectionality refers to the systemic and structural systems that allow entire communities to experience discrimination and oppression, across multiple identity markers (Crenshaw, 1989). These systems have resulted in the historical and current marginalization of groups of peoples who live at the intersections of many minoritized identities. So there cannot be a complete understanding of how colonization impacts the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations in the United States, without addressing how these identities intersect with being a Person of Color, LGBTQI, poor, gender non-conforming or non-binary, part of a non-English speaking family, etc. These are the experiences I desire to speak to because it is against individuals living at multiple intersections that the curriculum of colonization is potentially experienced more severely. This may be

particularly true in the schooling context where most professionals do not share the same intersectional experiences as the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing student population.

### **Guiding Question**

The purpose of this dissertation is to elucidate the larger issue of colonization which persists in the United States and its byproduct of attempting to assimilate and/or remediate all which is perceived to be “other” and divergent. In this dissertation, I also seek to explicitly connect how attempts to assimilate and eliminate difference have influenced the field of Deaf Education. Additionally, I examine cross disciplinary frameworks as potential solutions to be applied in the Deaf Education context. Specifically, I argue evidence supporting the need to apply decolonizing and intersectional approaches to research and teaching within the field. I use critical indigenous pedagogy and critical race theory to explore the question: How do Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people living at the intersections of additional marginalized/racialized identities describe the experiences they have had in formal schooling spaces? What is presented here is not only a descriptive history, but a call for all others to examine their own colonization and potential complicity in the colonization of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. Additionally, I hope this research journey will invite other teachers, academics, and researchers working in the field of Deaf Education to problematize their positionality and to act for the purpose of justice in the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities.

### **Overview of Chapters**

In this chapter, I explored my personal and professional journey of coming to terms with colonization and kyriarchy. Using critical personal narrative (Decuir-Gunby & Walker-DeVose,

2013), I described what brought me to this work, why the question guiding this research are important to me, and the role I play in Deaf Education as a teacher and researcher. This section described how my personal grappling with colonization has manifested in my approach to this research project. The subsequent parts of this dissertation are organized into eight chapters. In Chapter Two I introduce what I call “the curriculum of colonization.” I define the curriculum of colonization and provide a partial “genealogy” connecting imperialism, colonization, kyriocentrism, and the construction of dis/ability. I use the field of Deaf Education as a case study to demonstrate the pervasiveness of the curriculum of colonization. In Chapter Three, I examine critical indigenous pedagogy and critical race theory as two frameworks that address schooling and students marginalized due to their race, ethnicity, and/or language use, among other forms of marginalization. Discussions in this chapter also detail what these frameworks have to offer to the Deaf Education context and what is lacking in order to make a seamless application to the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. I caution that Chapters Two and Three form a major part of this dissertation and much space has been devoted to these chapters. This is due to the lack of in-depth exploration of colonization in the schooling of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. I felt it was important to explicate the systemic, societal, and individual level impact of colonization which required developing a theory—the curriculum of colonization—and allowing this theory to provide a frame of reference from which this research inquiry is grounded. The lack of exploration of colonization in the schooling of this population also required developing a methodology to researching this topic in a way that allowed for developing questions, collecting and analyzing data, and synthesizing and presenting that data in a way that

sought to honor the humanity of those impacted by colonization. This praxis methodology is the decolonizing-intersectionality framework.

The decolonizing-intersectionality framework is described in Chapter Four as the methodology for this study. This chapter details how I extended critical race theory and critical indigenous pedagogy beyond theoretical frameworks and how they were employed as research tools to collect information on and analyze the educational experiences of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals (who were both currently matriculated in the United States schooling system as adults or who experienced K-12 and/or higher education schooling in the United States). Chapters Five, Six, and Seven present the results of the interviews collected from Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing contributors to this study. The results are presented in the form of composite personal narratives, in keeping with both critical race theory's and critical indigenous pedagogy's use of counterstorytelling. Finally, Chapter Eight concludes the dissertation with a synopsis of the previous chapters, a review of the curriculum of colonization, a discussion of the implications of this inquiry, and future directions for this work in the field of Deaf Education.

## CHAPTER TWO: DEMYSTIFYING THE CURRICULUM OF COLONIZATION

“[The colonizer] will make peace [with the colonized] by strengthening its domination over [the colonized].”

—Gilly (1967, p. 29)

In this chapter, I seek to address what I call the “curriculum of colonization.” Though the curriculum of colonization impacts all aspects of Western-based life including schooling and impacts all populations of students, I explore its specific employment on the construction of dis/ability in the United States. This chapter expands on the curriculum of colonization at all levels depicted in *Figure 2*. Specifically, I address imperialism; colonization and four of the ways that colonization masks and sustains itself; kyriocentrism; and the five faces of oppression. All of these facets of the curriculum of colonization are taken up in the context of dis/ability.

The curriculum of colonization refers to the ways in which colonialism has instituted and secured its position in all fabrics of Western-based life, including schooling in the United States, while simultaneously remaining elusive to the vast majority. Most laypeople equate knowledge with content curriculum in schools and believe that curriculum is neutral. However, like teaching pedagogy, curriculum is a site of cultural politics (Giroux, 1992). Giroux places curriculum into the context of theory of interest and theory of experience (McLaren, 2003). Theory of interest understands curriculum to reflect the interests of the social relations that surround it; these interests are affirmed or discarded by dominant society members. Theory of experience understands curriculum as historically situated and constructed narratives. The purpose of these constructions are to organize students’ experiences in the context of social forms. These social forms include, but are not limited to: language use, valued and devalued knowledge, and representations of the past and present. Giroux’s (1992) framing is used to define the curriculum

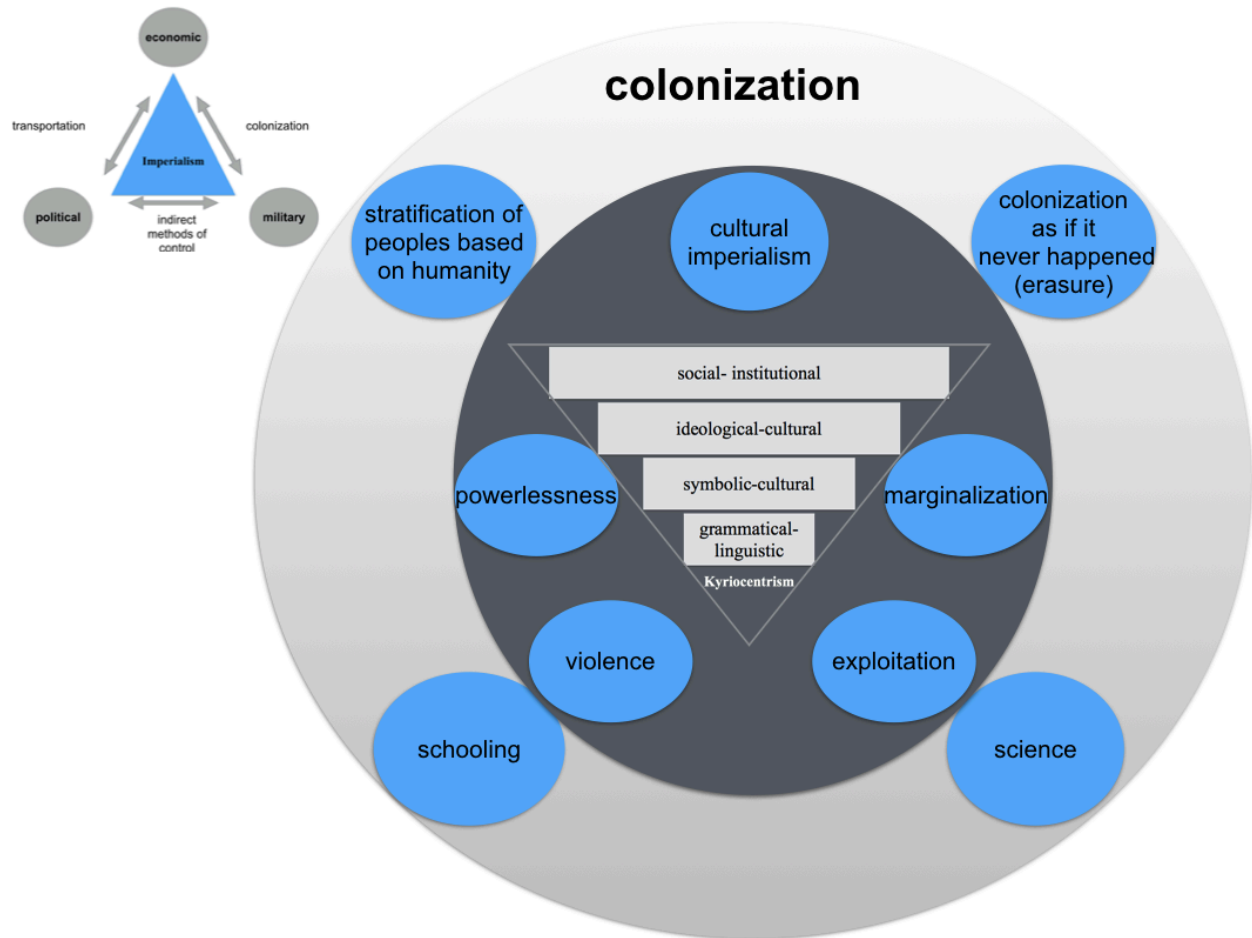


*Figure 3. The Curriculum of Colonization*

[image description: background smaller image in the upper left corner has a blue shaded triangle in the center with word “imperialism” in bold black text. There are three grey arrows, one on each side of the triangle. The top point on triangle has a grey circle with black bold text that reads “economic”; the right bottom point of triangle has a grey circle with black bold text that reads “military”; and left bottom point of triangle has a grey circle with black bold text that reads “political.” On the three sides of triangle are black not bolded text that reads “transportation” (left side), “indirect methods of control” (bottom of triangle), and “colonization” (right side). Larger foreground image at center of the figure has a large white circle with black bold text “colonization” at the top-center of the circle. Four blue circles placed around the outer rim of the circle read “stratification of peoples based on humanity” (top left), “colonization as if it never happened (erasure)” (top right), “schooling” (bottom left), and “science” (bottom right). At the center of the four blue circles is a large dark grey circle with five blue circles placed around the outer rim of the circle that read “cultural imperialism” (top center), “powerlessness” (left midway down), “marginalization” (right midway down), “violence” (bottom left), and “exploitation” (bottom right). At the center of the five blue circles is an inverted triangle with grey outline. Inside triangle at the bottom is the word “kyriocentrism” in white text. There are 4 rectangles that stack above “kyriocentrism” with each rectangle increasing in length to fill the triangle. Rectangles are shaded grey with black text that reads from bottom to top: “grammatical-linguistic”, “symbolic-cultural”, “ideological-cultural”, and “social-institutional.”]

described in this dissertation: the curriculum of colonization.

Crump (2014) discussed how identities can be imposed, assumed, and negotiated. The identity spectrum is an important concept to consider here as the curriculum of colonization has used the construction of disability to impose, assume, and force individuals to negotiate the dis/abled identity within the schooling context. The curriculum of colonization has been particularly effective in the exclusion and marginalization of those whose bodies and/or minds do not conform to normative ideologies. In any quest for liberation and educational freedom, it is imperative to start with society's most marginalized peoples; regardless of whether they are marginalized due to imposed, assumed, or negotiated identities. In the United States, this happens to be the dis/abled population, particularly those who are pushed to the margins due to not being White, upper class, heterosexual, and male. The crucial role of dis/ability is evident in the enduring and relentless efforts to eradicate this "difference" throughout the colonization of the United States. Therefore, we must analyze the role of colonization in establishing how we currently conceptualize and approach schooling and the implications for the Dis/abled and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities in the United States. What follows is an exploration of the curriculum of colonization at the levels depicted in *Figure 2*.

I conceptualize the curriculum of colonization as a multi-level and multi-faceted process that operates like a well-oiled machine that is self-sustaining at the macro- (system) and micro- (individual) levels. Though, the schooling institution is the focus of this discussion, understanding the comprehensiveness of the curriculum of colonization will facilitate in understanding how schools are implicated in this system. Historically, colonization has been a primary tool of imperialism, along with transportation and indirect methods of control. However, as colonization has morphed it has become more reflective of kyriarchy in its modern forms;

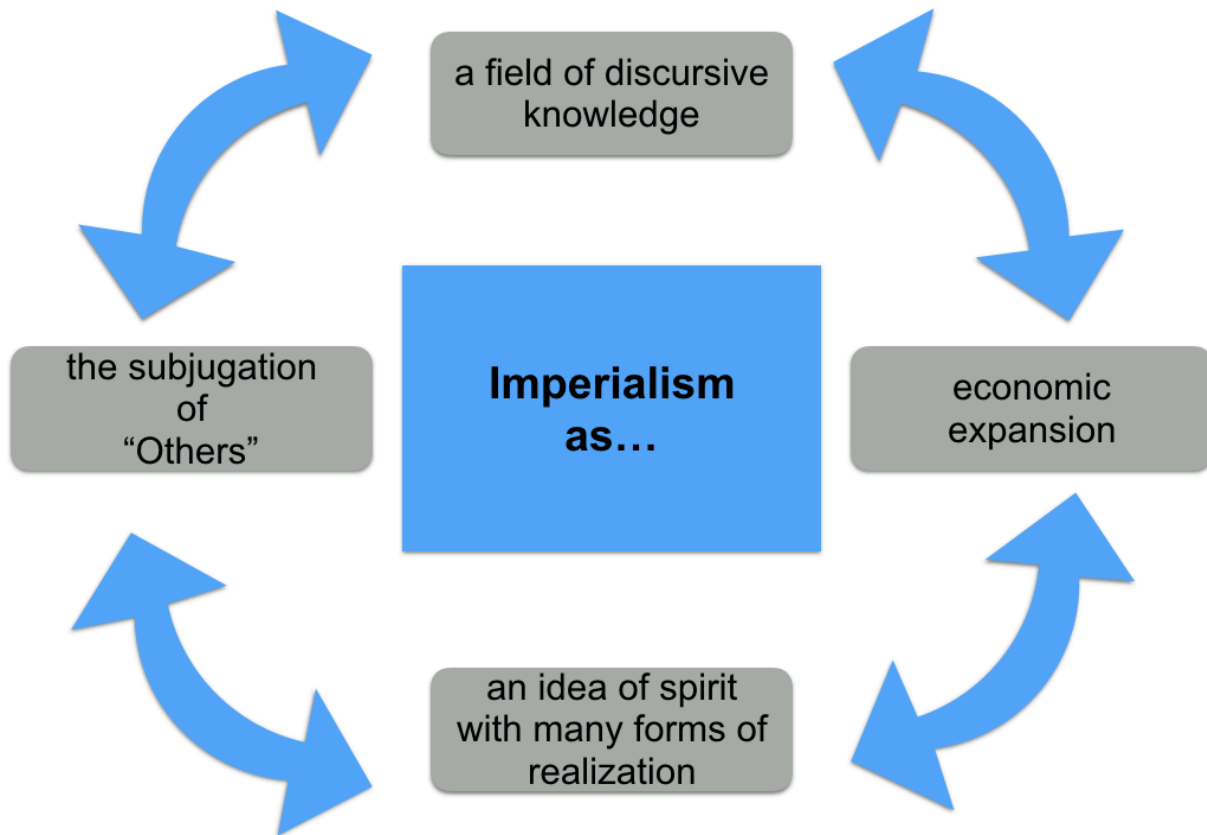


*Figure 4. Layers of Analysis of Imperialism*

[image description: blue square at the center of the figure has bold black text that reads "imperialism as..." Four grey boxes that alternate with four blue arrows form a circle around the blue box. Each box contains black not bolded text that reads: "a field of discursive knowledge" (top), "economic expansion" (right), "an idea of spirit with many forms of realization" (bottom), and "the subjugation of 'others'" (left).]

specifically, the four operational levels of kyriocentrism. Schooling exists within this curriculum, serving as one tool of maintaining and expanding the reach of colonization. The schooling context is also unique in that its employment spans many levels of the curriculum of colonization.

### **Imperialism**

We need to learn again how five centuries of studying, classifying, and ordering humanity within an imperial context gave rise to peculiar and powerful ideas of race, culture, and nation that were, in effect, conceptual instruments that the West used both to divide up and to educate the world (Willinsky, 1998, p. 3).

The term *imperialism* was initially used by historians to chronicle the extending of Western power, namely Europe, and its economic expansion which began in the 15th century. Through imperialism, Europeans were able to re-imagine themselves and the possibilities of their life with the improved and widespread reach of capitalism. “This imagination was realized through the promotion of science, economic expansion and political practice” (Smith, 2012, p. 23). The expansion and promotion of European capitalism was not as neutral as the above definition implies. The expansion entailed “discovery”, conquest, exploitation, distribution and appropriation (Smith, 2012). Removing the cloak of neutrality, *Figure 3* shows four ways to analyze imperialism.

The first layer of analysis is imperialism as economic expansion. Some historians argue that the primary motivation behind European imperialism was the attempt to rescue capitalism during the fall of the European markets. Therefore, “imperialism was the system of control which secured the market and capital investments” by expanding into other territories; the United

States was but one of those territories (Smith, 2012, p. 22). The second layer of analysis is imperialism as the subjugation of “Others.” This layer of analysis is necessary because economic motives alone cannot be the sole explanation for the subordination and devastation enacted upon nations of peoples across the globe, including the Americas. This is to say: the treatment of the peoples from various nations, and the manner with which subjugation and genocide were carried out upon those peoples, was beyond what was necessary for economic gain. The third layer of analysis is imperialism as an idea of spirit with many forms of realization. Smith (2012) quotes MacKenzie’s definition of imperialism as ‘more than a set of economic, political and military phenomena. It is also a complex ideology which had widespread cultural, intellectual and technical expressions’ (p. 23). This layer demonstrates that imperialism had influences beyond the economy and its effects extended beyond the treatment of the individuals who were encountered by the European colonizers. The effects of imperialism reached into all aspects of life for both the colonizers and those they colonized. As Sartre (1969) states, “[v]iolence in the colonies seeks to dehumanize [the colonized]” (p. 15).

The fourth analysis is imperialism as a field of discursive knowledge. This layer of analysis comes from individuals who are from colonized societies or have interests in understanding imperialism from local contexts (Smith, 2012). Some call this analysis the ‘post-colonial discourse’ wherein ‘writing back’ and ‘writing from the margins’ is done for the purpose of recovering and developing a sense of “authentic humanity” (Smith, 2012, p. 24). However, this layer seeks to demonstrate and reinforce that the effects of imperialism continue despite many nations having gained their political independence. Therefore, there is no ‘post’ in the ‘colonial discourse’ so long as we continue to live out the consequences of the past imperial and

colonial encounters. These four layers of analyses create a more comprehensive understanding of the breadth and scope of imperialism.

### **Colonization**

Though colonization and imperialism are interconnected, colonization is but one of the mechanisms of imperialism. Colonization constitutes all methods including ideologies, behaviors, institutions, policies and economies that are employed to dehumanize, subordinate, and/or exploit peoples, lands, and resources (Waziyatawin & Yellow Bird, 2005; Sartre, 1969; Fanon, 1969). White European colonizers conceived schooling as a tool of colonization with the expressed purpose of “civilizing” and “Christianizing” Indigenous and native peoples both in the United States and abroad (Grande, 2008). There is an inherent paternalism within this ideal of civilizing a people which holds as its premise that the “other” is defective and inferior by nature. Apart from paternalism, colonization also provided a means of gaining access to a nation’s or a people’s resources, which in turn supported imperialism. Therefore, the relationship of cultural and physical domination between the colonizers and the colonized peoples often coexisted with material exploitation– “the forced extraction of labor and natural resources in the interest of capital gains” (Grande, 2008, p. 235). Two points of emphasis are worth making here: 1) the exploitation of lands and resources became “justified” for capitalist ends and 2) colonization is not just limited to land and resources, it also extends to knowledge.

Examining dis/ability and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing experiences through the lens of imperialism and colonization, allows for greater understanding of how our schooling system was conceived in relation to capitalism, and simultaneously as a tool to sustain capitalism. Though colonization was initially used to refer to the experiences of Indigenous Peoples and nations on the African continent, as more communities engage with

(de)colonization work, we now know that the effects of colonization are far-reaching. I argue that the construction of dis/ability and the treatment of Dis/abled persons, a group that the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing population has been constructed under, should also be included when analyzing the effects on colonization. With this in mind, a few points of emphasis are offered: 1) one mechanism of colonization which has sustained its influence is by presenting itself as colonization that never happened; 2) colonization extends to knowledge and constructions of self, in addition to land/resources; and 3) the exploitation of lands/resources became “justified” for capitalist ends, therefore, the subjugation, attempted erasure, and forced assimilation of dis/abled peoples’ have also been justified for capitalist ends.

### **Humanity, Who Decides?**

Colonization employs different mechanisms in order to sustain itself. These mechanisms have repercussions for dis/ability and include, but are not limited to: 1) assignment and evacuation from humanity; 2) schooling and science; 3) stratification of peoples in capitalist societies; and 4) erasure of colonial processes. Prior to the institution of formal schooling, the link between colonization and perceptions of humanity were already established. The way in which humanity was applied, dictated in what ways individuals and groups of people were colonized. In cases when they did not experience literal genocide, and instead were made to be “civilized”, their “proximity to whiteness [and ableness] became a vehicle for their onto-epistemic genocide by forcing them to “disappear into whiteness [and ableness]” (Smith, 2014). The same can be true of any identity markers that have been pushed outside of the normative standard; that is any identity that is not upper class, White, heterosexual, male, abled, and Christian. The further and more multiply marginalized an individual, the more violent the genocide of one’s self to become this normative standard.

Frantz Fanon was one of the earliest scholars of color to connect the experience of Black peoples, a racialized group, to imperialism and colonization around the globe. Though his work was heavily focused on Algeria, he made connections to happenings in Latin America, Asia, and other countries on the African continent, demonstrating the scope of the colonialist agenda. Fanon's work also dived into the psychological effects of colonialism and the repercussions for racial relations within the context of colonization which is important for understanding how (de)humanization was meted out. One such effect was negrophobia (Fanon, 1952) which was the foundation for Gordon's (1997) framing of "anti-black." Anti-black(ness) as defined by Gordon (1997) is an historical context spanning from the beginnings of imperialism and colonialism to the present and possibly beyond. Anti-blackness is the "realm of negativity...encompassing of bodies (black people), social spaces (black neighborhoods), and geo-political regions (Africa and the diaspora)" (Woods, 2013, p. 126). Analyzing from the lens of anti-blackness, humanity was gauged by one's relation to whiteness. Whiteness was judged to be human and its negation—blackness— as "human nothingness" (Woods, 2013, p. 126).

In the same way, dis/ability has been framed through colonization. Dis/ability is also the onto-epistemic condition of negation. The human race is "normatively [abled], [disabled] human beings...a subspecies of humanity are not [abled]" (Woods, 2013, p. 126). Moving beyond conscious, malicious intent, anti-blackness includes the debasement of humanity, indifference to suffering, and the denial of rights to exist (Jeffries, 2014); while simultaneously, privileging dominant group experiences at the expense of those whose humanity has been denied. This has been the case of dis/abled individuals within the United States. The construction of all social institutions in the United States has privileged normative experiences, to the extent that laws and policies, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (The ADA National Network, nd), have

been enacted in attempts to rectify the disenfranchisement of dis/abled individuals. The rootedness of our social constructions of dis/ability in colonization evidences that dis/abled individuals have been classified as having less or no humanity. It is important to note that though dis/abled individuals have been denied humanity in the way that anti-blackness denies humanity to People of Color, dis/abled individuals of color will experience rejection from humanity doubly (and multiply, depending on their other identities) on the basis of their race and dis/ability.

### **Schooling, Science, and Humanity**

Meanwhile, schooling and science have been the disguised hands of colonization. Schooling was one of the primary means of imperialism and colonization with the purpose of expanding the empire's ideologies and economic vision. Said (1991) described his experience with colonial schooling in Egypt as:

the tremendous spiritual wound felt by many of us because of the sustained presence in our midst of domineering foreigners who taught us to respect distant norms and values more than our own. Our culture was felt to be of a lower grade, perhaps even congenitally inferior and something of which to be ashamed. (pp. 8-9)

Said's words also characterize present-day schooling in the United States for dis/abled students. His description of his experience also echoes the concept of having humanity removed through schooling.

**Schooling and colonial consciousness.** Colonialism shapes schooling on every level from "research to public policy to textbooks and classrooms" (Grande, 2008, p. 234). Grande (2004) described the link between colonial consciousness and schooling, which has led to several ramifications, including: the advancement of independence, achievement through competition,

and detachment from sources of local and personal knowledge. Independence is the prioritizing and striving for self-reliance. This works contrary to the Disability Justice model of interdependence. According to Grande (2004), independence results in classroom relationships that are impersonal and formal, the valuing of individualism, and the perception of cooperation as a hindrance to personal achievement.

Related to achievement, students are aware that they are in competition with one another. Disabled students are in fact, aware and constantly told they are being compared to the normative (abled) standard. As a result, success (academic achievement) and individual worth are gauged by abstract (normative) standards of excellence (e.g., standardized testing scores, individual grades on assignments, etc.). The third consequence of colonial consciousness in schooling is detachment from local and personal sources of knowledge. This detachment is characteristic of Western ideologies and a telling consequence from the relationship between schooling and science. Knowledge promoted in schools are of these ideologies and those who buy in to the tenets of this worldview benefit the most. The knowledge that children bring to school from within themselves or from their worlds are not accepted as valid. For this reason, perspectives from the lived experiences of disabled individuals are rarely accepted as objective and equal in authority to objective and scientific logic.

**Schooling, science and capitalism.** Grande (2004) also argued that a schooling system based on colonialism and imperialism has resulted in the establishment of science as the intellectual authority. Within the United States, the effects of capitalism—particularly in regards to science—are in the conceptualization of change and progress (as in “improvement” and “advancement”); which are measured by material gain (e.g., level of schooling attained, social status, income). The constructed nature of dis/ability and its connection to capitalism and

progress can be explicated by how “disability” has shifted over time based on how the construction benefited the wealthy, and by the eugenics movement.

The eugenics movement was grounded in the work of Sir Francis Galton—who originally coined the term “eugenics” (Galton, 1883)—and his cousin Charles Darwin—the father of Darwinism and evolutionary theory. Gould argued that the “essence of Darwinism lies in a claim that natural selection is the primary directing force of evolution, in that it creates fitter phenotypes by differentially preserving...the best adapted organisms...” (p. 381). Darwinism and other scientific theories were used to provide evidence of the inferiority of specific types of people; specifically, the poor, those with dis/abilities, LGBTQI, and people of color. In this way, Darwinian biology gained traction and spread as Darwinian sociology (Edwards, 2007) to support arguments for why the human race would benefit from eradicating these individuals.

Sheldon (1999) demonstrated that eugenic ideologies were not only championed in scientific communities, but extended throughout schooling; from policy to the classroom practice level. He wrote that the relationship of eugenics to United States schooling is “surprising for its breadth and depth of engagement, and...for the lack of recognition and understanding that we have for it...eugenicists saw the public schools as one important venue for the popularization and dissemination of eugenic policies” (Sheldon, 1999, p. xiv, xiii). In a targeted effort, eugenicists focused on popularizing eugenics in both public schooling and teacher training. Policies implemented on the national level for teacher education programs in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, provide further evidence of the effort and commitment to design schooling and a society that systemically and efficiently weeded out forms of social undesirability, including dis/ability (Sheldon, 1999). Eugenic organizations and societies sought to install its ideologies throughout the school curriculum, in elementary through high school settings, as well as through “special

courses in colleges and universities” (Evans, 1931, p. x). Prominent educational leaders like Edward Thorndike, Leta Stetter Hollingworth, and Franklin Bobbitt are celebrated even today for their leadership roles in educational psychology, gifted education, and curriculum studies, respectively; however, few people can recognize and acknowledge that these leaders were openly strong supporters of eugenics and used their positions in the field of education to secure eugenic ideologies at all levels of schooling (Sheldon, 1999).

Today, remnants of the eugenic movement are felt at the larger societal level with the lives that were lost through its practices and in the continuous fight for policies that recognize dis/abled individuals as full citizens who deserve equal access to society. The impacts are also resounding on the local educational level as schooling is the main grounds for habituating students to “specific forms of social organization and behavioral patterns” (Grande, 2004, p. 70). A major implication of this habituation is that dis/abled students are constantly judged by their proximity to ableness and their ability to “disappear into ableness”; whether through medical/scientific intervention or through schooling.

### **Humanity as Justification for Stratification**

The stratification of groups of people based on the concept of humanity reifies two important concepts. First, in order for capitalism to work effectively, there must be a dominant group and a subordinate group(s). Typically, the dominant or ruling group(s), has financial and/or material advantage over the subordinated group(s). Eugenicists commonly cited an individual’s lack of social mobility, financial, and/or material disadvantage as proof that they were unfit for society. Hollingworth (1926) even stated that efforts to provide access to “...money, education, surgery, medication and faith” were futile in uplifting the weakest (those with less humanity) in our society to “the desired level of behavior” (p. vii). Second, in order for

both the dominant and subordinated groups to subscribe to a system of stratification, they must subscribe to the belief that they deserve to be in those positions. The justification for this belief system is based on the concept of humanity—some groups of people are not human, some are partially human, and others are fully human. Schools are the sites of indoctrinating members of society into the stratified humanity belief system (Coleman-King, 2014), wherein humanity does not apply to people who do not fit the normative standard, including dis/abled peoples (of color).

### **The Colonialism that Never Happened**

An additional apparatus of colonization that reifies its power is framing itself as if it never happened. Fanon (1963) stated that “colonialism is not satisfied with merely holding a people in its grip . . . but by a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of an oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it” (p. 170). This distortion of the past has permitted very few to use colonization to capture the experience of different minoritized and racialized groups, including dis/abled individuals. “Colonialism shuts its eyes [and the eyes of others] to the real facts of the problem” (Fanon, 1967, p. 31). This erasing of the construction of dis/ability through colonization has resulted in the dehumanization of dis/abled peoples and the framing of the Disability Movement as purely fighting against abled people and the “lingering” effects of the eugenic movement; instead of as an anti-colonial struggle.

We must recognize how efficiently the mechanisms of colonization work together. In the 1900s, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Institute provided substantial financial support to the eugenic movement (Black, 2003), directly implicating capitalism and the United States government. Eugenics was also considered a feasible (and convenient) response to policies of immigration (Sheldon, 1999); thereby, supporting anti-blackness by restricting the movements of peoples that did not benefit the “superior race.” The classification of students

based on ability, which persists today, was grounded in eugenics and promoted by the work of Hollingworth (1924, 1926). Hollingworth's writings also largely influenced the development of mental measurements, which along with standardized testing, are still used today to support the classification of students based on ability. Yet, the erasure of educational leaders' roles in the promotion and cementing of eugenics in the schooling system, coupled with the erasure of colonial processes in establishing said system, and how the system in its current form benefits capitalism, make it unimaginable to accurately address the multi-layered issue of the curriculum of colonization in the United States.

### **Kyriocentrism and the Five Faces of Oppression**

Next, I explore the function of kyriocentrism in the curriculum of colonization. Though these examinations of the different parts within the curriculum of colonization have been in isolation, it is essential to reinforce that all the functions—imperialism, colonization, kyriocentrism—work simultaneously and work to sustain the other functions within this curriculum. As previously stated and as shown in *Figure 5*, kyriocentrism operates on four levels. Below, each level is explored as well as how it manifests with Young's (1992) five faces of oppression—violence, marginalization, exploitation, powerlessness, and cultural imperialism. Young's conceptualization of oppression delineated by the aforementioned five faces, allows for an understanding of oppression that moves beyond the limited definition that most people hold—oppression as simply overt and intentional acts by an individual or group of individuals to restrict the liberties of another person or group of people. Young's five faces of oppression allows for understanding of how oppression works within and throughout the curriculum of colonization; oppression operates with(in) kyriocentrism.

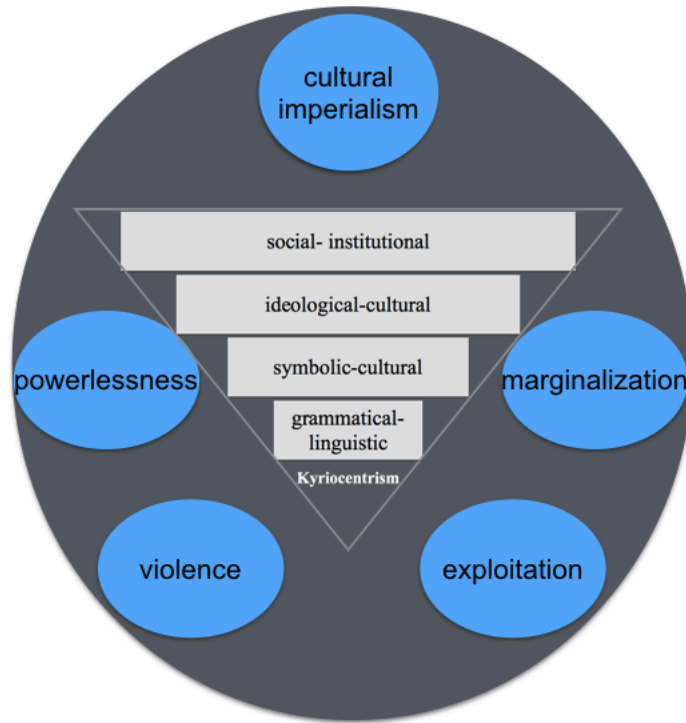


*Figure 5. Kyriocentrism and the Five Faces of Oppression*

[image description: large dark grey circle with five blue circles placed around the outer rim of the circle that read “cultural imperialism” (top center), “powerlessness” (left midway down), “marginalization” (right midway down), “violence” (bottom left), and “exploitation” (bottom right). At the center of the five blue circles is an inverted triangle with grey outline. Inside triangle at the bottom is the word “kyriocentrism” in white text. There are 4 rectangles that stack above “kyriocentrism” with each rectangle increasing in length to fill the triangle. Rectangles are shaded grey with black text that reads from bottom to top: “grammatical-linguistic”, “symbolic-cultural”, “ideological-cultural”, and “social-institutional.”]

## **Kyriocentrism at the Social-Institutional Level**

This level of kyriocentrism functions to maintain White elite men as first class citizens, while also maintaining the second class citizenship of those who do not meet the elite standard—upper class, abled, heterosexual, White, Christian, male. This stratification of people is employed through economic and legal-political means, particularly through socialization, schooling, and internalization (Fiorenza, 2001). At the social-institutional level, cultural imperialism is inherent by defining White elite, abled, heterosexual, men as the established universal norm by which all others are judged against. In this sense, the United States is painted as monocultural, erasing the various other cultural groups and within-group differences that are exhibited within those cultural groups. Claude Denis (1997) coined “whitestream” to describe the fundamental and structural basing of United States society on the Anglo-European experience, despite being a predominantly non-White country. As a result, Peoples of Color, and especially those who cannot be read as or mistaken to be White, are forced to live in “double consciousness”; a term coined by W. E. B. Du Bois (1909), which captures the internal conflict of marginalized individuals experiencing themselves from the perspective of the dominant society members while also attempting to measure up to the expectations of those members.

Yet, even while examining kyriocentrism at the social-institutional level, and cultural imperialism at play within this level, we can also analyze how the curriculum of colonization is employed to limit and discredit those who attempt to address it. For example, Du Bois’ work on double consciousness is typically only limited to race but his work was more comprehensive than race; he also dealt with colonialism (Babaka, 2013). The limiting of Du Bois’ work to race is an example of anti-blackness at play and a function of colonialism (erasure). Double consciousness applies to all individuals “constructed outside the dominant paradigm” (Ladson-Billings &

Donnor, 2008, p. 64). Du Bois' liminality has become a barrier to the application of double consciousness to the experiences of Dis/abled and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples within a colonized United States. Cultural imperialism is also fundamentally and structurally based on (White) hearingness and sightedness in the United States. As a result, being "hearing" (without hearing loss), sighted (dependent on sightedness), and abled (having body/mind that functions according to normative physical and neurotypical ways) is the standard by which persons categorized as dis/abled are measured against. In this way, dis/abled people also live in their own "double consciousness", not including the other multiple identities they can embody (e.g., Person of Color, LGBTQI, etc.).

There is no mistaking that existing in a state of double consciousness is a type of violence and reflects powerlessness, two other faces of oppression defined by Young (1992). Violence, though it includes physical harm, also refers to the fear of systemic and legitimized forms of harm. At the social-institutional level of kyriocentrism, violence includes economic and legal-political practices that require citizens to strive to achieve the White, male, abled, upper class standard. Galtung (1969) considered institutional classism, sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, nationalism, among others (e.g., ableism), to be part of systemic and legitimized forms of violence because they increased suffering (i.e. trauma, disability, and death) for those considered inferior— those considered to have less humanity— while impacting those in dominant positions considerably less. These forms of violence are directly related to powerlessness— the structure of social division, particularly social status, as well as the denial of freedom to exercise autonomy and creativity. Within a capitalist society that relies on social division to function, there must be individuals who dominate and those who are subordinated (Lorde, 1997; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). The subordinated group, particularly multiply-marginalized peoples, are

typically denied autonomy and humanity because the social-institutional level of kyriocentrism legitimizes various forms of oppression to operate against them, while socializing the dominant and multiply-marginalized groups into accepting these forms of oppression as normal and necessary for society to function.

### **Kyriocentrism at the Ideological-Cultural and Symbolic-Cultural Levels**

Kyriocentrism at the ideological-cultural level serves to make gender, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, and colonial prejudice appear as normal; and hides the fact that differences based on these, and other identity markers are socially constructed (Fiorenza, 2001). These differences are constructed within the dominant-subordinate relationship. This construction again results in violence and powerlessness. On the symbolic-cultural level, these identity differences and colonial relations are naturalized as essential differences (Fiorenza, 2001). In other words, we are born to these dominant and subordinate binaries of White-People of Color, men- women and non-binary persons, heterosexual-sexual fluidity, rich-poor, abled-disabled, etc; and the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is as it should be. Through schooling and socialization those who are uplifted in dominant positions and those who are subordinated internalize these differences.

Marginalization— material deprivation experienced by under class people and their exclusion from full/equal participation in society, which includes financial or material dependency on dominant group(s)— and exploitation— the transfer of underclass labor to benefit dominant group(s) and reproduce class divisions and inequalities—are a natural result of the ideological-cultural and symbolic-cultural levels of kyriocentrism (Young, 1992). Within the curriculum of colonization, marginalization of dis/abled individuals is exemplified by United States society's refusal to provide consistent, full access to dis/abled individuals. This denial of

access includes, but is not limited to: building designs and environments that do not accommodate dis/abled persons; information that is provided in formats that cannot be consumed by individuals with different hearing thresholds, visual acuity, and/or different neurological processes; and creation of technologies that exclude dis/abled persons from being able to engage like other members of society. This often results in financial and/or material ceilings (e.g., limits on level of schooling attained, social status, and income) for dis/abled individuals and in dependency on abled individuals to provide the access that is denied to dis/abled individuals daily. Within this marginalization, kyriocentrism at the ideological-cultural and symbolic-cultural levels reinforces that not having access to spaces, places, and information is *because* of the person's dis/ability and a natural result of the person's defect. Exploitation of dis/abled persons is evident throughout the fight for civil rights in the United States. Many of the civil rights movements in this country have been on the figurative and literal backbone of Disabled individuals, including Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. The results of such movements have resulted in the improvement of civil liberties for People of Color and in the institution of healthcare provisions into policy, which benefits all citizens in this country. Meanwhile, with the threat to current healthcare mandates targeting provisions for dis/abled individuals and women, dominant society members (abled, men) choose not to act since they are not impacted by these threats. Again, the erasure of the role of dis/abled people in the advancement of rights for all society members in tandem with the ideological-cultural and symbolic-cultural levels of kyriocentrism, reinforce the idea that dis/ability negates full participation in and rights to United States society.

## **Kyriocentrism at the Grammatical-Linguistic Level**

At the grammatical-linguistic level, kyriocentrism is concerned with both uppercase ‘D’ and lowercase ‘d’ discourses (Gee, 2005). Specifically, this level of kyriocentrism relates to how language use marginalizes upper class White women and lower class White men, and doubly/multiply marginalizes all others who do not fit the upper class White male standard (Fiorenza, 2001). This function of kyriocentrism is indicative clearly in what *is* and is not said. For example, all constructions outside of the dominant paradigm must be stated. This triggers a subconscious indication both of the “difference” and of its inferior position to the dominant counterpart. For example, most heterosexual people do not refer to their sexual orientation, while all other orientations must be stated. Likewise, most abled people do not refer to themselves as abled, yet dis/abled people are constantly signaled.

On the other hand, the language we choose to use also matters. In United States English, those who exist outside of the dominant paradigm who used endlessly as representative language for negative connotations. For example, Black people are used to describe negative characteristics with language such as “black sheep”, “black list”, and “black market.” Dis/abled people are used with language such as “blind to the truth”, “fall on deaf ears”, and “stupid.” Mentally ill people are characterized by language such as “crazy”, “bipolar”, and “insane.” Negative connotations are used to describe difference through paternalistic, colonizer frame of reference (Lane, 1992). The way language is used signals how United States society positions these groups of people and reifies the inferior social position. This is another form of legitimized and systemic violence that operates within kyriocentrism.

### **Dual Impact on the Colonized and the Colonizer**

Ladson-Billings and Donnor (2008) point out that discourses tend to be dichotomized—“us” and “them”, colonizer and colonized, etc. Though the discussion thus far has been presented as a dichotomy, the curriculum of colonization impacts everyone that lives in the United States society. Those who are devalued as not being fully human are not the only victims in colonialism; as the colonizers acted upon the colonized, they too lost their own humanity (Freire, 1970). This applies to all forms of colonization and at all levels of colonization; whether colonization of land, of knowledge, resources, or of persons; whether the colonization is carried out through physical force, coercion, or indoctrination. Fanon’s (1967) argument also advanced the idea that there is both a dual and interactional impact of colonization on the colonizer and the colonized and cautioned that this is a reason why imperialism and colonization should not be reduced to simply a colonized/colonizer binary. Both are the colonized and colonizer are mutual constructions within the curriculum of colonization. Reducing the discourse to a colonized/colonizer binary ignores the effects of colonization within each group as well as the effects of colonization across the two groups. Specifically, reducing the discourse to an “us” and “them” dichotomy ignores the loss of humanity experienced by all parties involved because taking the humanity of someone else means to evacuate your own humanity in the process (Fanon, 1967; Freire, 1970). Though the effects of the curriculum of colonization are experienced differently between the colonized and the colonizer, the effects persist even today. In the following sections of this chapter, the United States hearing and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations are examined in relation to the curriculum of colonization in order to further explicate how the curriculum of colonization has impacted all parties in the context of schooling.

## **Framing the Colonization of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing**

I am not the first to discuss colonization and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations. Lane's (1992) groundbreaking book *Mask of Benevolence: Disabling the Deaf Community* and Wrigley's (1996) *The Politics of Deafness* both explored colonization and the \*deaf\* in ways that had not been published previously in mainstream texts. Ladd's (2007) book chapter discussed colonization of the \*Deaf\* in the United Kingdom. However, all of these texts were written from the Eurocentric male perspective of two White, hearing, males from the United States and one British Deaf male. Interestingly, for Lane and Wrigley, it took going to the African continent and to Thailand respectively, to identify colonialism. As a result, Lane wrote from a perspective that essentialized the United States Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations as a singular \*Deaf\* community. Lane's discussion failed to address the diversity within the \*Deaf\* communities. This diversity includes race, gender identity, ability, sexual orientation, home language use, class, and more. Each Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individual will experience colonization differently based on any or a combination of the aforementioned identity markers. Therefore, describing colonization as a dichotomy of hearing-\*d/Deaf\*, or discussing colonization of the \*d/Deaf\* in *comparison* with that which happens on the African continent, presents a barrier to addressing the breadth and depth of colonization that Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities face. Wrigley's (1996) discussion of colonialism and the \*d/Deaf\* expanded on colonialism in ways that were unaddressed in Lane's (1992) work by discussing other communities within the \*Deaf\* community such as the marginalized Hard of Hearing community and the Black Deaf population. Drawing on the works of bell hooks, Foucault, and Freire, Wrigley (1996) without a doubt advanced the discussion of colonialism and the \*d/Deaf\* by touching on the exclusion of

“peripheral members” from the \*Deaf\* community (e.g., Hard of Hearing persons, individuals who were born hearing but became deaf, etc.), class relations, and \*Deaf\* identity. However, his contributions neglected to address the experiences of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals who are marginalized due to their race, minoritized language use, sexual orientation, ability, etc. and/or a combination of those identity markers.

Lane and Wrigley serve as examples for why we need writing from the margins. Though revolutionary at the time of publication, their framing needs to be addressed for at least two reasons. First, their framing serves as a function of colonization. By painting a distorted, or incomplete description of colonization and its multiple layers, they erase how colonization works on various levels. Second, their framing neglects the multiple marginalization and oppression of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals who experience colonization at the intersections of many identity markers. Although their work opened doors for work such as what I promote in this dissertation, I would like to take the opportunity to expand on their previous discussions in critical ways; writing and researching from the perspective of the multiply-marginalized voices in the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities. I do this by framing the curriculum of colonization as extending beyond Africa, invading all levels of living, and having devastating consequences for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students in the United States.

### **Early Employment of the Curriculum of Colonization**

The United States Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities present one of the oldest and longest cases of the curriculum of colonization in relation to the construction of dis/ability and its intersection with other identity markers. The conceptualizing of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing within a colonial construction of

dis/ability, had lasting ramifications on approaches to schooling Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. However, due to the effective mechanism of erasure of histories working in favor of colonization, the resistance to the normative standard of schooling by Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals has largely been centered on the *effects* of colonization; namely, the oralism (listening and spoken language) versus manualism (Sign Languages) debate. One of the ways colonization has continued to succeed in relation to Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students is by distorting the language debate, portraying it as oralism and manualism when really it's monolingualism (spoken English) versus bilingualism (Sign Language and English through speaking and/or reading/writing). Two critical points are worth noting in order to demystify the beginnings of colonizing the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing. First, the processes of colonialism were at work, even before the institution of formal schooling of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing in the United States. Second, the debate on whether to school Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children the oral way or the bilingual way has dominated the 200-year history of formal schooling for the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing; leaving colonization, and its role in the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children, mainly unaddressed.

### **Colonization Prior to Establishment of Formal Schooling**

Most historians began "Deaf history" with the arrival of Laurent Clerc (who is hailed as the French Deaf man who brought formal Sign Language to the United States). However, Lang (2007) documented that there were \*deaf\* communities and Sign Language in the United States long before the 19th century and Laurent Clerc's arrival. There have been reports of \*deaf\* Indigenous peoples (Lang, 2007) and even hearing Indigenous peoples using Sign Languages to

communicate with other tribes (Baynton, 1993; Mallery, 1881). The lack of recognition of these pre- imperial Sign Languages is a testament to the devaluing of Indigenous peoples' pre-colonial-existing knowledges and communication varieties. Therefore, I argue that it is possible that with the colonization and genocide of Indigenous peoples', Sign Languages were lost in addition to spoken Indigenous languages because both—but especially Sign Languages—were perceived as primitive by the colonizers. During the arrival of the settlers, manual Deaf people also immigrated to the newly formed colonies from various European countries, or countries that previously experienced the influences of imperialism. These Deaf peoples brought colonial ways of living that were foreign to the soon-to-be colonized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities in the United States.

Even before the establishment of formal schooling for the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing in the United States, schooling was still being used as a tool to colonize the peoples of the United States. Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals born to privileged families would typically be sent to Europe; with the overwhelming majority of them attending Braidwood Academy in Scotland<sup>1</sup>, which strongly implemented the oral method<sup>2</sup> (Crouch & Greenwald, 2007). Because the journey to and schooling in Europe were prohibitive, only wealthy colonizers like the Bollings could afford to send their deaf children to formal schooling. Upon completing schooling in Europe, deaf people would return to their families in the United States. Therefore, schooling of Anglo-European, wealthy deaf persons was directly linked to sustaining capitalism at the imperial center because

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<sup>1</sup> The Bollings, a prominent family in the United States colonies, sent their deaf children to this school. Braidwood Academy was known for being highly protective of their oral methods. However, the Cobbs School was later developed in the United States with this background and tied to the Bolling family.

<sup>2</sup> The oral method was championed by the Germans. In this method, deaf individuals were expected to learn how to use listening and spoken language to communicate and the use of signs was prohibited.

wealthy deaf persons were exclusively paying for schools in Europe. Additionally, schooling Anglo-European wealthy deaf persons helped to maintain the influence of capitalism in the United States because the newly-schooled deaf persons more than likely returned conditioned to the capitalist way of life at the imperial center. Therefore, the intersections of being poor and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing, and the detrimental impact this intersection had on the material gain of poor Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing, was evident even before formal schooling was established in the United States.

I would like to argue that those Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals who were born in communities where Sign Languages and Deaf culture thrived, such as Martha's Vineyard (Groce, 1985) and in Indigenous communities, were distinct from wealthy deaf children born to hearing parents for a couple of reasons. First, manual Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities did not directly support capitalism at this point because they were not paying for schooling in Europe. Second, their use of Sign Languages was more than likely considered primitive and too-close-for-comfort to the signs of the Indigenous peoples. Thirdly, these communities' use of Sign Languages demonstrated a different kind of knowing that the colonizers would not acknowledge as "civilized." The aforementioned three factors made the growing Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing manual communities a threat to the colonial way of life. Therefore, manual Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities who were also poor, were located at the intersections of being Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing + being poor + using a minoritized/marginalized language.

## **Kyriocentrism Deployed in the Name of Capitalism**

At the social-institutional level of kyriocentrism, the “Deaf”, particularly manual Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals had to be re-framed in a way that problematized their existence as a group. Manual Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples’ lack of support for capitalism and the barrier their Sign Languages presented to their indoctrination and habituation to colonization had to be addressed. The lack of participation in the newly-established capitalist society, was perceived as a threat to the class system and the superordinate position of elite men. Through the eugenic movement, laws were promoted and established to allow sterilization of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals, in addition to laws that prohibited intra-Deaf marriages (Sheldon, 1999). Alexander Graham Bell is still widely celebrated for inventing the telephone, yet his endeavours to spread eugenic ideologies continue to be largely erased from content in schools. His work with eugenicists provided him with funds and influence, garnering support from President Theodore Roosevelt, John D. Rockefeller, and John Pierpont Morgan (Greenwald, 2007). These influential connections provided political and social influences that propelled oralism (monolingualism for the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing) into the position it continues to have over approaches to schooling the Deaf which involve Sign Language as a Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing child’s first language.

The increasing influences of colonialism throughout the history of the United States brought about several changes in regards to Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. Namely, Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples became defective from a medical perspective (socially disabled) at the arrival of the colonizers, their “science”, imperialism, and colonization (Ladd, 2007). Socially disabling the Deaf, DeafBlind,

DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing ushered in a wave of eugenic assaults under the guise of technological advances— a consequence of colonial consciousness— and educational policies. The intended effect of the eugenic assaults was to prevent individuals from identifying with the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities (Lane, 2002); from using a language other than English (Lane, 2002); and, I would add, from attending schools that would potentially be beyond the reach of colonization: schools for the deaf.

I assert that schools for the deaf have been rejected by hearing society because: 1) schools for the deaf are perceived to promote ways of knowing that are contrary to hearing, abled, White, elite society; and, 2) the rejection of schools for the deaf has been fueled by capitalist motivations. For example, in 1975 *Public Law 94-142 Education for All Handicapped Children Act* provided financial incentives to states to comply with providing disabled children access to schooling (University of Kansas School of Education, 2017). In this way, capitalism became the vehicle for discouraging Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children from being sent to schools for the deaf because: 1) public schools would have to transfer the funding of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students to the schools for the deaf, losing the additional federal funding; and 2) Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children would be immersed in Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing cultures and Sign Language. In 1990, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the Cochlear Corporation's proposal to market the "bionic ear" (cochlear prosthesis) for surgical implantation in children 2 years and older (Gannon, 2012). This meant that the "repair" of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children could begin prior to enrolling in school. Meanwhile, no such policies had been implemented that incentivized the development of Sign Language prior to enrolling in school. Constructing the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and

Hard of Hearing populations as unfit and in need of (re)habilitating in tandem with laws that (re)habilitated the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing forced this population to contribute to the maintenance of capitalism.

At the ideological-cultural level of kyriocentrism, the socially disabling of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations became normalized; hiding the fact that colonialism constructed this difference as a negative attribute. At this level, hearing became the dominant identity and all others became the subordinate identities. The symbolic-cultural level painted this hearing-as-dominant relationship as the natural order of things. To be Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, or Hard of Hearing was an anomaly that necessitated subordination. To move from the subordinate position, Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals were expected to strive for and disappear into hearingness, Whiteness, ableness, etc.

The grammatical-linguistic level shows how constructions of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals have changed over time. As colonialism took hold, Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals were imposed labels such as “Deaf and Dumb” and “Deaf Mute.” Later labels such as “hearing impaired”, which continues to be used today, replaced previous labels. Other language constructions included “Deaf Plus” and “Deaf with Disabilities” which were previously discussed. However, in recent years, it has been inspiring to witness Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals take back the power of language by naming themselves and resisting the labels assigned by dominant society members.

### **The Five Faces of Oppression Make Themselves Known**

As kyriocentrism has placed all (doubly/multiply) marginalized individuals in a constant strive toward recognition by and/or equal status with dominant counterparts, the five faces of

oppression provide a frame to examine how oppression rooted in the curriculum of colonization has impacted and continues to impact the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities in the United States. The oppression enacted *upon* and *among* individuals within the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities materializes and intersects in a multitude of ways that reinforce and sustain colonization. The faces of oppression can be expressed in the following, non-exhaustive ways: anti-blackness, the disappearing of other identities into whiteness; ethnocentrism, the belief that one's social group is the universal standard (Sumner, 1906 in Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach, 2008); heterocentrism, privileging heterosexuality as the normative standard (Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach, 2008); androcentrism, privileging of the male experience (Bem, 1994 in Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach, 2008); audism, privileging of hearing ability as the normative standard (Humphries, 1975); ableism, the privileging of those whose abilities and functioning are considered essential to and normative for the human species (Wolbring, 2011); linguicism "ideologies and structures which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and non-material) between groups which are defined on the basis of language" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1989, p. 41); vidism, the attempt of sighted people to understand DeafBlind people through their "eyes" as well as attempts to force DeafBlind people to conform to the sighted world (Yunashko, 2015); and distantism, the maintaining of the world out of the reach of DeafBlind individuals through forcing DeafBlind to operate as though they are sighted and hearing and denying access through touch because of the valuing of distance senses (Clark, 2017). Although I do not connect each form of oppression to other forms of oppression, one point to emphasize is that the interactions of various oppressions are not always apparent. Some reasons for their lack of appearance are the erasure of history; the marginalization and

unacceptance of various ways of knowing and existing in the world; and the essentializing of cultures. Therefore, examining the intersections that are least highlighted and discussed (e.g., the intersection of race and being Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing; the intersection of being born to a non-English speaking family and being Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing, etc.), is one path to better understanding the pervasiveness of oppressions.

### **Audism**

Audism was built off of Jacques Derrida's *phonocentrism* —the construction of language as being rooted in sound systems (Bauman, 2004). Audism refers to the privileging of hearingness and rejection of those who cannot hear while positioning them as defective; resulting in violence and marginalization of those who do not rely on hearing. Audism is embodied in the “hearing loss versus Deaf Gain” debate. Hearing loss is rooted in the medical perspective; as in loss of a sense that needs to be restored, (re)habilitated or compensated for in some way. Contrastingly, Deaf Gain is the perception of being Deaf as contributing to the biodiversity of the human species (Bauman & Murray, 2014). Deaf Gain also emphasizes that society at large has benefitted from the existence of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples since the beginning of human history. The supports for communication methods that are favored by hearing people; the lack of support for Sign Language on the policy level and in pedagogical practices; and the obsession with the idea of English mastery as a critical foundation for schooling Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children are just a few examples of how audism is enacted upon Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples (Gertz, 2007). The overwhelming dominance of hearing professionals in the field of Deaf education, and hearing control from the policy level down to the classroom level, are also

examples of how audism is enacted upon Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples. This type of violence is considered a form of systemic and legitimized harm because it is so engrained in our institutionalization as a country (laws, policies, etc.) that it is the normative standard.

Gertz (2007) explored how audism operates within the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities. Audism is what drives the fear of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples in challenging hearing people's authority in the field of Deaf Education. Audism "contributes significantly to the weakening of Deaf people's identity...and [awareness] that they possess, to varying degrees, these kinds of audistic behaviors and attitudes" (Gertz, 2007, p. 223-224). Gertz (2007) continued that:

- Dysconscious audism disempowers Deaf people from becoming liberated.
- Dysconscious audism disables Deaf people from expressing Deaf cultural pride.
- Dysconscious audism intimidates Deaf people and limits their promotion of the Deaf perspective.
- Dysconscious audism hinders Deaf people from attaining quality education.
- Dysconscious audism denies Deaf people full acceptance of ASL.
- Dysconscious audism weakens Deaf people in the development of their Deaf identity (p. 224).

## **Ableism**

Audism can be considered a form of ableism as it ultimately seeks to make Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people as close to hearing as possible, which is a form of cultural imperialism and violence. Ableism from hearing individuals is evident in how hearing society continues to celebrate eugenicists like Alexander Graham Bell within the schooling system without acknowledging and problematizing his attempts to eradicate the Deaf,

DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing population. Ableism is also manifested in the continued attempts to improve genetic modifications causing fear in many Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals that these “advancements” will be used to eliminate their populations and future generations (Martinez, Linden, Schimmenti, & Palmer, 2003).

Additionally, ableism is embodied in the “Vanilla Deaf” versus “Deaf Plus” debate. “Vanilla Deaf” has been used within deaf education professional spaces to describe culturally Deaf children who do not have “differences” (including race, dis/ability, etc.). Though this phrase was developed by hearing, abled professionals in the field, these phrases have been adopted by Deaf professionals as well. “Vanilla Deaf” implies that the ideal student is one that is White, uses ASL, possibly from a Deaf family, and has no dis/abilities. “Deaf Plus” was also created by hearing, abled professionals. This label, however, typifies hearing society’s perception of “Deaf” as a difference that needs extenuating and “Plus” as additional differences to be (re)habilitated. However, both sides of the “Vanilla Deaf” and “Deaf Plus” debate are grounded in the idea that difference is undesirable. As stated by a DeafAutistic non-binary person on social media in reference to their exclusion within the \*Deaf\* community:

I personally prefer to separate audism and ableism, because one can be free of audism but not free of ableism...Not many Deaf people are interested in interacting with me because...they have to work harder to adjust to me...The main reason Deaf community is very ableist may be because it was rooted from our Deaf Studies education, where we’re taught to think, ‘Deaf NOT DISABLED!’ I wish they would find a better way to encourage Deaf pride... without throwing Deaf\_\_\_\_ [people] under the bus (personal communications).

Both audism and ableism are also exemplified in schooling system's continuous attempts toward inclusion and placing Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students in classrooms with "typically developing hearing peers." It is also evident in how all assessments and measure of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students' progress, even those within schools for the deaf, must be measured and tracked in comparison to "typically developing hearing peer" standards. Audism and ableism are also shown in the way hearing-centric schooling has forced a dependency of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples on hearing people. Hearing-centric schooling has successfully colonized many Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples and indoctrinated them into inferior social positions. At the same time, hearing-centric schooling has effectively blocked Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing persons from the teaching profession. With audistic and ableist barriers weaved throughout all levels of schooling, including higher education, the curriculum of colonization ensures that Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations will remain dependent on hearing individuals to provide formal schooling with also serves as a gatekeeping to material and financial gain in this society. Consequently, Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing professionals who are able to enter the schooling context experience powerlessness to hearing individuals. This powerlessness can be described by instances in which hearing people who supervise Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals (e.g., a hearing person who supervises Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing Sign Language instructors; a hearing person who supervises Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing teachers in the instruction of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students), prescribes ways of performing tasks that are counter to how the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals

would approach said tasks. Due to the power relations or social division in the work setting, the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals are deprived of their freedom to be autonomously Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing.

### **Vidism and Distantism**

Referring to Sign Languages as “language of the eyes” marginalizes a group of people within Sign Language communities: the DeafBlind. DeafBlind individuals also use Sign Languages such as ASL and Black ASL. DeafBlind people make up approximately 10% of the \*Deaf\* population in the United States (Yunashko, 2015). Many individuals within the DeafBlind community have Usher’s Syndrome which causes both changes in hearing threshold and in visual acuity, which may occur gradually or more suddenly. Very rarely are DeafBlind people born DeafBlind; they become DeafBlind later through a gradual or more rapid process. Yet, Yunashko (2015) stressed that Usher’s Syndrome, for example, is a genetic condition that is unique to the \*Deaf\* population; not occurring among the hearing population. When \*Deaf\* children are born into Deaf families, everyone celebrates. Yet, when a child with Usher’s Syndrome is born into a Deaf family, the family grieves.

There is a need to interrogate society’s tendency to blame DeafBlind students and their “condition” for their limited access to the world. There is a need to forefront the denial to tactile access by sighted and/or hearing individuals which limits DeafBlind individuals’ awareness of society at large and of the day-to-day aspects of their environment (Clark, 2017). Clark (2017) cited rehabilitation as the “monument to distantism...built on one-on-one instruction, which effectively isolates us and tells us that we [DeafBlind people] are broken and need to be fixed.” Like dysconscious audism, Clark explained that distantism is so pervasive that it has been internalized by DeafBlind people who explain being DeafBlind as existing in darkness and

silence, yet cannot connect this experience to the marginalization imposed on DeafBlind people by a society that says hearing, seeing, and existing alone (independently) *is* existence. As a result, DeafBlind people have attempted to use visual language reception even though it does not suit their needs. Resources provided, have been aimed at helping DeafBlind people “maintain access to visual fields of engagement” (Edwards, 2014, p. 23). This type of oppression has not only kept DeafBlind people from experiencing the world tactilely; it has also kept them from realizing one another as their own (tactile) cure.

### **Linguicism**

*Home* language and *native* language are different for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students unless they are born to parents who use ASL [Black ASL, Pro-Tactile] (Reagan, 1985). Therefore, Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals who should be bi-/multicultural and bi-/multilingual, are forcibly schooled in a monolingual system. The battle for placement in bilingual versus monolingual settings continues today because of the views by prominent supporters of oral schooling who advanced the idea that “sign language users were akin to other unassimilated foreigners, threats to the social order, undermining cultural unity and stability with their cultural and linguistic difference” (Edwards, 2007, p. 89). Linguicism is evident in the sign systems that were developed (i.e. Cued Speech, Signing Essential English (SEE) and Signing Exact English (SEE II)). Though ASL is a language and sign systems are not, ASL is considered the lowest-status of signing because sign systems are closer approximations to English (Reagan, 1985). Therefore, Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children are constantly denied their language due to English language dominance, which has both material and non-material impacts on the life of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. In this way, marginalization begins

at birth, depriving Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children the tools—access to a full language—needed to become full participants in society. The deprivation of language has both cognitive and social implications (Gulati, 2014); leading many Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals to be dependent on disability-related income supports such as Social Security Disability Income (Schley et al., 2011). Income supports which are controlled and regulated by dominant group members who do not rely on such supports.

While Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals are denied their language, hearing individuals are praised for their use of Sign Languages. This is another way linguisticism is deployed and becomes a means of exploiting Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples and their language. For example, exploitation can appear as Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals, after years of being denied Sign Language or learning it later in life, teaching hearing individuals Sign Language for little to no pay. These hearing people, who may or may not have ties to the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities, later become Sign Language instructors or interpreters who financially benefit from Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples' desire to have a world wherein they have full access to communication through Sign Language (which means more hearing people learning Sign Language); and/or Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples' dependency on Sign Language interpreters to provide language access in situations in which hearing people do not know Sign Language. Within the aforementioned situations, it is common for hearing interpreters to refuse to provide Sign Language services to Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities if payment is not involved.

Within Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities, linguicism is often wielded using ASL. ASL becomes the dominant language that oppresses minoritized Sign Languages. Within the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities, ASL dominance can be tied to racism, distantism, vidism, and ableism, among other types of oppression. Linguicism is evidenced by the suppression of Black ASL by White Deaf signers since the integration of schools. Additionally, those Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children who are born to families who use languages other than English, are discouraged from learning their home languages in oral (when accessible) and/or written form. Linguicism is also present in the treatment of sighted ASL users towards DeafBlind individuals who have now created their own language, Pro-Tactile or Tactile American Sign Language. Research on the language of DeafBlind people referred to their language use as “accommodations to” and “adjustments to”, ASL (Edwards, 2014). However, Pro-Tactile is a valid language, with distinct features from ASL. The DeafBlind community should be praised for their contributions to the linguistic diversity of the world. Instead, DeafBlind communities must battle the forces of distantism, ableism, and vidism which present barriers to them even gifting this language to one another.

### **Anti-Blackness**

As discussed in Chapters One and Two, anti-blackness is the onto-epistemic condition of negation wherein racialized peoples (i.e., Black people and People of Color—sometimes referred to as Brown and Red people) are forced to disappear into whiteness (Smith, 2014). Here, anti-blackness is described as opposed to racism to account for the experiences of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing Peoples of Color and to provide an explanation for why they are often essentialized into White American Deaf, ASL users, abled, and from the middle-class.

Anti-blackness, unlike racism, also provides a frame for understanding the lack of documentation of the experiences of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing Peoples of Color who are not Black; for example, Indigenous, Asian, or Latinx Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples.

Essentializing Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing Peoples of Color into White Deaf culture is not by accident, though some would argue that this essentializing occurred in reaction to oralism (Ladd & Lane, 2013). Interrogating the events proceeding the passing of *Brown v. Board of Education of 1954* demonstrates how anti-blackness was at play even mitigating the oralism factor. During the segregation of (deaf) schools, White Deaf students were forced to be educated under the oral method with no Sign Language use in the classroom (McCaskill, 2010). Meanwhile, 11 of 16 schools/departments for Black Deaf students were still taught entirely through Sign Language and taught primarily by Black Deaf adults (Bayton, 1996). In the segregated schooling era, Black (Deaf) teachers were the critical pedagogues; providing a liberatory education experience to Black (Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing) students (bell hooks, 1994). These teachers naturally embodied ways of preparing Black students to resist a White supremacist and racist society, in addition to promoting educational achievement (bell hooks, 1994). Therefore, Black Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children had full access to Sign Language and role models to transmit their cultures, resulting in their high academic achievement. Integration brought with it the ability to strengthen and restore Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing cultures nation-wide and bring Sign Language back to the classroom. Black Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing teachers and students had the cultural capital and sustained Sign Language use to revitalize what hearing society had sought to suppress. Instead, Black schools for the deaf were

closed and Black teachers fired; Black Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students were forced to relinquish their Sign Language and learn under the oral method (McCaskill, 2010). When Sign Language was returned to the classroom, Black Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students were then forced to learn and use the Sign Language of White Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing signers.

Even today, Black Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students have struggled to have their blackness recognized; to be Black *and* Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing instead of (just) “Deaf.” Deaf Education continues to ignore identities beyond “Deaf” (e.g., by not exploring and/or teaching histories of racialized and minoritized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students, explicitly telling students they are “just Deaf” or “Deaf first”, etc.). Bienvenu (2007) provided an example of this when describing a situation of a Black Deaf storyteller being asked ‘Which are you first: black or Deaf?’ This shows that even in questions of identity, White Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals are unaware of the violence they commit against Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing Peoples of Color. This is reflective of anti-blackness by the indifference to black suffering/experience and the privileging of the White Deaf experience.

The impact of the curriculum of colonization on the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled and Hard of Hearing populations has been examined at a few different angles. National data sets analyzed by Blanchfield, Feldman, Dunbar, and Gardner (2001) showed that 44.4% of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations had not graduated high school while only 18.7% of hearing population had not graduated high school. Of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing population that dropped out by age 18, most were students of color (Simms, Rushner, Andrews, & Coryell, 2008). For over 50 years, the average reading level

for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals who did complete high school remained at the third or fourth grade level (Morere, 2011). Unfortunately, many graduate with a certificate of attendance instead of a diploma, making them unable to compete in the job market or apply for admittance into higher education programs (Simms, Rushner, Andrews, & Coryell, 2008). Though the schooling system is failing Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students, the data show that Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students of color are disproportionately impacted resulting in vocational rehabilitation training after high school, contact with the carceral system and illiteracy in English into adulthood (Simms, Rushner, Andrews, & Coryell, 2008).

The pervasiveness of the curriculum of colonization requires approaches that tackle its effects in all levels of society, but especially in our conceptualizations of schooling. Any framework used to address the curriculum of colonization must address the effects of colonization within groups and between groups of superordinated and subordinated individuals. A framework of possible solution must also address how colonization has benefited dominant group interests and served to sustain a schooling system that is based on the normative standard. Though explored in the context of schooling Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students, this framework could have applications for addressing the curriculum of colonization across dis/ability groups and the schooling system as a whole. Dis/ability is essential to the biodiversity of the world. Dis/ability should be valued, not only for what it offers the world (e.g., diverse perspectives and different ways of navigating the world), but also because dis/abled individuals should have the freedom to exist as their true self outside the grip of colonization and colonial schooling. In the following chapter, I explore frameworks that have been used to address inequitable schooling in the United States.

### **CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

Frameworks that have been developed and used in an attempt to rectify the state of schooling in the United States are discussed in this chapter, namely cultural competence and the asset pedagogies. The overview of these frameworks are followed by a brief discussion about why these frameworks have not been applied to the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. I then discuss two frameworks, critical indigenous pedagogy and critical race theory, that provide possible solutions to the current state of colonial schooling in the Deaf Education context. These two frameworks are explored in depth for their potential applications but also limitations to the field of Deaf Education.

#### **Attempts to Rectify the System**

Though in previous chapters I explored the curriculum of colonization in relation to the dis/abled and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations, the effects of colonial schooling are not limited to these populations. The pervasiveness of the curriculum of colonization can be captured by simply reviewing the current outcomes of (doubly/ multiply) marginalized students. It is critical to review the effects of the curriculum of colonization on (doubly/ multiply) marginalized students given that the mainstream schooling system serves the following student demographic: 42 % of multi-racial people are school-aged (Jones & Smith, 2001), 1 in five children enrolled in schools are immigrants to the United States (Goodwin, 2002), 12 million school-aged children use a language other than English at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013) and 13% of school- aged children are considered dis/abled or receive disability services (Scull & Winkler, 2011).

“The United States of America is not a level playing field for all children and our nation does not value and protect all children’s lives equally” (Children’s Defense Fund, 2007, p. 3).

There have been several consequences to the introduction of colonization and imperialism; racialization, introduction of gender binary, and expulsion of the sexual orientation spectrum are just a few examples. Take racialization as an example; the data basically show that all racialized groups suffer under the current schooling institution. The high school graduation rate for Indigenous children is only 57% with only 3.14% performing at the advanced level in reading and 3.96% at advanced level in math (Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Indian Education Programs, 2006 as cited in Ladson-Billings, 2006). Indigenous children also have a 15% drop out rate which is higher than Whites, Blacks and Asian/Pacific Islanders (Freeman & Fox, 2005). This is quite grave, given that 90% of Indigenous children are educated in mainstream settings (Gallagher, 2000). Additionally, 11.8 % of Blacks and 23.8% of Latinxs drop out of high school between 16 and 24 years old (Children's Defense Fund, 2007). Even when there are policies or provisions in place that help to mitigate these dropout rates, they are targeted, like the recently expired Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which was shown to reduce high school dropout rates, increase college enrollment, and increase attainment of a four-year college degree for children who qualified for the program. Without this protection, we can expect the dropout numbers to increase (Lane, 2014).

Examining gender and sexual orientation, Kosciw et al. (2016) found that 60.5% of LGBTQ students from their survey planned to drop out or had doubts about graduating high school due to the hostile school climate they experienced. Gendered school policies and practices were one of the named experiences the students used to describe the hostile school climate. LGBTQ students reported experiencing hostile school environments, from both educators and peers, because of their sexual orientation and/or gender expressions. About 86.3 % of LGBTQ students cited mental health concerns, specifically depression, anxiety, stress, as a reason for

planning to not complete school. Some of these mental health concerns stem from hostile school climate (Kosciw et al., 2016). Additionally, experiences of discrimination at school were related to the amount of days LGBTQ students were absent from school. Higher levels of victimization based on sexual orientation or gender expression was associated with lower grade point averages and related to lower academic achievement.

When examining language background, Fry (2008) found that English language learners (ELLs) were concentrated in schools that were economically disadvantaged, had lower percentage of White students, and tended to have higher student-to-teacher ratios. Fry (2008) also found that ELLs tended to be concentrated in schools that were positively correlated with lower scores on English and Math achievement testing. Yet, it is also important to keep in mind that none of the above data addressed intersections across categories (i.e. racialized LGBTQI students; LGBTQI students who are also English language learners, etc.) and none of these data included students with a dis/ability (i.e. racialized Disabled LGBTQI students who are also English language learners).

While examining the effects of colonial schooling on students, to understand why cultural competence and the asset pedagogies were developed there must be an explicit statement about the teacher population. Demographic research on the teacher population in the United States had not changed much despite the ever diversifying student population (Sleeter & Milner, 2011). This diversification was not limited to color of skin, ethnic groups students ascribe to, and languages used. The diversified body of students also extended to gender identity, sexual orientation, nation of origin, family socio-economic status, and dis/ability. Meanwhile, the majority of educators and educator trainers consistently came from a White, heterosexual, Christian, middle class backgrounds (Sleeter, 2008). The demographic divide between teachers and students in the

United States is so great that scholars have coined terms to describe this difference. Banks (2004, 2008, 2010) labeled it the “demographic imperative.” Sleeter and Milner (2011) called it “demographic urgency.” The reality of the demographic imperative is that those who control the schools and classroom micro-cultures are predominantly White, native-born, Christian, from monolingual families who are also generally from middle-class socioeconomic backgrounds, identify as women, heterosexual, abled, and are from individualist cultures (Goodwin, 2002; Sleeter, 2008). The frameworks that are discussed in the following sections were developed with these data in mind and serve as a response to schooling institutions that continuously fail students from (multiply-) marginalized backgrounds.

### **Cultural Competence and the Asset Pedagogies**

*Cultural competence* became a major buzzword in education, among other fields, around the 1990s (Sakamoto, 2007). During that time, more frames were being applied to elucidate the problem of schooling racialized and minoritized students. Since then, the push for the application of cultural competence has increased in the field of education. I would argue that the discussions of, and push to apply, cultural competence in education is a result of the work of the scholars who developed the asset pedagogies. De Gaetano and España’s (2010) review of the literature on cultural competence in education within the United States supports my proposed etiology of cultural competence in education. Although their overall review was limited to the years post 2000, their theoretical perspectives for cultural competence, corresponded with many of those that I also traced; specifically, the works of Gloria Ladson-Billings and Geneva Gay. Asset pedagogies can be broken into two main strands: that of Gay, who focused more on teaching practices; and that of Ladson-Billings, who focused more on pedagogy and the posture of

instructors (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). Of note, is that both strands supported classrooms and schools as sites for social change.

The asset pedagogies, also referred to as the resource pedagogies, emerged throughout the 1990s as a way to address the demographic imperative and improve the educational outcomes of racialized and minoritized students. They were theorized in response to the call for change in how educators approached teaching students with different language needs (Black/African American language, Chinese, Navajo, Spanish languages). The focus of these pedagogies were to change teachers' perception of students' language, cultural, and literacy practices as deficits when compared to dominant Standard English language and literacy practices. The asset pedagogies emphasized teaching approaches that valued these students' practices as resources for identity development and accessing dominant culture norms and practices (Paris, 2012). The asset pedagogies include (but are not limited to): Culturally Congruent Pedagogy (Au & Kawakami, 1994), Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995), and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2000) and more recently Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (Paris, 2012).

**Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy.** The newest iteration of the asset pedagogies, expanding on previous work is Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP). Paris (2012) conceptualized CSP as an attempt toward pluralist outcomes by supporting multicultural and multilingual educational practices. What CSP adds is that multiculturalism and multilingualism are valued not just for the sake of contributing to dominant culture but primarily for sustaining and maintaining the culture and funds of knowledge of students from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This pedagogy reflects the fluid nature of culture and explores group demographics within current social contexts. This pedagogy explores the intersections of race,

language, class, and gender in education. CSP expands upon this exploration by also addressing the socio-historical and contemporary contexts of schooling. Furthermore, it critiques and problematizes aspects of youth cultural practices that are problematic (e.g. sexism, ableism) (Paris & Alim, 2014). Additionally, this pedagogy calls for community-based accountability in educational practices (McCarty & Lee, 2014). Arguably, this community-based accountability could be extended to the realm of educational research and schooling as well.

**The asset pedagogies and student outcomes.** Dunbar (2008) maintained that shared life experiences between researcher and the researched lend to greater understanding of how life experiences and social circumstances impact the researched. I maintain that the same extends to the teacher-student relationship. This was proven with the Mexican American Studies program in the engagement of the students and their improved academic and social outcomes (Romero, 2013). Aronson and Laughter's (2016) review of the literature on the asset pedagogies and the impact on student outcomes in content areas supported the results that were illustrated in the Mexican American Studies Program. Their review included the following content areas: Math, Science, Social Studies, and English Language Arts. Aronson and Laughter (2016) found that when the asset pedagogies were implemented in the classroom, across the studies in all of the above content areas, student academic outcomes consistently improved. These outcomes, when reported, were measured by standardized testing and classroom assessments and projects. Additionally, student engagement and motivation improved. When students' life experiences and discussions of their experiences with social inequities were used to engage with the content, students were able to increase their content knowledge and apply that knowledge as a tool to analyze their experiences. Two findings that are critical results of teachers implementing asset pedagogies in the classroom are worth highlighting: 1) White teachers' developed an

understanding of students' experiences with social inequities and as a result desired to have more personal relationships with students; and 2) increase in the performance of racialized and minoritized students did not negatively impact the outcomes or the engagement of White students. The outcomes of students under teaching practices and postures that include the asset pedagogies are evidence that there is a need to have more teachers who are prepared and willing to engage in instruction that embodies principles of these pedagogies.

### **Special Education Rejects the Asset Pedagogies**

In general, the field of Special Education reflects mainstream society perceptions on dis/ability: bodies and minds that function differently need to be (re)habilitated into "typical" development and functioning. Society has deemed the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations as in need of this (re)habilitation. Though the asset pedagogies have gained some traction in general education, multicultural education, and urban education from a theoretical perspective, they are still severely lacking in the teaching practice in general education, and have yet to be brought to Special Education in theory or practice. Positivism still dominates the field of Special Education (i.e. (re)habilitating medical and educational deficits/needs take priority over the needs of an individual based on identity). The hold of the curriculum of colonization on the construction of dis/ability remains evident in how Special Education continues to operate.

Mainstream society perspectives on Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals do not take into consideration race, nation of origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc. Instead, perspectives are reduced to the hearing threshold, visual acuity, cognitive functioning, and or physical functioning of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals; to training them; to providing educational and/or medical services in

order to help them exist in society as closely to fully functioning, hearing and abled individuals as possible. I propose that the lack of application of the asset pedagogies and cultural competence in Special Education and in Deaf Education are an outcome of the curriculum of colonization and the belief that schools are the place where dis/abled students can be taught and indoctrinated to disappear into ableness.

The exclusion of Disability and Deaf communities' perspectives within the field of Special Education, but specifically Deaf Education, is appalling given that the context of the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children has many parallels to mainstream education teacher-student demographics. Andrews and Jordan (1993) found that roughly 90% of professionals in the K-12 setting working with Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students were hearing and 90% were White. Of the professionals that identified as Deaf, approximately 90% were White. Despite the increase of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students of color in the past twelve years, there has been no change in the demographics of the professionals in the field (Simms, Rushner, Andrews, & Coryell, 2008). Like the demographic imperative in mainstream schooling, the contrast between the students and professionals in the context of schooling Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children is strikingly different. I must be clear that it is not my intent to make comparisons with "hearing peers" which is currently done in Deaf Education research, perpetuating audism and ableism. My intent here is to show how the forces of colonialism and imperialism continue to place specific groups of people in positions of power in educational settings.

Despite the strong theoretical implications and support for the asset pedagogies, it is demoralizing that they have not been explored as thoroughly with Deaf, DeafBlind,

DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children. I offer that the curriculum of colonization has prevented hearing and abled professionals in the field of Deaf Education from recognizing a need to approach the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children from an asset approach. The curriculum of colonization has also masked the need to have more Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing teachers and teacher educators; this is especially true for doubly-/multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities. The professionals and researchers in the field of Deaf Education have yet to accept this because there has yet to be an exploration of the curriculum of colonization in the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. Crenshaw (2016) stressed the importance of providing frames in order to give people a way to contemplate an issue. Therefore, as more scholars start to name the power system—the curriculum of colonization—the greater potential to begin to center the real issue and the greater the potential for liberation to occur within the realm of schooling Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students.

In the following sections I explore two such frameworks that center both colonization and the experience of double/multiply marginalization. I believe these two frameworks have much to offer the field of Deaf Education, in spite of their current limitations in research and application. I go to critical indigenous pedagogy and critical race theory first because of my own backgrounds and experiences of multiple marginalization. I believe that in addressing colonization within the populations that experience marginalization on multiple fronts, and addressing those areas of multiple marginalization simultaneously, a path for liberation for all of United States society's populations can be set forth.

## **Critical (Indigenous) Pedagogy**

There are several different ideas promoted among critical theorists and at least three different strands of critical pedagogy: libertarian, radical, and liberationist. I choose to focus on the radical strand as this is typified in the work of Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux. The radical strand of critical pedagogy is what was merged with Indigenous methodologies to form Critical Indigenous Pedagogy (CIP). CIP provides an analytical lens with strong applications to the issues with schooling in the United States. CIP is the re-envisioning of Freire's work in Indigenous contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). I argue this pedagogy could be re-envisioned in the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing contexts as well. To understand the scope of CIP, an etymology of radical critical pedagogy is warranted.

*Figure 6* presents a genealogy of critical indigenous pedagogy. Most critical pedagogies in North America are influenced by Paulo Freire. However, to not acknowledge those that inspired the work of Freire, would do a disservice to those that came before, as well as what they have contributed to challenging imperialism and colonialism. Freire's work is influenced by many including Antonio Gramsci—some of whose concepts I discuss below—and Frantz Fanon, among others (McLaren, 2000). In North America, critical pedagogies are rooted in several theoretical developments, specifically: Latin American philosophies of liberation, critical literacy, sociology of knowledge, the Frankfurt School, adult education, bilingual and bicultural education, teacher education, neo-Marxist cultural criticism, cultural studies, multiculturalism, postmodernism and post-structuralism (McLaren, 2000). Therefore, those who have worked and theorized in any of the aforementioned areas, have had some influence in the development of critical pedagogy as known in the United States. Additionally, some North American critical

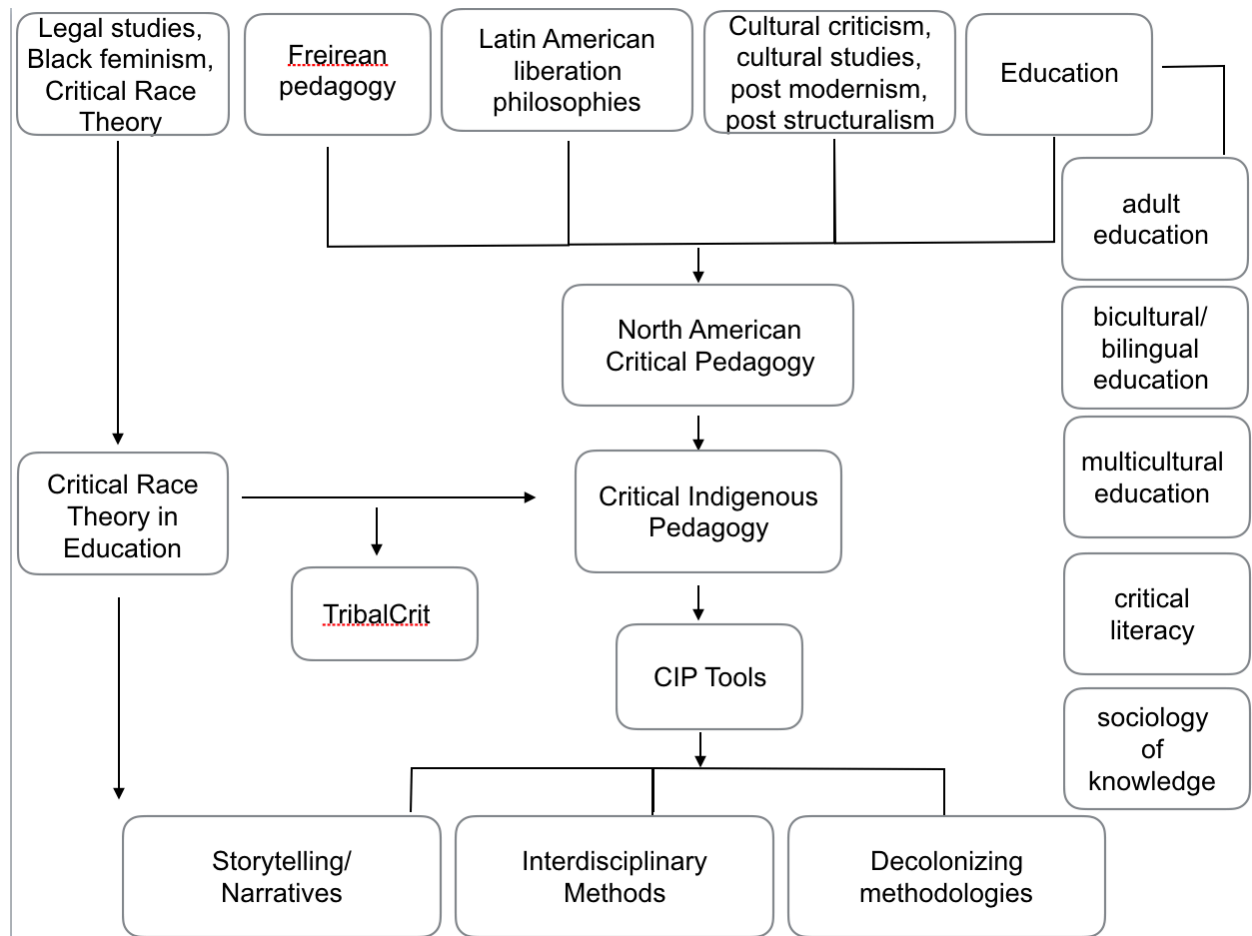


Figure 6. *Critical Indigenous Pedagogy Genealogy* (Adapted from McLaren, 2000 and Solorzano, 2013)

[image description: a chart on white background with black text in boxes. Top of chart has four boxes with reach (left to right): “Freirean pedagogy”, “Latin American liberation philosophies”, “cultural criticism, cultural studies, post modernism, post structuralism”, “Education.” Arrows direct these four boxes down to a centered box that reads “North American Critical Pedagogy.” This box has arrow that leads down to box “Critical Indigenous Pedagogy.” This box’s arrow leads down to box “CIP Tools” which leads down to three boxes that are side by side reading (left to right): “Storytelling/Narratives”, “Interdisciplinary Methods”, and “Decolonizing methodologies.” At the top left corner of the image, a box reads “Legal studies, Black feminism, Critical Race Theory” has an arrow that leads downward to box at the left of image midway down that reads “Critical Race Theory in Education.” This box has an arrow that leads down to the three boxes that read: “Storytelling/Narratives”, “Interdisciplinary Methods”, and “Decolonizing methodologies.” The “Critical Race Theory in Education” box also has an arrow that leads towards “Critical Indigenous Pedagogy” box at the center of the image. This arrow has an arrow that leads down to “TribalCrit” box. (Accessibility note: This tries to depict that Critical Race Theory in Education and Critical Indigenous Pedagogy use the same tools). At the top right corner of the image, the box that reads “Education” has an additional arrow that leads downward to five boxes. These boxes read (top to bottom): “adult education”, “bicultural/bilingual education”, “multicultural education”, “critical literacy”, and “sociology of knowledge.”]

pedagogies are also rooted in post-colonial theories of education such as those promoted by Edward Said (see Said, 1978).

Critical pedagogy is a dialectical theory. Dialectical theories recognize problems of society as part of the interactive context between the individual and society (McLaren, 2003). Neither the individual nor society takes priority because they are inextricably interconnected. Dialectical theories also trace histories from the system to the event; in this case, imperialism and colonialism and the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled and Hard of Hearing children, respectively. Critical pedagogy is a way of “thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structures of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider community, society, and nation-state” (McLaren, 1993 as cited in McLaren, 2003, p. 10). Therefore, critical pedagogy does not address schooling as happening within a vacuum. Schooling is a practice that is situated within a larger social and political context. Kincheloe (2008) described critical pedagogy as:

- grounded on a social and educational vision of justice and equality
- constructed on the belief that education is inherently political
- dedicated to the alleviation of human suffering
- concerned that schools don’t hurt students—good schools don’t blame students for their failures or strip students of the knowledges they bring to the classroom
- enacted through the generative themes to read the word and the world and the process of problem posing—generative themes involve the educational use of issues that are central to students’ lives as a grounding for the curriculum

- centered on the notion that teachers become researchers of their students—as researchers, teachers study their students, their backgrounds, and the forces that shape them
- interested in maintaining a delicate balance between social change and cultivating the intellect—this requires a rigorous pedagogy that accomplishes both goals
- concerned with “the margins” of society, the experiences and needs of individuals faced with oppression and subjugation
- constructed on the awareness that science can be used as a force to regulate and control
- dedicated to understanding the context in which educational activity takes place
- committed to resisting the harmful effects of dominant power
- attuned to the importance of complexity—understands complexity theory—in constructing a rigorous and transformative education
- focused on understanding the profound impact of neocolonial structures in shaping education and knowledge (p. 10).

These concepts put forth by Kincheloe (2008) can be interpreted as encompassing four foundational principles: 1) critical pedagogy is committed to the side of the oppressed, 2) politics, 3) culture and 4) economics (McLaren, 2003). As listed above, the critical pedagogy’s commitment to the side of the oppressed is evidenced in the strive to alleviate “human suffering”, “concern that schools don’t hurt students”, and its commitment to resisting the “harmful effects of dominant power.” Beyond that critical pedagogy extends to empowering and liberating those who are oppressed. Related to politics, critical pedagogy provides a lens of

which to analyze schooling. Schooling is analyzed as a political enterprise, as already been described, schooling has been conceived as a tool of colonialism since its inception. With this lens, schools are regarded as the arena in which ideological and social forms collide in the struggle for dominance (Connell, 1993; Bourdieu, 1996; McLaren, 2003). Schools themselves can be analyzed in three ways. First, schools can be analyzed as sorting mechanisms that give advantages to certain groups of students based on race, gender, class, language use, dis/ability, etc. The sorting mechanisms used in schools can be perceived as the local context for the sorting mechanisms (stratification) used in forming dominant and subordinated groups in order for capitalism to be effective; this was discussed in Chapter Two as part of the curriculum of colonization. Secondly, schools can be problematized as agencies for self and social empowerment (McLaren, 2003; Espanioly, 2005). This agency can be exercised for liberation or exercised to support the existing systems of oppression (i.e. supporting and/or promoting white supremacy, xenophobia, colonization, etc.). Lastly, related to culture, schooling is the process that introduces, prepares, and legitimizes particular forms of social life (McLaren, 2003). This is the social- institutional level of kyriocentrism at work. The cultural principle ties directly into economics. Schools are promoted as the place where social and economic mobility are possible. However, the economic returns of the current schooling system overwhelmingly benefit the elitist group over the working class group(s) (McLaren, 2003); reinforcing the capitalist society and demonstrating that schools are driven by the global market (Giroux & Giroux, 2008).

### **Critiques of Critical Pedagogy**

However, critical pedagogy is not without its critics; namely, Indigenous scholars and (feminist) scholars of color. Some critiques have centered how critical pedagogy values of critique, resistance, struggle and emancipation are practiced and conceptualized (Denzin &

Lincoln, 2008). Some critiques from Indigenous scholars (see Smith, 1999 and 2012; Grande, 2008) have included the imposition of Western Enlightenment perspectives on the Indigenous experience; privileging of Western reason; and the diminishing of “indigenous concepts of identity, sovereignty, land, tradition, literacy, and language” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 9). Though critical pedagogy is a powerful tool for challenging the curriculum of colonization, it remains deeply influenced by Western theory (Grande, 2004). Two essential critiques from both Indigenous scholars and scholars of color are the privileging of the White, male theorist experience and discounting the significance of patriarchy as a form of oppression within critical pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1997; Ellsworth, 1989; McLaren, 2000). Other critiques of critical pedagogy include the failure to explicitly address the mutual influence and intersections of class, ethnicity, and sexual orientations (McLaren, 2000); failure to take explicit stances on Christianity (McLaren, 2000); failure to adequately address emotionality, sexual politics, and gender (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008); the inaccessibility of critical pedagogy to working class society due to the elitist language used by most theorists and scholars; the positioning of students as “Other” (Orner, 1992); the, often unintentional, perpetuation of dominant-subordinate relations in the name of liberation (Orner, 1992); and the underlying assumption that it is the critical theorist, scholar, and educator who have the power to “interrogate” consciousness, empower marginalized groups, and decide when those groups have come to value their own identities, ethnic group expressions, and languages as these “paternalistic tendencies...ultimately replicate racist, classist and sexist forms” (Orner, 1992, p. 87).

I also offer a critique of the application of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy was applied to the field of Deaf Education by Nover and Andrews (1999) in *Critical Pedagogy in Deaf Education: Bilingual Methodology and Staff Development*. This breakthrough article was

the result of a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education to “improve language teaching practices of teachers who work with deaf children using current bilingual theories and pedagogical techniques (Nover & Andrews, 1999, p. vii). The result was the developing of a conceptual framework of ASL/English Bilingual Staff Development which later became the pedagogy for many schools for the deaf to adopt. The revolutionary nature of this work at that time must not go unacknowledged. This application of critical pedagogy was a rare move, led by Deaf individuals, in what could be considered a rebellion against and a departure from the positivist ideologies of Special Education.

However, Nover and Andrews focused only on the bilingual/bicultural education branch of critical pedagogy, leaving other mechanisms of the curriculum of colonization unaddressed. For example, their application of critical pedagogy did not address the connection between elite White men who were involved in educational policy-making and also members of eugenic organizations (Sheldon, 1999). As a result, colonialism responded in full, drawing on the economic and social capital of eugenicists. The approaches were methodical and true to colonial form. Fashioned after the same approaches employed by earlier eugenicists described in Sheldon (1999), the efforts of oralists were well-coordinated. Deploying ableism and linguicism, propaganda to parents, and medical professionals discouraged parents from exposing their children to Sign Language citing it as a hindrance to the development of spoken English. Despite the research disproving this claim, those who promote oralism (now reframed as Listening and Spoken Language), continue to use this claim with parents and educators. With support from well- funded and -connected organizations, the oralist assault on bilingual deaf education has been detrimental on the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children; further solidifying colonial hold. By 2013, approximately 75% of Deaf, DeafBlind,

DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students were schooled in mainstream settings with little to no Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peers (Shirin, 2013). This example of critical pedagogy applied in a limited way is but one of the reasons I lean on critical indigenous pedagogy. CIP is one way that critical pedagogies have been re-conceptualized in different contexts. Through CIP, many of the cited limitations to the applications of critical pedagogy are being addressed. Below I expound on some of the tenets of CIP that I believe address the curriculum of colonization.

### **Critical (Indigenous) Pedagogy as ‘Radical Love’ and Humanizing**

I would like to focus specifically on the radical strand of critical pedagogy which is found in the work of Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux as it is this strand that has been used to construct critical indigenous pedagogy. At this point, highlighting some of Freire’s and Giroux’s concepts and making the connections to critical indigenous pedagogy would be practical. According to Freire, at the foundation of critical pedagogy is “radical love.” The ending of human suffering is one way that radical love is achieved. Freire promoted critical pedagogy as a pedagogy of possibility when it is rooted in love, respect, and justice (Kincheloe, 2008).

Critical pedagogy also addresses Fanon’s concept of dehumanization through radical love. “Within Freire’s system of pedagogy, an individual’s ontological vocation is to be a subject who acts upon, and transforms, the world in order to become more fully human” (Krank & Steiner, 2000, p. x). According to Freire, any act that limits human potential is oppressive and dehumanizing (Krank & Steiner, 2000). Although critics would problematize how “limit human potential” is defined and by whom, I believe critical indigenous pedagogy provides more clarity. Building on previous discussions about the dehumanizing effects of colonization on both the colonized and the colonizer, CIP centers radical love and humanization by embodying them in

the decolonization project. Waziyatawin and Yellow Bird (2005) define decolonization as “the intelligent, calculated, and active resistance to the forces of colonialism that perpetuate the subjugation and/or exploitation of our minds, bodies, and lands, and it is engaged for the ultimate purpose of overturning the colonial structure and realizing Indigenous [and other colonized peoples] liberation” (p. 5). McCaslin and Breton (2008) outlined three reasons for commitment to decolonization, which highlights the roots of radical love and humanization within critical indigenous pedagogy. First, decolonization is critical for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Prior to the colonial project, Indigenous peoples’ knowledge entailed how to exist in good relationships. Good relationships included cultural integrity, being promoted, respected, and honored as a human being. However, colonization resulted in the destruction of relationships and dehumanization of all those involved. CIP holds that any act that is destructive to the well-being of one individual cannot be good for other individuals. Likewise, dehumanizing others also dehumanizes those who benefit materially or otherwise from the dehumanization of others. Second, rule by force is inherently oppressive and cannot turn benign or benevolent (McCaslin & Breton, 2008). Therefore, any projects with the goal of decolonization is not done with the purpose of “tweaking the existing colonial system to make it...a little less oppressive” (Waziyatawin & Yellow Bird, 2005, p. 4); the goal is to dismantle the curriculum of colonization itself by returning to and reclaiming Indigenous [and other oppressed groups’] ways of knowing before colonization. Third, McCaslin and Breton (2008) state that we must recognize colonizers as well as when we, the colonized, are “wearing the colonizer’s coat” (p. 513). Solórzano and Yosso (2002) also describes this as when People of Color [and any other (multiply-) marginalized group] buy into and perpetuate majoritarian or master narratives. In this way, we not only seek to decolonize the system, but also ourselves. The decolonization of the mind is a

way towards healing, recovery, and journeying to developing a sense of authentic humanity. CIP centers the healing and transforming of relationships as a way to everyone becoming “whole.”

### **Critical (Indigenous) Pedagogy in Opposition to Imperialism and Colonialism**

Critical pedagogy evaluates and foregrounds the relationship between schooling, imperialism, politics, and liberation (McLaren, 2000). There has yet to be an approach to educating the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations that is committed to individual and social transformation in the United States. The goal of schooling in the United States has been to deliver students who have a specific set of skills as the end result, but this comes at the expense of becoming proactive change agents (McLaren, 2003).

Critical pedagogy also analyzes schooling as the product of historical influences. In contrast to the presumed depoliticized approach taken by teacher preparation programs, critical pedagogy positions teaching and learning as a political and partial process (McLaren, 2003). In analyzing the social, political, economic, and institutional contexts of schooling practices, success is measured in a child’s ability to participate and contribute to the social order and to society through gainful employment. As a result, schooling supports the existing social structure in a class-based society. In contrast to schooling, Freire states that education should be a vehicle for liberation. Therefore, there is no neutral educational process. Education is either a tool for liberation or a tool to keep learners assimilated into a system of oppression (Kranz & Steiner, 2000).

Critical indigenous pedagogy provides a more in-depth way to analyze the effects of colonial consciousness in schooling described by Grande (2004): advancement of independence, achievement through competition, and detachment from sources of local and personal knowledge. CIP problematizes how the push for independence in schooling is antithetical to

Indigenous Peoples' focus on relationships and connectedness to people. The concept of independence also reinforces the hierarchies necessary for capitalism to function. In the school context, this translates to necessitating that there are “good” students and “bad” students; “high achieving” students and “low achieving” students. Without these stratifications, there is no way of identifying who is excelling and who is failing based on the abstract standards of excellence that are administered in schools.

CIP also is concerned with returning to sources of local and personal knowledge and recovering traditional knowledges. These knowledges include how to be in good relation with others and with the land (McCaslin & Breton, 2008). Colonial consciousness has positioned traditional knowledges as inferior and not rational, while uplifting certain brands of science as the intellectual authority. Freire addresses this by first reframing what “rational” is by disconnecting it from knowledge, and instead attaching it to action. Freire re-imagines *rational* as any act that is inherently evolutionary, dynamic or generative that is enacted for the purpose of social transformation (Krank & Steiner, 2000). In this framing, individual transformation begins with subjective reflection, which then leads to *rational* action upon the world in order for all individuals to become more fully human. CIP also challenges claims about the neutrality and objectivity of science. “From the critical pedagogical perspective, Euroscience’s so called neutral search for truth is better understood as an ethnocentric justification of self-interested and exploitative colonial actions” (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 5). A hallmark of Western science is its claims of “universal truths.” This is evident in, for example, the establishment of the Bell curve and the implementation of standardization in schooling. When those at the margins ‘write back’, ‘talk back’, and ‘research back’ about the oppression they experience at the hands of these “universal truths” (e.g., the outcomes of marginalized and colonized students in the current

schooling system), the response of those who ascribe to Western science has been defensiveness (e.g., there is something inherently wrong with the students because other students (White students) do succeed in this system) and a refusal to engage in subjective reflection. Critical pedagogy critiques these responses.

### **Critical (Indigenous) Pedagogy and Knowledge**

CIP not only problematizes whose knowledge is valued and transmitted, it also problematizes the conceptualization of knowledge. Freire (1973) argued that many educators are prevented from analyzing their teaching practices and curriculum use based on their consciousness; and consciousness is inextricably tied to knowledge. He contrasts naïve consciousness and critical consciousness. Naïve consciousness is a state of existing within society and the system of schooling and perceives this reality to be a static entity. The naïve thinker seeks to accommodate “today” and be normalized into this perceived static reality. In this sense, the naïve thinker remains in a state of lacking agency and self-hood. In contrast, critical consciousness reflects a state of questioning the construction of reality and understanding that reality is a process grounded in historical contexts. The critical thinker seeks to constantly transform this reality, rejecting the script to be “well-behaved” and fitting in. According to Freire, knowledge comes in as an emancipatory and political act. The shift from naïve consciousness to critical consciousness is the beginning of emancipatory knowledge and knowledge is inseparably tied to praxis (action).

Gramsci also argued that knowledge was instrumental in, what he called, the “war of positions” (Gramsci, 1971; Mayo, 2000). The war of positions is a process of “wide-ranging social organization and cultural influence” (Mayo, 2000, p. 253) wherein the *intellectuals* play an essential role. He reforms perceptions of the traditional intellectual and instead writes on *organic*

*intellectuals*. Organic intellectuals are cultural and educational workers who specialize in legitimation (Mayo, 2000). In Gramsci's formulation of organic intellectuals, *organic* is used to describe the worker's allegiance; this allegiance is either to the dominant group or to the oppressed groups. Although, I will emphasize here that groups of people can be oppressed in one context while privileged and oppressors in other contexts. Therefore, these alliances are always shifting depending on the local context. In Gramsci's description, if workers are organic to the dominant group, they seek to legitimize individuals into the current hegemonic structures and systems. In other words, cultural and educational workers (teachers) organic to the current colonial and oppressive structures (the status quo), create what Freire refers to as naïve students. In contrast, if cultural and educational workers are organic to subordinated and oppressed groups, they are seeking to create critical consciousness in their students.

Therefore, critical pedagogy affirms that schooling, knowledge, and cultural politics must be analyzed together, paving ways to transform both the schooling system and society at large.

[S]chools have always functioned in ways that rationalize the knowledge industry[;]...that reproduce inequality, racism, sexism, homophobia [etc.]; and that [place] an emphasis on competitiveness and cultural ethnocentrism...It is always implicated in relations of power, social practices, and the favoring of forms of knowledge that support a specific vision of past, present, and future. (McLaren, 2003, p. 187)

One of imperialism's and colonialism's mechanisms for sustaining hegemony has been to keep even those who work within the schooling system from recognizing how interwoven schooling, knowledge, and cultural politics are. McLaren (2003) notes that teachers are kept from studying political and sociological theory, especially Marxist, feminist, and post-colonial theories. This

hindering of critical consciousness begins in teacher preparation programs. As a result, most teachers never engage in subjective reflection, and by default become organic to the dominant society structures, initiating and assimilating their students into the same system. Another mechanism of imperialism and colonialism has been to put a leash on critical pedagogy. McLaren (2003) described this as the sterilization, vulgarization, domestication of critical pedagogy resulting in its limited and/or superficial applications. One example of this is how “critical” has been co-opted into a cognitive skill instead of a reflective practice; meaning Freire’s “critical” in *critical consciousness* has been co-opted to be limited to cognitive (higher level thinking) skills instead of the constant critique and analysis of everyday social and political life that Freire intended.

### **Critical (Indigenous) Pedagogy as Liberation**

Any liberating education process must start with a language of critique; an explicit analysis of the ties between the educational system (local context) and the systemic and structural forms of dominance within the larger social context (Mayo, 2000). CIP embodies this language of critique in the decolonization project. Through decolonization, CIP “critically engages at all levels of imperialism, colonialism, and postcoloniality” (Smith, 1999, p. 20). CIP holds that everything is performative and the performative is always pedagogical. Furthermore, the pedagogical is always political. Therefore, when critical theory is used to analyze the local context—schooling in this case—it must be grounded in the “politics, circumstances, and economies of a particular moment, a particular time and place, a particular set of problems, struggles, and desires” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 9). Additionally, being born out of the intersection of many discourses, namely: the post-colonial (Edward Said), subaltern (Antonio Gramsci), First Nation, Red Pedagogies (Sandy Grande), post-poststructuralism criticism,

cultural critique, critical race feminism, critical White studies, Latinx criticism/critical theories (LatCrit), critical pedagogy, pragmatic action theory, participatory action research, critical race and queer theories (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) —language of critique is inherent in CIP.

A liberating education process must also include what Gramsci calls a language of possibility. CIP offers this language of possibility. All inquiry within CIP is understood to be both political and moral and critical methods are used for the sole purpose of social justice (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). All inquiry through CIP should be “ethical, performative, healing, transformative, decolonizing, and participatory...[it must be] committed to dialogue, community, self-determination, and cultural autonomy...[and simultaneously] unruly, disruptive, critical, and dedicated to the goals of justice and equity” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 2). It is through approaches that embody these principles that liberation for subordinated and oppressed peoples can be realized. It is through these approaches that we can learn to live again in good relations and humanity can be restored both in the colonized and the colonizer.

### **Critical Race Theory (CRT) and CRT in Education**

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), one explicit goal of CIP is to extend “localized critical (race) theory and the principles of radical democracy to all aspects of [the decolonization project]” (p. xi). For this reason, it is important to have an understanding of critical race theory (CRT) in education. Solórzano (2013) directly linked CRT to critical pedagogy in a discussion of how to apply Freirean critical pedagogy in CRT. Like critical pedagogy, the anti-essentialist strand of critical race theory has become the foundation for other works that may inform solutions and lens of analysis for the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. Some examples of spin-off movements of CRT include: Critical Race Feminism (FemCrit); QueerCrit, which is represented in the work of MJ Bienvenu; Critical Deaf

Theory (DeafCrit), first theorized by Deaf scholar Genie Gertz (2003) to examine audism in society; Latino/a Critical Race Theory (LatCrit), which Deaf Latina scholar Carla García-Fernández (2014) has used to analyze the Deaf Latinx experience in secondary education; newly theorized Disability Critical Race Studies (DisCrit); and newly theorized Critical Language and Race Theory (LangCrit). Also like critical pedagogy, CRT calls for social activism as part of any CRT project. In their discussions of connects between CIP and CRT, Ladson-Billings and Donnor (2008) emphasized the moral and ethical responsibilities that should be embodied within different epistemologies. CRT, like CIP, is a vehicle for these epistemologies to be brought forth. Therefore, the goals of CRT are to always engage with the purpose of social change.

Critical race theory originated in the 1970s in the field of legal studies from the minds of legal scholars Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, and Richard Delgado. With influences from critical legal studies (CLS) and radical feminism, the aim of the movement was to resume and expand on the work of the Civil Rights Movement to include less explicit forms of racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Although not every critical race theorist subscribes to all tenets of CRT, there are common tenets that form the foundation of the legal scholarship. These common tenets inform CRT in the field of education. CRT was transposed to education from legal studies in the mid- 1990s by Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate (1995). They proposed common themes of CRT that are derived from the tenets of the legal studies literature and are applicable to education (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006; Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993):

- CRT recognizes that racism is pervasive and permanent part of American society
- CRT challenges dominant claims of objectivity, neutrality, colorblindness<sup>3</sup>, and merit

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<sup>3</sup> This is the term used in the original text. Subsequently, I use the phrase *color evasiveness* to refer to the same phenomenon in order to not perpetuate the use of “blind” as a negative or defective quality.

- CRT challenges ahistoricism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of law [education]
- CRT insists on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color in analyzing law [education] and society
- CRT is interdisciplinary
- CRT works toward eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression

These themes are discussed in more detail subsequently; *Figure 7* presents a genealogy of CRT in education.

### **Racism as Endemic in United States Society**

CRT asserts that race is deeply engrained in the legal, culture, and psychological maintenance of life in the United States. Non-white individuals are racialized and positioned relative to White people and white ideology. This white ideology is tied to privileges and benefits that are not afforded to racialized peoples. Harris (1993) extended the understanding of the effects of racializing people by analyzing the benefits to White people. The United States is based on property rights (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Though property can refer to land, which is evident in the laws that were created to strip Indigenous peoples of their land, property also refers to one's ownership of certain rights. Property as rights includes the right to exclude, which was evident in the denial of (quality) schooling to racialized and minoritized (non-White) people (Harris, 1993). Yet Harris (1993) asserted that the ideology of whiteness is itself an intangible property in which the legal and schooling systems have vested interest. In agreement with Harris, Donnor (2013) asserted that schooling is one of the properties of White people. The connection between property and schooling is explicit in the ties to capitalism (e.g., those with

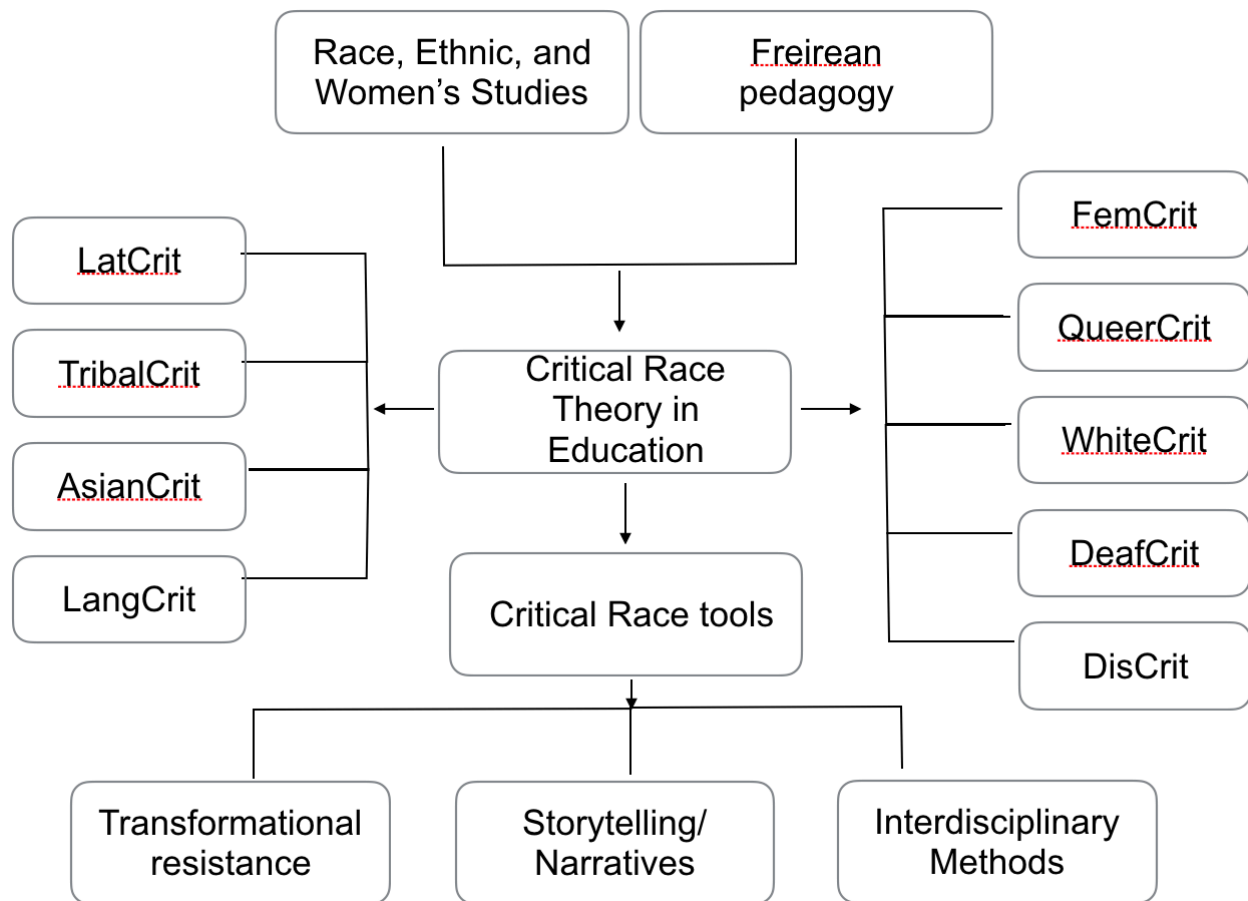


Figure 7. *Critical Race Theory in Education Genealogy* (Adapted from Solórzano, 2013 and Crump, 2014)

[image description: Black text boxes with black text on all white background. Two side by side boxes at top, center of the image read (left to right): “Race, Ethnic, and Women’s Studies” and “Freirean pedagogy.” The two boxes have a conjoining arrow that leads down to box that says “Critical Race Theory in Education” at the center of the image. This box has three arrows leading away from it. Arrow leading to the left has four boxes stacked vertically that read: “LatCrit”, “TribalCrit”, “AsianCrit”, and “LangCrit.” Arrow leading to the right has five boxes stacked vertically that read: “FemCrit”, “QueerCrit”, “WhiteCrit”, “DeafCrit”, and “DisCrit.” Arrow leading down the middle points to box that says “Critical Race tools.” This box has three arrows leading downward to three side by side boxes that read (left to right): “Transformational resistance”, “Storytelling/Narratives”, and “Interdisciplinary Methods.”]

better property— higher property taxes—have better funded schools). The connection between property and schooling is implicit in many ways. It is implicit in the intellectual property through curriculum that favors the dominant group, to which racialized and minoritized groups do not typically have access; in the educational policies that support(ed) individualism and (school) choice; and in the evoking of choice (e.g., white flight, voucher programs), individualism, and color evasiveness by White people, which prevent access to quality schooling and learning opportunities for racialized students (Donnor, 2013; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In addition to whiteness as property, another important concept that CRT explores to account for why racism is pervasive and unrelenting in United States society is interest convergence. Donnor (2013) stated that over time, White people have to come depend on and “expect a unique and exclusive set of benefits, predispositions, and socioeconomic privileges” (p. 199). This is a system of privilege that White people, and other dominant groups, may or may not admit to or recognize they benefit from. As a result of this, the interests of racialized and minoritized people in achieving equality and living in their full humanity, will always be denied, unless these interests merge with the interests of the dominant group members (Bell, 1980). Milner, Pearman, and McGee (2013) conceptualized interest convergence in two ways: self and systemic interests—difficult to expose racism and work for racial equality when the interests of racialized/minoritized peoples and the dominant group are in perceived conflict— and loss/gain binary—dominant group has to sacrifice something which can be material or non-material (i.e., loss of property of Whiteness). With this in mind, Bell (1980) asserted that the law alone, which is constructed in the interests of White people, will not provide racial equality to racialized people as long as that remedy threatens the historical and current benefits to Whites and upsets the social status of upper and middle class White people.

Due to both whiteness and property and interest convergence, though they had yet to be officially theorized, Bell (1992) and other racial realists hold that racial oppression will remain permanent in the United States. However, Bell (1992) argued that though racial oppression will never be eradicated, we should still struggle against racial oppression and racism, because the struggle itself is what empowers racialized and minoritized peoples. Buras' (2013) racial realism paradigm is one example of answering Bell's call to accept racial realism while using it as an analytical tool to continue struggling against racism within educational policy. Buras' (2013) critical analysis of educational policy in New Orleans using a racial realism paradigm is evidence that accepting racial realism does not demand accepting society and the schooling system as is.

### **Critique of Liberalism and Ahistoricism**

CRT challenges dominant claims of objectivity, neutrality, color evasiveness, and merit. Most oppression is not recognized as oppression by the perpetrator (Lawrence, 1987). As a result, oppression is rationalized and, therefore, there are few signals for the oppressor to engage in self-examination. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) hold that objectivity, neutrality, color evasiveness and meritocracy are codes that camouflage the maintenance of the self-interests of dominant groups in the United States. Though these concepts are promoted in many liberal education agendas, the result is not a realization of equality for racialized and minoritized students. Instead, the result is the perpetuating of oppressive and hegemonic forces. For example, color evasiveness signals that race is a malady that stands in contrast to the scheme of whiteness. To ignore it is to reinforce that race and color is something to be ashamed of; both racialized students and White students internalize non-Whiteness as an abnormality (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006).

Crenshaw (1988) provided a critique of liberalism which can also be applied to liberal education agendas. Crenshaw (1988) distinguished between expansive equality and restrictive equality within liberal agendas. These perspectives are not mutually exclusive; instead they exist in tandem. From the perspective of expansive equality, the focus is on the outcome. The outcome is to end racial oppression through the use of institutional power. From the restrictive equality perspective, the focus is not on the outcome; instead, the focus is on the process of seeking equality in order to prevent future injustices. This perspective ignores the current manifestations of past inequalities and injustices. In schooling, the restrictive perspective is embodied in discourses and approaches to schooling racialized and minoritized students by treating them the same as White students, regardless of the disproportionate outcomes. In contrast to the restrictive perspective, the expansive perspective would require teachers to address race as a factor in the differential outcomes of racialized and minoritized students.

Embedded in Crenshaw's description of expansive and restrictive equality perspectives is a lens to critique of liberal agendas, as well as the critique of decontextualization and ahistoricism. CRT insists on a contextual/historical analysis of schooling. This tenet of CRT would problematize the restrictive perspective of equality for de-contextualizing race and the current impacts of historical injustices. Therefore, all educational practices, student experiences, and student outcomes must be situated in both the historical and local contexts. This tenet also opens analysis to race as a social construct that has impacted non-White and White people, though in different ways. For example, this tenet would address how Whiteness has shifted historically when it benefitted the dominant group (interest convergence).

## **Evoking of Storytelling and Counternarratives**

Another central tenet to CRT is the recognition of the experiential knowledge of racialized and minoritized people in analyzing law, schooling, and society. Storytelling is a way to counter the dominant group, normalized narratives. They provide an understanding of a different reality than that which is presented as normal. The purpose of storytelling is not to represent one *voice*. Instead the goal is to represent the common experiences of racialized and minoritized peoples at the hands of dominant group oppression. Crenshaw (1989) referred to this as “shifting the frame” while Matsuda (1987) referred to this as “looking to the bottom [the margins].” The use of storytelling and counternarratives are a way of asserting the experiences of racialized and minoritized peoples as sources of knowledge (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006). The eliciting and privileging of storytelling and voice in CRT is also reinforced in CRT’s call for use of interdisciplinary methods. Included in the use of interdisciplinary methods is the shift to qualitative perspectives as opposed to the quantitative “numbers speak for themselves” perspective. Stories and narratives then, become valid forms of “evidence” (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006).

## **Critique of the Applications of CRT in Education**

CRT has yet to be applied extensively in the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations due to the essentializing of these populations as one culture. Furthermore, with the debates around schooling Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students focusing predominantly on what Van Cleve (2016) terms the “language wars”, at the expense of addressing colonization and kyriocentrism, there has been little focus on applying frameworks such as CRT to the local context. It appears that Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing scholars of color and multiply-marginalized hearing scholars

of color are the only ones attempting to apply the CRT lens to the field of Deaf Education. My work in the current study will continue this tradition. Unfortunately, the number of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in higher education are few and their voices are overshadowed by hearing individuals whose research agendas tend to serve hearing interests. Therefore, the tradition of marginalized researching marginalized is perpetuated. The findings of these studies may continue to be pushed aside as simply the Deaf (Person of Color) intellectual concerned with the “Deaf (Person of Color) problem.”

In an act of what could be called radical community love and ‘researching back’, García-Fernández (2014)—a Deaf Latinx woman of color—and Lissa Stapleton (2014)—a hearing Black Queer woman—applied LatCrit and CRT, respectively, to the experiences of \*Deaf\* students of color at the secondary and higher education levels, respectively. Using qualitative research methods, they used CRT to tell the story of how intersecting identities of being \*Deaf\* and a racialized/minoritized student played out in the schooling context. In both these studies, CRT was applied as the theoretical framework of the studies. These works have added to the ways we analyze the experiences of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students of color. However, Windsong (2018) argues for the application of CRT’s intersectionality tenet in the theoretical framework, in the data collection process, as well as the data analysis process. This is what I have attempted to accomplish in the current study.

### **Critical Race Theory and Critical Indigenous Pedagogy as Research Tools**

There are many points of confluence between critical race theory and critical indigenous pedagogy. Arguably the most essential point of agreement is the requirement of social activism. Both CRT and CIP call for the development of scholarship that will fight for human liberation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Ladson-Billings & Donner, 2008). With this goal in mind, there are

many overlapping tenets and approaches to working towards the liberation of racialized and minoritized people. Like CIP (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), Ladson-Billings and Donner (2008) argued that CRT is not limited to “old notions of race” but is instead a “new analytic rubric for considering difference and inequity using multiple methodologies—story, voice, metaphor, analogy, critical social science, feminism, postmodernism” (p. 73). The use of narratives and the rejection of “objective” and “neutral” scholarship are critical to CRT and CIP. Both CRT and CIP have a strong qualitative tradition making them perfectly suited for the goals and research question that guided the current study.

### **Intersectionality and Counterstorytelling**

“In considering story as both method and meaning, it is presented as a culturally nuanced way of knowing... Within Indigenous epistemologies, there are two general forms of stories... stories that hold mythical elements... and there are personal narratives of place, happenings, and experiences...”

—Margaret Kovach (2009, Chapter 5, Section 1, para. 3-4)

### **Intersectionality**

Related to the essentializing of knowledge and truth, CRT and CIP address the essentializing of identities as well. Essentialism is the opposite of intersectionality. It assumes that everyone within a cultural group has a single identity, and think and act uniformly based on that single identity (Hutchinson, 1999; Delgado, 1993). Essentialism is also a form of violence and cultural imperialism, masking the experiences of those who do not fit societies constructed standard/norm. Both frameworks address the issue of peoples being kept from the fullness of all their identities (Brayboy, 2013). For example, Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) holds that colonization, like race, is endemic. By acknowledging both colonization and race as persistent,

these frameworks open space to directly confronting and reducing the effects of colonization (Brayboy, 2013). The essentializing of identities is taken up through the decolonization project of CIP and through intersectionality in CRT. *Intersectionality* is a crucial analytical tool that is supported by critical pedagogy, but theorized in CRT. Hinting toward the connections of intersectionality and critical pedagogy, Freire (1997) stated:

[W]hat I have been proposing from my political convictions, my philosophical convictions, is a profound respect for the total autonomy of the educator. What I have been proposing is a profound respect for the cultural identity of students—a cultural identity that implies respect for the language of the other, the color of the other, the gender of the other, the class of the other, the sexual orientation of the other, the intellectual capacity of the other; that implies the ability to stimulate the creativity of the other. But these things take place in a social and historical context and not in pure air. These things take place in history, and I, Paulo Freire, am not the owner of history. (pp. 307-308)

Critical race theorist and legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) first coined the term to describe the injustice perpetrated in anti-discrimination law by focusing solely on a single-axis framework of how a person could experience discrimination. Crenshaw (1991) asserts that when concerning multiple identities, power relations must be analyzed at the position of their intersection. You cannot fully understand the whole identity by investigating each part separately. So in the case of anti-discrimination, the law at the time stated that an individual could experience discrimination on the basis of race *or* on the basis of gender, but not both. This analysis ignored the experience of women of color who are both raced and gendered. Intersectionality “[is] meant to...identify the mechanisms of power functioning on and through

identity groups, thereby highlighting complex power problems” (Vaught & Hernandez, 2013, p. 376). Although Crenshaw coined intersectionality, the foundations were laid earlier in the works Fanon’s stretched dialectic of oppression and in the works of Black feminists such as Andre Lorde (1934- 1992), bell hooks, and the Combahee River Collective.

Crenshaw (1991) formulated intersectionality related to gendered racism in the following ways: structural intersectionality (the convergence of systems of oppression that impact several aspects of an oppressed individual’s life), political intersectionality (existing at the intersections of at least two subordinated groups that often have conflicting political agendas), and representational intersectionality (how representation in popular culture reinforces/reproduces racial and gender hierarchies). Although the term initially centered gendered racism (Crenshaw, 1989), intersectionality has been applied across a wide range of intersectional identity and contexts. In keeping with gendered racism, Lewis & Neville (2015) explored microaggressions using intersectionality to develop a quantitative scale. Lewis, Williams, Peppers, & Gadson (2017) used intersectionality framework to explore the influence of gendered racism on the self-reported mental and physical health of Black women in the university setting. Applications of intersectionality beyond gendered racism can be found in Purdue-Vaughns and Eibach’s (2008) intersectional invisibility model. This model revisited intersectionality to develop a model to explain how individuals with “multiple subordinate-group identities” are excluded from the prototype of their identity groups (Purdue-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Their intersectional invisibility model undertook explaining why, for example, Queer Black women did not fit society’s prototype expectation of a Black woman; or how poor, gay, White men did not fit the prototype for (straight) White men. More recently, Deaf Queer activist-scholar Rezenet Moges (2017) used crip theory and intersectionality to conduct a literature review on being queer and

Deaf. She applied intersectionality to queering Deaf identity and expounded on her own experience of being Black, Queer, and Deaf.

Intersectionality has also been adopted and applied to the field of education to describe the different experiences of individuals who experience marginalization or inequity based on two or more identity factors converging in a given situation. Intersectionality frameworks have been used to explore educational policy (see Gillborn, 2013), the experiences of racialized students in higher education (see Teranishi & Pazich, 2013; Szymanski & Lewis, 2016; and Stapleton, 2014), K-12 education (see Gillborn, Rollock, Vincent & Ball, 2016; and García-Fernández, 2014). More educational researchers are also using intersectionality in their work (e.g. Choo and Ferree, 2010; Shields, 2008; Ferri & Connor, 2005; and King Thorius & Tan, 2016). Though researchers (e.g., Garcia and Ortiz, 2013) have long argued the need for and how an intersectionality framework can be applied in research in Special Education, intersectional analyses of the experiences of students have yet to become common practice in the field of Special Education, in which Deaf Education is situated.

There is on the whole, a lack of inquiries into the structural, political, and representational intersectionality of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people in the United States and how their educational experiences have been impacted by these types of intersectionality. This is due to the curriculum of colonization and the fact that there is very little published *by* DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, Hard of Hearing, and DeafQueer, etc. who also live at the intersections of multiple marginalized/racialized identities. However, one noteworthy observation is that more is happening outside of academia (e.g., through social media, social justice workshops, community movements such as pro-tactile movement (Nuccio & Granda, 2013; Edwards, 2014), presentations through community organizations such as Council de

Manos, and trainings, etc.). Importantly, most of these efforts *are* predominantly led by Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals who are also People of Color.

I sought to expand on the work of Deaf Scholars of Color who have come before me by attempting to address intersectionality. I used Windsong's (2018) approach of intersectionality as social constructionism by establishing a foundation of identities as socially constructed within the curriculum of colonization and kyriocentrism; of intersectionality as relational by analyzing the dominant positions that stand in opposition to the subordinated groups described in this dissertation; and intersectionality as a unique experience that amounts to more than just the added effects of various marginalized identities. My reason for incorporating so many facets of intersectionality was to avoid what Choo and Ferree (2010) referred to as the under-theorization of intersectionality. This under-theorization involved presenting intersectionality as a scoring of a person's oppression or privilege while ignoring the unique experience the intersections of identity markers creates of one's daily life (Windsong, 2018). Under-theorization of intersectionality in research studies also take the form of presenting positions of privilege and oppression as static and unchanging in various contexts. Documenting the stories of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled and Hard of Hearing individuals allowed for expansion on how we have conceived of intersectional experiences within the larger context of colonization in schooling.

### **Counterstorytelling**

Both CRT and CIP call for moral and ethical responsibilities embodied within different epistemologies—with both applying storytelling and counternarratives as part of these epistemologies. Storytelling is upheld as political and not without social implications; storytelling, in fact, is the mechanism that contextualizes by connecting past, present, and future

(Dunbar, 2008). Storytelling is also a tool for talking back and researching back to the dominant group narrative. CRT and CIP recognize that historically and currently, the dominant group(s) are centered and those pushed to the margins are defined based on this center (Dunbar, 2008). Therefore, storytelling presents the multiple truths that exist in contrast to the one truth, single reality that is presented in dominant narratives. CRT (and CIP) asks “Whose stories are privileged in educational contexts and whose stories are distorted and silenced?” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 36).

Counterstorytelling has been used as a political strategy within the United States (Baszile, 2015). Over time, counterstorytelling has been expanded by “legal scholars, educational researchers, sociologists, and policy analysts...as a vehicle to understand how juridical, educational, social, political, epistemological, and other structural apparatuses produce and reify social inequalities along racial and class lines” (Atwood & López, 2014; see Bell, 1992; Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995; Delgado, 1989; Delgado Bernal, 2002; Lynn & Dixon, 2013; Parker, Deyhle, & Villenas, 1999). Baszile (2015) described counterstorytelling as the first movement for social justice in the United States. Counterstorytelling provided one way of challenging objectivity and rationality as the only ways of practicing democracy and constructing narratives, particularly about People of Color (Baszile, 2015). Decuir-Gunby and Walker-DeVose (2013) described three types of counterstorytelling employed in CRT: personal stories/narratives, which are one’s own auto-biographical experiences; other people’s stories or narratives, which are situated within sociohistorical contexts and most-commonly used in CRT research; and, composite stories and narratives, which can be both autobiographical or biographical. Though composite stories/narratives may be told using quantitative data, they also can be developed from a variety of qualitative data (Decuir-Gunby & Walker-DeVose, 2013). In

Chapter Four I expand on how I merged CIP and CRT for purposes beyond theorizing frameworks, into a decolonizing-intersectionality methodology and data analysis tool.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY**

“[The] legacy of the helping Western colonizing other must be resisted...As agents of colonial power...these practices place control over research in the hands of the Western [hearing, abled, White] scholar...This means, [multiply-marginalized DDBDDHH peoples] are excluded from discussions concerning who has control over the initiation, methodologies, evaluations, assessments, representations, and distribution of the newly defined knowledge.” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 5)

In this chapter, I described the methods used to address the following research question: How do Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people living at the intersections of additional marginalized/racialized identities describe the experiences they have had in formal schooling spaces? There are several traditional methodologies I could have used to approach this research question. However, I felt that in order to address the research question within the theory of the curriculum of colonization, this inquiry required an approach to research which was authentic to me and my journey of decolonization. Though it was not my intention to develop a new methodology, the decolonizing-intersectionality framework that emerged as a result of my own decolonization processes in academia specifically in the field of Deaf Education, was employed here as a research methodology; emphasizing its praxis nature. In this chapter, I describe this methodology in detail. I discuss the research design for this study, data collection and analysis procedures, and limitations of the study.

### **Decolonizing-Intersectionality Framework as Methodology**

I conceptualized the decolonizing-intersectionality framework as a type of disruptive methodology (Bhattacharya, 2018). It is an approach to theory, research, and teaching that challenges colonization and the way forms of subordination intersect in the schooling context in

the United States. Delgado Bernal's (1998) cultural intuition was a major part of this framework as it was the source of my theoretical, methodological, and praxis sensitivities. Delgado Bernal (1998) defined cultural intuition as "a complex process that is experiential, intuitive, historical, personal, collective, and dynamic" (p. 568). It is the extension of "one's personal experience to include collective experience and community memory" (Delgado Bernal, 1998, p. 563-564). My cultural intuition drew on the existing literature, my professional experiences, and my personal experiences as well as my journey of coming to terms with colonization and its effects on my life (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). *Figure 8* shows the theoretical and analytical tools—critical indigenous pedagogy, critical race theory, and the branches of critical race theory—that informed my approaches to this inquiry and the levels of the schooling system that must be impacted by this framework, at minimum. In this dissertation, I applied this framework at the research level—methodological implications—and the K-12 and higher education levels—exploring the experiences of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in these formal schooling contexts. *Figure 9* indicates the (combination of) specific identity markers addressed in this research and the various ways kyriocentrism is enacted on those identity markers. Below, I describe the specific methods used for the decolonizing-intersectionality methodology: identifying the colonizer's coat; removing the colonizer's coat; exploring research frameworks and methods that address colonization and intersectionality; and, coding, analyzing, interpreting, and presenting data with decolonial and intersectional lenses.

### **Identifying the Colonizer's Coat**

The development of a decolonizing-intersectionality framework as a methodology for this research necessitated identifying the colonizer's coat in its historical and current manifestations.

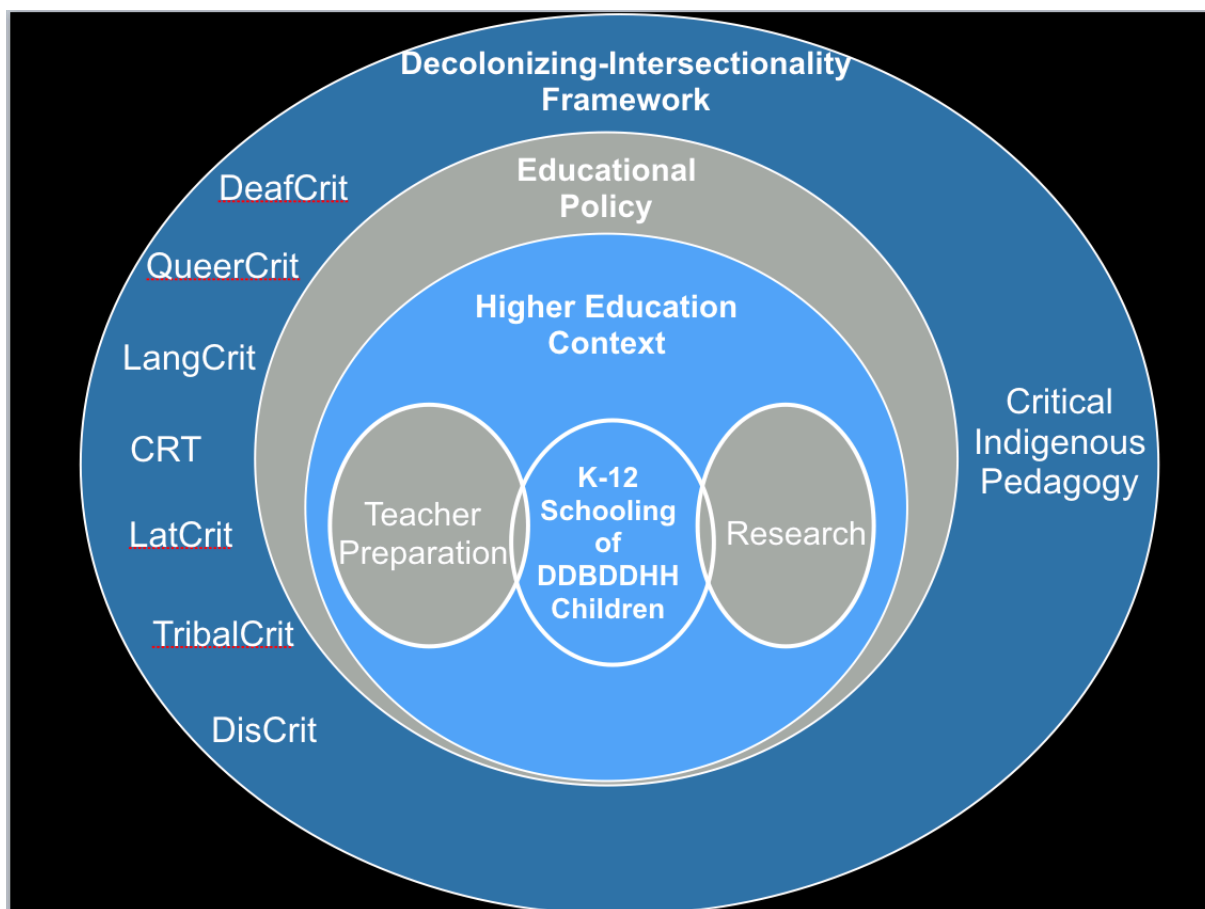


Figure 8. Decolonizing-Intersectionality Framework and Impact Levels

[image description: Black background. Dark blue large circle. White text on top center reads “Decolonizing-Intersectionality Frameworks and Pedagogies.” White text at far right midway down circle reads “Critical (Indigenous) Pedagogy.” White text at far left midway down circle reads “CRT” [critical race theory]. List of CRT branches appear on far left of circle one by one. “DeafCrit, QueerCrit, LangCrit, LatCrit, TribalCrit, DisCrit.” (Progress to next layer) Grey circle couched in center of large dark blue circle has white text at top center of grey circle that reads “Educational Policy.” (Progress to next layer) Light blue circle couched in center of grey circle. At top center of circle, white text reads “Higher Education Context.” (Progress to next layers). Two small grey circles are side-by-side couched in center of light blue circle. Right grey circle reads “Research” in white text. Left grey circle reads “Teacher Preparation” in white text. (Progress to final layer) Transparent circle sits directly in middle of last two circles. White text at center of circle reads “K-12 Schooling of DDBDDHH Children”]

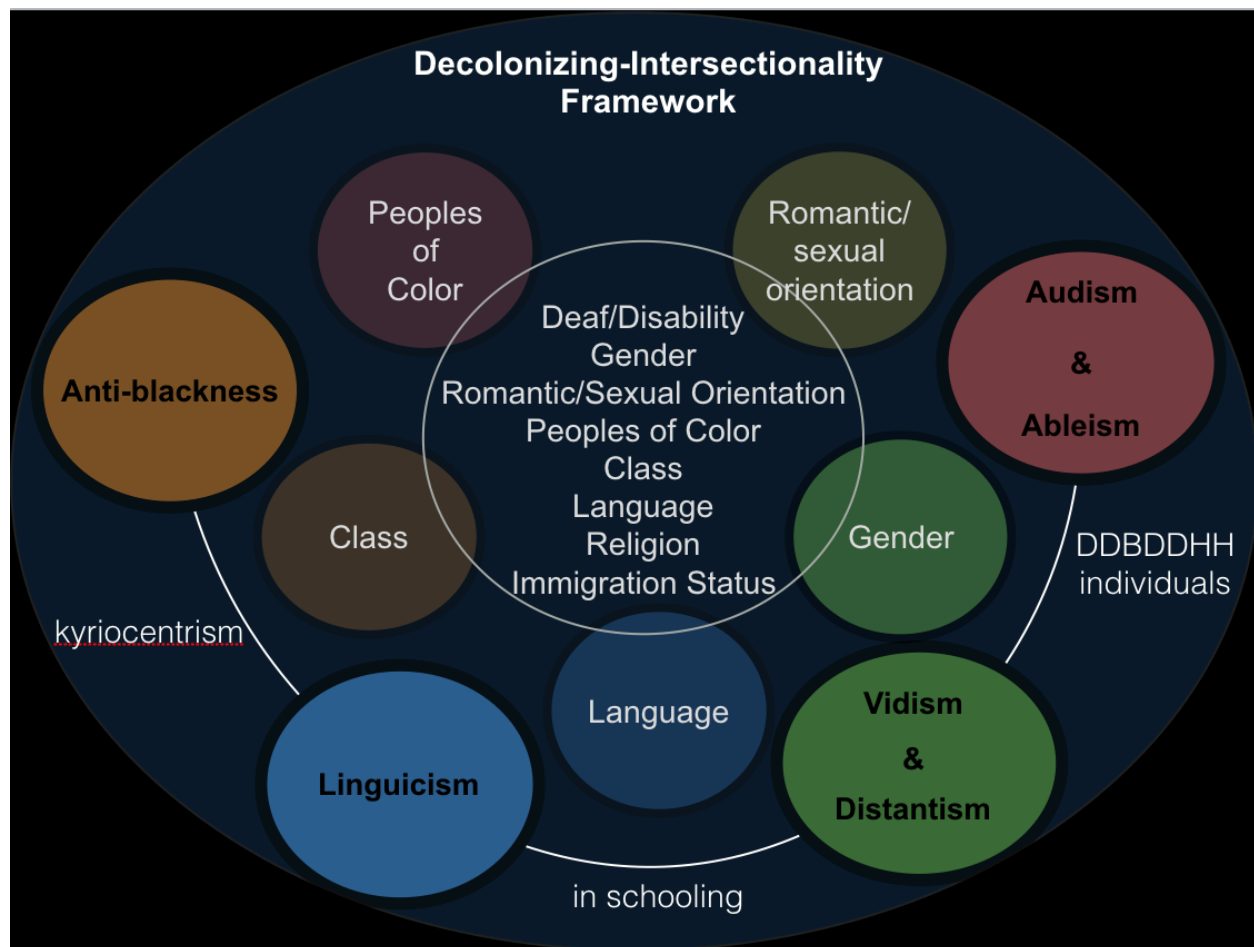


Figure 9. Decolonizing-Intersectionality Framework Addressing Kyriocentrism in Schooling

[image description: Black background. Top of image has white text that reads: Decolonizing-Intersectionality Framework." Circle in center of image lists the following identity markers in white text: "Deaf/Disability, Gender, Romantic/Sexual Orientation, Peoples of Color, Class, Language, Religion, Immigration Status." Five color-filled circles surround the center circle. Dark burgundy circle "Peoples of Color", dark green circle "romantic/sexual orientation", green circle "gender", blue circle "language", brown circle "class." Four color-filled circles arch around the inner circles and have black text that read: orange circle "anti-blackness", blue circle "linguicism", green circle "vidism and distantism", pink circle "audism and ableism." White text surround the circles reading: "kyriocentrism in schooling DDBDDHH individuals."]

In Chapter One, my positionality and personal journey of coming to know colonization were shared in order to understand how those processes have influenced my personal and professional life as well as the framing of this dissertation. Identifying the colonizer's coat was also applied in Chapter Two in the development and exploration of the curriculum of colonization; and particularly, how the curriculum of colonization applies to the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in the United States.

### **Removing the Colonizer's Coat**

This step within the framework moves beyond simply exploring positionality and into how one's behavior is implicated in colonization historically and currently. Some may refer to this as unpacking or critical self-assessment (Bhattacharya, 2018). For me my historical implication was through my teaching methods and approaches, particularly in relation to dis/abled students and forcing them to "disappear into ableness." It wasn't until I was taught by dis/abled adults that I realized how I've been an agent of and complicit in the colonization processes of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students in formal school settings. I was an example of how divided our social movements have been through colonization; I supported Persons of Color while simultaneously oppressing dis/abled persons. My actions demonstrate the importance of examining issues of colonization from an intersectional lens, to address the experiences of colonization by multiply-marginalized individuals.

This step also involved pushing beyond currently-accepted research methods that outline minimum requirements for research ethics but may not use approaches that address colonization and intersectionality. As discussed in Chapter Two, some forms of science and research have been designed and applied in ways that perpetuate and reproduce colonization, particularly in educational research. As a result, I had to understand how mainstream research methods are

implicated in colonization and the impact those methods have traditionally had on multiply-marginalized communities. Therefore, a crucial part of the decolonizing-intersectionality framework is to explore methods and theories that address colonization and intersectionality.

### **Research Methods That Address Colonization and Intersectionality**

In this study, I sought to expand on previous work and use counterstorytelling as a tool to understand how schools reproduce social inequities along ability, sexual orientation, immigration status, language use, and racial and class lines. Using counterstorytelling as a research tool centered the stories of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students and placed their stories in contrast to the current dominant narratives in Deaf Education teaching and research. These stories gave both the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing (and me as the researcher) the “power to construct and influence understandings” of the intersectional experiences of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students within the curriculum of colonization (Griffin, Ward, & Phillips, 2014, p. 1355). In this study, I used critical personal narratives and composite stories/narratives. Focus groups and 1:1 interviews were selected as the method of collecting and documenting stories from Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples.

**Recruiting contributors living at the intersections of multiple sources of marginalization.** A purposive sampling method was used to recruit individuals from various locations throughout the United States. A substantive sample, grounded in the demographic criteria related to the study seemed appropriate. Criteria to participate in the study included the following: 1) must currently live within the United States; 2) must have had some experience with schooling in the United States with a teacher of the \*Deaf\*/DeafBlind (can be at any level); 3) self-identify as DDBDDHH; 4) self-identify as Person of Color (Black, Latinx, Indigenous,

Asian or Pacific Islander), LGBTQI, gender non-binary/conforming, and/or raised in a family that used language other than English in the home; and use American Sign Language (or a dialect of ASL such as Black ASL) and/or Tactile American Sign Language as one of their primary languages. Contributors were recruited using social media posts (Twitter and Facebook presented in both ASL and English), and emails. The purposive sample, quickly became snowball sampling as the first few contributors contacted all of the subsequent contributors to be involved in the study. The sampling procedures for this study resulted in 25 narrative contributors from all over the United States.

Demographic data for the contributors were collected via a brief, electronic scheduling survey distributed in conjunction with the consent form. Additionally, demographic data were compiled during data collection by asking questions specifically related to how contributors identify themselves and by documenting other relevant information they volunteered such as: sexual orientation, parent hearing status, home language use, and parental involvement in school. Information related to gender, sexual orientation, home language, parent hearing status, and parental involvement in school, were not solicited through interview questions if the contributor did not volunteer this information. As a result, the demographic data provided in *Table 1* represents the volunteered information that overlapped all contributors.

Other demographic data shown in *Table 1* are ethnicity and immigration status. Again, contributors were asked how they identified themselves and to list all their preferred identities. This allowed contributors to provide the language for the labels used to describe the contributors' ethnicity. With regards to immigration status, some contributors identified their specific countries of origin, namely those who identified as African and as Asian, and would refer to themselves by the larger ethnic group (e.g., instead of identifying as "Nigerian", a contributor

**Table 1. Contributor Demographic Data Overview**

| Age Range        | Gender        | Home Language                | Immigration Status            | Self-identified Ethnicity               | Parent Hearing Status    | Parent Level of Involvement in School |
|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 20-25 years: 5   | Non-binary: 0 | Sign Language only: 3        | 1 <sup>st</sup> generation: 5 | African: 6                              | Deaf (signer): 2         | High: 8                               |
| 26- 30 years: 10 | Female: 10    | Spanish: 2                   | 1.5 generation: 3             | Asian: 2                                | Deaf (non signer): 1     | Medium: 6                             |
| 31- 35 years: 4  | Male: 15      | Creole: 2                    | 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation: 2 | Black/ Afro-Latinx: 1                   | Hearing (signer): 0      | Low: 2                                |
| 36- 40 years: 3  |               | Multiple Spoken languages: 4 | U.S.-Born: 14                 | Brown Latinx: 1                         | Hearing (non-signer): 19 | Undisclosed: 5                        |
| 41- 45 years: 0  |               | Sign and Spoken Languages: 2 | Undisclosed: 1                | Black/African American: 13              | Undisclosed: 3           | Not applicable: 4                     |
| 46- 50 years: 3  |               | English only: 12             |                               | Haitian American: 1                     |                          |                                       |
|                  |               |                              |                               | Multi-ethnic (Black Native American): 1 |                          |                                       |

may say they are from Nigeria yet call themselves “African”). An important note about the races of the immigrant contributors: six immigrants were from Africa and all identified themselves as racially Black; one immigrant was from the Dominican Republic and identified as racially Black/ of African descent; one immigrant was from the Philippines and did not provide a racial identification. Regarding the contributors born in the United States, one identified as racially Black and (culturally) multi-ethnic; one identified as a Brown Asian (2<sup>nd</sup> generation Indian American); thirteen people identified as racially and culturally Black/ African American; and one identified as African American Haitian. I point this out to highlight that socially-constructed races (Black, Brown, and White) span all ethnic groups and nationalities. For this study

recognizing both the marked races—Black and Brown—are just as important as naming the unmarked race—White—because an individual’s experience within society and within their ethnic groups will vary based on their socially-constructed racial identity.

As shown in *Table 1*, more than half the contributors who participated in this study were born in the United States. Only one contributor did not volunteer or disclose this information. Of the eight contributors who immigrated to the United States, six were from the continent of Africa, one was from the Philippines, and one was from the Dominican Republic. Two additional contributors were first generation children of immigrant parents to the United States, in addition to being first generation Deaf and DeafBlind in their families. Although these two contributors were born in the United States, they also were presented the unique experience of being raised in an immigrant family with parents unfamiliar with the United States K-12 schooling system as well as being Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, or Hard of Hearing in a hearing family.

*Figure 10* shows the contributor group breakdown according to their schooling environment. Of note is that four of the contributors did not attend K-12 schools in the United States. These four contributors immigrated to the United States as adults—1<sup>st</sup> generation immigrants to the United States—in pursuit of post-secondary schooling opportunities. Related to sexual orientation, three contributors openly identified as Queer and discussed their sexual orientation in relation to their school experiences. One additional contributor, though Queer, did not discuss their Queer identity in relation to school experiences. Immigration status is also another set of demographic information worth discussing. Like gender, sexual orientation, home language, parent hearing status, and parent involvement in the participants’ school processes, immigration status was not directly solicited, but volunteered by contributors during the interview process.

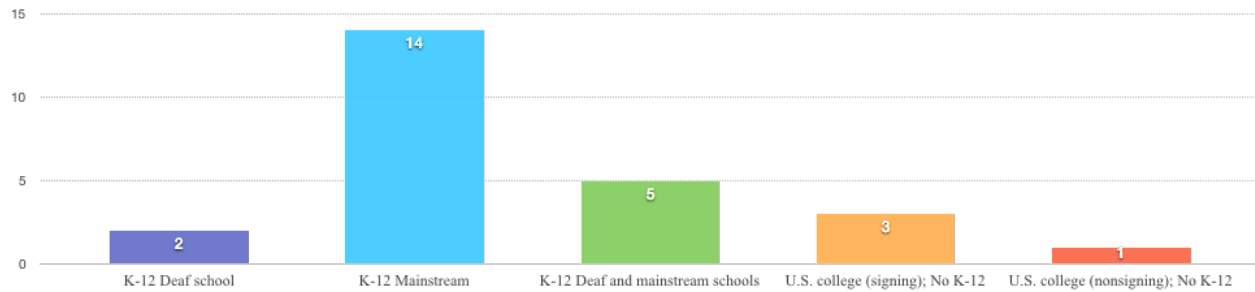


*Figure 10. Contributor Demographic by School Environment*

[image description: bar graph with numbers on x axis ranging from 0 to 15. Graph data from left to right reads: “K-12 Deaf school” represented by a purple bar with “2” on top of bar in white text; “K-12 Mainstream” represented by a blue bar with “14” on top of bar in white text; “K-12 Deaf and mainstream schools” represented by a green bar with “5” on top of bar in white text; “U.S. college (signing); No K-12” represented by an orange bar with “3” on top of bar in white text; “U.S. college (nonsigning); No K-12” represented by a red bar with “1” on top of bar in white text.]

**Research questions and data collection methods engaging intersectionality and colonization.** Focus groups and 1:1 interviews were selected as the method of collecting and documenting stories the study contributors. Focus group interviews are a common method within CRT for collecting counterstories. The focus group interview is a method that was developed combining non-directive interviewing with groups after realizing that people shared more information when they were with people with similar backgrounds and in environments in which they felt safe and comfortable (Krueger & Casey, 2015). The purpose of focus groups was to get “in tune with the reality of the interviewee[s]” (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 3). Although focus groups initially were used to solicit information from White, middle-class people for marketing purposes beginning in the 1950s (Krueger & Casey, 2015), they have since been used in a variety of contexts (e.g., educational research) and for a variety of purposes (e.g., counterstorytelling). Some of the benefits of focus group interviews are that they highlight the common experiences of the individuals within the group. Another benefit of focus group interviews are that this data collection method allows for the potential of the researcher to decrease their level of power and

allow for the contributors to dominate the space and the direction of the conversation more (Krueger & Casey, 2015). This is especially important for this study since within our society structure, hearing researchers have historically maintained power over Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing research participants. Providing space for focus group interviews was one way of enacting restorative justice and placing more power on the side of the contributors.

Roulston (2010) described six types of interviewing orientations; two interview types were within what Roulston called the critical theory orientation. Within the critical theory orientation are the transformative interview and the decolonizing interview. The decolonizing interview was used for the current study. Roulston (2010) described the decolonizing interview as one that focuses on restorative justice and privileging the research agenda of the colonized. The decolonizing interview is one that centers “the processes of decolonization, transformation, mobilization, and healing” (Roulston, 2010, p. 68). This is consistent with Denzin and Lincoln’s (2008) description of decolonizing inquiry as involving the “performance of counter-hegemonic theories that disrupt the colonial and the postcolonial” and an inquiry that should be “ethical, performative, healing, transformative, decolonizing, and participatory” (p. xi, 2).

The decolonizing interview was coupled with intersectional methods in how the data were collected (Windsong, 2018). Specifically, the semi-structured interview questions were designed to allow contributors to discuss race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, immigration status, etc. The semi-structured interview was designed to ask contributors how they chose to identify themselves. Once they listed all of their (imposed or chosen) identities, they were then asked about each identity development (how and when they became aware of this identity). Next, contributors were asked about how and when they became aware of their (imposed) multiply-

marginalized status, followed by their educational experiences as said multiply-marginalized identities. With these series of questions, intersectionality was addressed within the data collection itself. A full list of the semi-structured interview questions is provided in Appendix B.

The focus group interviews completed for this study were online in a synchronous, graphical (video) format using videophone, Zoom, Google Hangouts, or FaceTime. Contributors chose their preferred video chat platform and I contacted them based on their communicated preference at a mutually agreed upon day and time. The 1:1 and focus group interviews were done live and in real time. Stewart and Williams (2005) discussed the benefits and challenges of conducting online synchronous focus groups. Though their discussions were mostly geared towards text-based and avatar-based focus groups, many of the affordances and limitations of using an online platform apply to video focus groups. Synchronous online focus groups afford immediacy, allow for real-time interactions that lead to rich discussions, geographical restrictions are removed, and stress on resources and costs are greatly reduced. Some challenges Stewart and Williams (2005) outline are the scheduling difficulty due to time zone differences which may lead to the challenge of virtual jet lag. Fortunately, this was not an issue for the current study for those who selected the focus group interviews. All contributors who preferred the focus group were able to agree on a time irrespective of time zone and geographical region. Having skill and training in interview methods as well as being well-versed in a large repertoire of video technology made the online, synchronous interviews a success for me without placing much burden on contributors to learn the video technology in order to participate.

It was important to me to prioritize restorative justice within the data collection procedures. One of the ways I attempted to do this was by giving contributors the option of focus group interviews and 1:1 or 2:1 interviews. This was done for three reasons. The first reason for

offering interviews in addition to focus groups was for community safety (e.g., when contributors had safety concerns such as experiencing vidism, genderism, or xenophobia based on who could potentially participate in the focus group sessions); understanding that intersectionality makes many spaces within the larger communities unsafe for community members based on their identities. Therefore, if contributors wanted to keep their identity unknown to other contributors, they were able to choose the 1:1 interview. The second reason individual interviews were offered was to privilege the language preferences of the contributors (especially those who preferred tactile communication). However, based on the contributors who volunteered for the study, no tactile or Pro-Tactile interviews were conducted. Lastly, individual interviews were offered so the contributors could have a more privileged epistemic position. Therefore, if a contributor felt that after joining a focus group, they wanted to expand on their position and personal experiences more, they could follow-up with a 1:1 interview.

All interviews were video recorded. In addition to the video chat platform interviews, one interview and one interview follow-up occurred via email. Interviews lasted approximately 30-60 minutes (1:1 interviews) and 60-90 minutes (2:1 interviews and focus groups), with a few exceptional 1:1 interviews lasting 120 minutes long. The interviews resulted in approximately 30 total hours of recorded conversations.

**Coding and analyzing data with decolonization and intersectionality lenses.** NVivo software was used for data coding and analyzing. NVivo is a professional-grade software used to collect, organize, code, and analyze qualitative and mixed-methods data (QSR International, nd). NVivo allows for the coding of video recorded data sets which makes it ideal for analyzing interviews conducted in ASL. This software also affords the use of nodes that can hold codes across data sets and organize them in a central place for more efficient data analysis process.

The interviews were uploaded into NVivo and coded using open-ended coding technique. This technique consisted of watching the interviews in their entirety, noting demographic information to establish case classification sheets for each contributor in NVivo, and annotating different types of experiences as initial codes. The case classifications identified contributors by the following: immigration status, age, school environment, parent hearing status, parent immigration status, parent level of involvement in the contributors' schooling experiences, home language, and gender. Again, this was all information volunteered by contributors throughout their stories. Examples of annotations/initial codes were "becoming aware of oppression", "identity development", "knowing my worth", "role models", "our powerlessness to teachers", "what the system is denying us", and "treatment from peers." Once an annotation was applied to all interviews, constant comparative analysis was used to establish a frequency of the types of experiences across all the interviews (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). NVivo's "Explore" feature allowed for a comparison of all code annotations across all sources (the interviews). The Hierarchy Chart of the Explore feature yielded a color-coded treemap—a visual representation of the amount of sources and references that were annotated with a specific code. This treemap showed which annotations were more extensive—how many contributors discussed a given type of experience— and those were used for more targeted exploration and comparison. At this point, interviews were reviewed at the annotated time point of the video for the entirety of the contributors' stories related to that code.

To apply intersectionality as an analytical tool, constant comparative analysis at this step was used to explore and highlight the differences in experiences related to the various constructed identities an individual or group of individuals embodied as well as the similarities across marginalized groups. In this way, constant comparative analysis allowed for the nuanced

differences to emerge from the data as well as the more obvious similarities. For example, within the initial annotation/code “becoming aware of oppression”, there were similarities across contributors in that they became more aware of how they were oppressed as they gained more access, particularly when they gained more linguistic access. However, comparative analysis allowed for exploration of differences that emerged between the types of oppression they were becoming aware of (e.g., female-presenting contributors being gendered, immigrants becoming racialized, etc.) and what the sources of said oppression was (e.g., immigrants coming to the United States having never been racialized prior to entering the country, attending a school for the deaf but never learning about race relations for the United States, etc.). The experiences were then given secondary codes such as “being gendered”, “racialization”, “where I found myself.” Within group comparisons were also established with the aforementioned specific codes, among others, being categorized into: “immigrant” experiences, which was broken down by age of immigration; “ethnic-race group” experiences, which explored differences between brown-skinned and dark-skinned individuals of the same ethnic groups; and “ability group” experiences, which categorized differences based on being perceived or embodying a dis/ability. Therefore, secondary codes of being gendered, racialization, etc. were used to explore across group experiences; within group comparisons were used to list differences within groups; and a list of experiences for all contributors based on their class classification of identities was used to outline the intersectional experiences of each individual for their personal context (e.g., intersections of gender and racialization, intersections of gender and disability, intersections of religion, race and dis/ability, etc.). Next, videos were also coded for intensity—how much emotion was portrayed by the contributor when discussing an experience—and contributor perception of importance—if the contributor stated this experience as particularly worth noting or sharing, it was coded as

“direct comment to interviewer” (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

The tertiary analysis involved reviewing the secondary codes for their responsiveness to the research question (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). There were several secondary codes that addressed future directions for this work (e.g., “what skills we wish our teachers had”, “envisioning a liberated education”, and “professionals’ responsibilities”). Codes of this nature were removed from further analysis and placed in a separate file. Lastly, the secondary codes that were left and the list of experiences and case classification sheets were reviewed and organized into three major themes.

Obasi (2014) cited limitations of her research conducting interviews with hearing and Deaf Women of Color, particularly in the data transcription and translation stage. One of her major limitations was being a hearing person translating and transcribing data from British Sign Language (BSL) to English and the regret of not working with the raw data. As a result, these limitations transferred to the data analysis phase. Unlike Obasi (2014), I chose to work directly with the raw interview data and not transcribe from Black ASL and ASL into English in order to stay true to the original signers’ thoughts and minimize the potential loss of information. Furthermore, I elected to member check with my contributors during their interviews; paraphrasing their comments and asking if I understood them correctly, asking clarification questions, and asking them to elaborate before I again paraphrased/repeated their comments and asked for their confirmation that I captured their thoughts and areas of emphasis. Therefore, real-time checks and corrections also helped to minimize possible misunderstandings due to language; however, the language factor cannot be completely mitigated. Though I worked directly with the ASL interviews, all codes and annotations were made in written English within NVivo. This allowed for me to align my annotations to cover the exact time stamps for the full

duration of the contributors' comments to which that code/annotation applied.

**Interpreting and presenting the data with decolonial and intersectional lenses.** Using CRT and CIP, composite narratives were developed based on common and reoccurring experience types from various contributors' stories. This process was as much an intuitive process as it was an art for maintaining the integrity of the stories while keeping contributors' identities confidential. To develop the ten composite stories shared in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, themes related to experience-types were developed across each contributors' interview stories. Some examples of experience types included: racialization, being gendered, language socialization, intersections of gender and racialization, and the intersections of gender and dis/ability, among others. The original classification sheets for each contributor was printed and contributors were coded based on their experience types. *Table 2* presents an example of a contributor's classification sheet which was then coded by experience type.

At this point, cultural intuition was used to swap and merge experiences across contributors with similar experience types. This process involved the following:

- Selecting a parallel local context: For all contributors, the local context was the formal school setting (K-12 and/or college). To protect the identities of the contributors, I avoided describing the exact contexts as described by a contributor. For example, if a contributor described a high school Social Studies class setting and the details that made that setting of interest for the topic of their story, an English class with parallel setting details was used. In this way, an outsider could not easily identify a contributor to this research based on the context of their story.
- Maintaining the integrity of experience type with contributor identities and integrity of the intersections of experiences with contributor identities related to that experience type. In

other words, if a Latinx female described experiences with being over-sexualized in school, I would maintain the composite story character as Latinx and female because over-sexualization is a common experience for students with that identity and must be interrogated at the intersections of being Latinx and female(-presenting). However, this composite character might also be coded with the experience-type of a contributor with immigrant parents who were dismissed by the school. This is because school personnel relationships and potential lack of engagement with immigrant parents could be experienced by a contributor regardless of their identified gender.

- Selecting parallel historic events that were discussed within a contributor's larger story. At times, the contributor's discussion of historic events that they may have attended, organized, or promoted made it possible for the contributor to be identified by the larger Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities. For this reason, historic events were changed to current events and the contexts were made to match the contexts described by the contributors in cases when an exact parallel could not be found. For example, Deaf President Now (DPN) was a major protest at Gallaudet University led by students. In a composite story, a present-day student-led protest that received national coverage would have replaced the DPN protest.
- Matching contributor "voice." Once experience types were selected for a composite story, original interviews of the contributors whose stories were selected were rewatched several times. I watched for the contributors' prosody in Black ASL or ASL, their emotions, and the intensity of the expression. Their points of emphasis became the point of emphasis for that part of the composite story. It is important to note that this step was not translation. The contributors' stories were not transcribed and the intent was not to capture their word-

for-word expressions. Instead, this step served the purpose of mapping the story details and assisting me in embodying their story and voice.

- Classifying the composite stories into one of the three major themes. From here, the story outlines were placed into one of the three major themes developed from the coding and analyzing step. Based on the story outlines and what scenarios the experience types were constructed into during A and B in this interpretation and presentation step, the composite stories were grouped within the theme that became most salient.
- Converting the stories from outlines to English. At this step, all outlined stories were typed into their final English printed form.

*Tables 2, 3, and 4* provide an example of how Benjamin's composite story was interpreted and developed. Benjamin's full composite story is presented in Chapter Seven. Due to the fact that *Table 2* presents four contributors' full demographic information, only partial experience-types and details for Benjamin's composite character outline is provided in *Tables 3 and 4*. This is done to not divulge information that could be used to identify any of the contributors used in this example of how the composite character was constructed.

### **Humanity-Driven Ethics**

Although I feel that ethics is innately addressed within decolonization because decolonization strives toward restoring our ability to live in our full humanity, I believe it is important to describe how I addressed ethics within my decolonizing-intersectionality methodology. For this dissertation, I sought to have my ethics guided not by Institutional Review Board (IRB) standards; however, those were satisfied as required for dissertation research. Instead, I wanted to be guided by humanity. With that said, I entered this inquiry with the mindset that my relationships with the contributors would extend beyond my research needs;

**Table 2. Example of Contributors Case Classification Sheet**

| <b>Contributor ID</b>                        | <b>A</b>                              | <b>B</b>                              | <b>C</b>                                     | <b>D</b>                   |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Age</b>                                   | 26-30                                 | 26-30                                 | 26-30                                        | 46-50                      |
| <b>Gender</b>                                | Female                                | Female                                | Male                                         | Male                       |
| <b>Home Language</b>                         | English, Filipino                     | Creole                                | English                                      | English                    |
| <b>Immigration Status</b>                    | Immigrate as minor under 14           | Immigrate as minor under 14           | Immigrate as minor over 14                   | Immigrate as adult         |
| <b>Parent Immigration Status</b>             | Born abroad                           | N/A (stayed in home country)          | N/A (stayed in home country)                 | N/A                        |
| <b>Parent Hearing Status</b>                 | Hearing                               | Hearing                               | Hearing                                      | Hearing                    |
| <b>School Environment</b>                    | Mainstream K-12 and college (signing) | Mainstream K-12 and college (signing) | Mainstream high school and college (signing) | College (non-signing) only |
| <b>Parent Level of Involvement in School</b> | Moderate                              | N/A                                   | N/A                                          | N/A                        |

beyond moments of contact for data collection and compensation for their time and stories. For one contributor this was inherent because our relationship was crafted around the beautiful messiness of being confidants, roommates, advocates for one another, and one another's support system. We both felt that our relationship brought the humanness into the study. This relationship also allowed for at least one contributor to understand my motivations; the colonizing forces I had to endure to push this research into fruition; and just witnessing how I live in relation to and interact with multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people daily. I believe having this insider perspective into my life added a level of trustworthiness not commonly expected in the Western/Eurocentric research context. As a result, I had a community insider who could vouch for me as a person as well as my work who was authentically moved to ask others to share their stories. As a result of my personal and

**Table 3. Partial Example of Contributors' Experience Types**

| <b>Contributor A</b>                                                                                                                       | <b>Contributor B</b>                                                                                                            | <b>Contributor C</b>                                                                                                           | <b>Contributor D</b>                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| being gendered<br>(work/school related<br>unequal treatment)<br><br>timestamp: 7:13-<br>8:28; 8:34- 9:59;<br>11:08- 11:39                  | being gendered<br>(becoming aware of<br>imposed gender<br>roles)<br><br>timestamp: 8:11-<br>11:25                               | exclusion from<br>White Deaf<br>community;<br>racialization<br><br>timestamp: 21:15-<br>24:25                                  | oppressive/marginalizing<br>disability services<br>policies at university;<br>intersections of<br>immigrant, racialization,<br>dis/ability<br><br>timestamp: 21:58-30:59 |
| intersection of race,<br>gender, dis/ability<br><br>timestamp: 3:59-<br>4:11                                                               | recognizing<br>multiply-<br>marginalized status<br>in society<br><br>timestamp: 35:02-<br>35:30                                 | intersections of<br>immigrant, Deaf,<br>racialization;<br>navigating identities<br>in school<br><br>timestamp: 18:46-<br>19:18 | identifying oppression<br>within marginalized<br>communities<br><br>timestamp: 1:17:10-<br>1:18:14                                                                       |
| teacher bias (model<br>minority)<br><br>timestamp: 5:12-<br>7:03                                                                           | oppression from<br>school personnel<br>(interpreters,<br>tutoring service,<br>administrators)<br><br>timestamp: 39:21-<br>47:52 | disconnect from<br>family (left in home<br>country)<br><br>timestamp: 21:15-<br>24:25                                          | inability to network with<br>peers due to access<br>barriers<br><br>timestamp: 21:58-30:59                                                                               |
| comparing<br>oppression to those<br>more multiply-<br>marginalized<br>(recognizing<br>privilege positions)<br><br>timestamp: 7:13-<br>8:28 | finding sign<br>language and Deaf<br>identity in college<br><br>timestamp: 24:25-<br>26:12                                      | schools defending<br>personnel over Deaf<br>POC student access<br><br>timestamp: 1:02:48-<br>1:03:48                           | intersections of<br>immigrant, racialization,<br>Deaf, and working as<br>professor<br><br>timestamp: 45:35- 49:12                                                        |

**Table 4. Partial Composite Story Outline-Benjamin**

| <b>Contributor ID</b>                                                                                  | <b>A</b>                                                                           | <b>B</b>                                                                   | <b>C</b>                                                                                                                       | <b>D</b>                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Experience Type 1</b>                                                                               | identity factor-Asian (Filipino)                                                   | identity factor-immigrated at 12 live with host family                     | identity factor-immigrated as teen live with host family                                                                       | identity factor-immigrated as adult for college                                                                             |
| <b>Experience Type 2</b>                                                                               | identity factor-immigrate under 14 with mother                                     | disability services; unqualified interpreter & coordinator issues          | racialized due to home country is Black nation; lighter skin privilege                                                         | disability services; interpreter & coordinator issues limited services hours provided                                       |
| <b>Experience Type 3</b>                                                                               | teacher bias of model minority                                                     | host family controlled movements and limited access/opportunities          | no disability/interpreter services provided in high school; no teacher supports; unfamiliar with systems of oppression in U.S. | judgmental of U.S. Deaf population due to luxury of access and opportunities; unfamiliar with systems of oppression in U.S. |
| <b>Experience Type 4</b>                                                                               | uses spoken language; learned sign language later                                  | uses spoken language; learned sign language later                          | sign language as first language                                                                                                | sign language as first language                                                                                             |
| <b>Experience Type 5</b>                                                                               | Master's degree student wants to work with Deaf Asian women                        | Doctoral student, work with younger DDBDDHH students in STEM               | Master's degree teaches DDBDDHH students                                                                                       | Phd Degree, professor at university                                                                                         |
| <b>Experience Type 6</b>                                                                               | oppression "not that bad" compared to other POC                                    | excluded within Black Deaf/hearing communities                             | excluded by Black Deaf/Hearing communities                                                                                     | excluded by colleagues/other professors indifference to contributor's experiences                                           |
| <b>Benjamin</b>                                                                                        |                                                                                    |                                                                            |                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Theme category: Teachers, Interpreters, and School Personnel as Agents in Our Oppression</b>        |                                                                                    |                                                                            |                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                             |
| Identity: Filipino with light skin privilege; heterosexual; male; first generation to U.S. as teenager | Life with host family (additional experiences outside of formal schooling setting) | model minority; no ESL or disability services provided in secondary school | limited interpreter services hours provided in higher ed; Disability Service Coordinator indifference and over oppression      |                                                                                                                             |
| access of DDBDDHH persons in U.S. from immigrant perspective                                           | ability to speak impacting how others treated "Benjamin"                           | professionals siding with unskilled interpreters                           | treatment as student continues in the work setting (experiences with colleagues as an educated Deaf POC in academia)           |                                                                                                                             |

professional relationships with at least four of the contributors, I was able to approach every contributor as if we had a similar endearing relationship. Therefore, I regarded every contributor as if they were my roommate and I approached my questioning, listening, documenting, interpretations, during the data collection in a way that was guided by their humanity; if this were my sibling, my roommate, my family member, how would I love them through this experience in which they are being asked to relive potential educational traumas? For some, this required remaining on video chat an hour after our data collection had finished to re-center ourselves in joy. For others, this entailed text messaging for weeks after the data collection was done. Yet others, this research resulted in newly-formed personal and professional friendships. Like Bhattacharya (2007), I realized that my research was operating in a space where I sought to bring decolonizing epistemologies into a colonizing discourse. For me this meant returning to full humanity; using approaches to this research space that were not limited or guided by colonizing expectations set by Western research and IRBs; pushing lines of what is considered partial by giving my personal cell phone number and opening myself to contact and experiences with contributors outside of the research context; and remaining available anytime I was called upon for personal and professional advices.

Like Bhattacharya (2007), my member checks during the data collection process were not of the traditional expectation of member checking. However, for this research I believe my approach to member checking allowed for the fluid nature required of doing decolonizing work and developing methodology that pushed the colonizing research frame. It was important to me that I only asked my contributors to recount and relive their experiences with schooling one time. Of course there were contributors who did follow up or sent a video or text message with statements, experiences, and fragments of stories they wanted to add. However, by in large, I was

able to document most of the contributors' stories in one interview sitting. While member checks involved asking clarifying questions and rephrasing what was said for confirmation that I was interpreting the meaning and form of the message they were intending to deliver correctly; member checks also involved me sharing parallel experiences from my own schooling and teaching. My willingness to disclose personal information allowed for a level of comfort that some contributors shared directly with me while others communicated to other contributors after the interview through positive personal messages about the interview experience. Sharing parallel experiences also allowed the contributors to note where my understanding of their story diverged and where I was missing the points they intended to highlight. Again, this allowed for more clarifying details to be shared which ultimately contributed to my ability to re-present their stories in a way that honored their recounted integrity. This form of member checking also brought about an inherent feature of counterstorytelling that Griffin, Ward, and Phillips (2014) described as building community among individuals who have similar experiences with marginalization and oppression. This member checking process allowed for more data verification about the impacts of colonial schooling with contributors responding with phrases such as 'I thought I was the only one.' While these phrases became another source to contribute to the composite narratives, they also became a gateway for healing discussions that might not have been broached otherwise. Yet, again circling back to the concept of humanity and taking the time within this space for healing discussions.

### **Limitations**

One of the expected limitations of this study related to one of the themes at the core of this research: intersectionality. Due to the nature of power relations and privilege, I inhabited different insider/outsider positions throughout this research; my subjectivities shifted based on

who the contributor was and what social positions they embodied. In several interviews I was an insider based on race, ethnicity, gender, spoken/written language affiliations, and my experiences with hearing loss. However, in other interviews I was an outsider due to having direct communication at home with my parents and having majority school personnel that shared my ethnic and/or racial identities. Choo and Ferree (2010) encouraged the use of intersectionality as relational in order to overcome this limitation. I attempted to use relational intersectionality by framing this study to challenge the effects of colonization on the construction of static insider/outsider positions and by naming unmarked categories such as hearingness, heteronormativity, ableness, etc.

Upon revisiting the final contributor list, there were some groups that were largely underrepresented (i.e., Latinx and Asians) and groups that were completely excluded. The underrepresentation and exclusion of these groups, though unintentional, means that I have failed to make this research accessible to those groups within the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities and/or my research goals were not in alignment with the desires of those communities. Orner (1992) stressed the importance of examining contexts when it comes to voice. To be more clear: it is important for me to look at my research as a specific site and historical moment, and analyze why those groups have chosen not to lend their voice and what is their silence saying about research communities and/or my own research approaches; which may make them feel unsafe to express their voice. The third limitation is that the use of technology for outreach/recruitment and to conduct the interviews dismissed low/no income Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities from contributing to this research. Time and financial constraints made it unfeasible to advertise to potential contributors who did not have access to the internet recruitment materials.

Navigating language was another limitation of the study, especially with ASL being my third language. Obasi (2014) described identical experiences with being a Black Woman researching hearing and Deaf Women of Color. In conducting interviews with Deaf Women of Color, Obasi openly addressed the dynamic and historical trend of hearing people researching Deaf people. The language limitation may have particularly been a limitation in this study because no outside researcher or native ASL users were used to verify my interpretation of the contributors' thoughts and expressions. Although this was done to protect the identity and maintain the confidentiality of the contributors, not having a native language user or outsider confirm my understandings could be considered another limitation of this study. I believe another limitation related to language was the use of written English (for this version of the dissertation). Those reading this dissertation in the printed English form lose the level of emphasis, the emotions, and expressions of the contributors sharing their experiences.

Counterstorytelling method may also be considered a limitation by some. Several authors (see Farber & Sherry, 1997; Hendrix, 2010; Orbe, Smith, Groscurth, & Crawley, 2010) have argued that narrative methods, including counterstorytelling, are unreliable particularly when researchers identify with the communities they write about (Griffin, Ward, & Phillips, 2014). Therefore, some may consider my insider status of being a Person of Color, user of minoritized languages, experiences with hearing loss, growing up poor, and identifying as a woman as a limitation that may make my interpretations of the data unreliable. Others may consider my outsider status of having hearing privilege and being heterosexual as allowing me to present an objective counterstory. Griffin, Ward, and Phillips (2014) countered the arguments of counterstorytelling as unreliable stating that composite counterstories afford the opportunity to “build community among those who suffer similarly; expose barriers that inhibit success and

derail social consciousness...; teach those unfamiliar about marginalization; and challenge and transform the imposition of domination” (p. 1356). For those who side with objectivity, I cannot deny that I do not purport this research to be objective and accept that my subjectivities and cultural intuition formed a major part of the data analyses, interpretation, and presentation.

An additional limitation is in the development of composite narratives from the individual and focus group interviews. The goal was not to generalize the contributors’ experiences to the educational experiences of *all* Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people. Instead, the goal was to bring forth stories that may have remained untold within multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities and to the dominant-group professionals in Deaf Education. Furthermore, these stories were a way for the contributors to talk back to the colonial forces in that manifest specifically in the schooling context. However, I employed methods for developing composite stories that have yet to be used with this population and relied heavily on my own cultural intuition. Though cultural intuition does take into account the research process as a facet of that intuition, someone with different cultural intuition may not be able to replicate my methods as an ‘exact science’ (Hernandez, 2013). With these potential limitations in mind and my attempts to address them, the results of this process are presented in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SCHOOLS AS A SITE OF STRUGGLE FOR OUR INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES**

“We would prefer to prepare the dispossessed and disenfranchised to better fit in a corrupt system rather than rethink the whole system.”

—Ladson-Billings and Donnor (2008, p. 72)

Using the methods of qualitative research, specifically focus groups and 1:1 interviews as detailed in Chapter Four, I sought to address the following research question: How do Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people living at the intersections of additional marginalized/racialized identities describe the experiences they have had in formal schooling spaces? Using stories shared by the 25 contributors to the current study and a three-level data analysis process, composite personal narratives/stories were developed. These narratives are presented within this chapter. All narratives shared use pseudonyms and are written based on the expressions of several contributors in order to better protect individual contributors' identities.

Each chapter presents a major theme with several sub-themes that are explicated through the narratives' characters. In this chapter, I highlight stories that explore the ways in which schools served as a site of struggle for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals with intersectional identities. There are several important and common experiences that emerged related to attending United States schools as a person with multiple marginalized identities. Specifically, all the participants shared that they found and/or accepted their multiple identities in college or shortly after their college years, meaning they experienced arrested identity development in one or more ways throughout their K-12 schooling years; and experiences of being racialized, gendered, language oppressed, or a combination of those

experiences. I use Maya's, Tatiana's, and Musa's composite narratives to illustrate this chapter's theme.

### **Maya's Story**

Maya currently identifies as a 28-year-old, DeafBlind, Brown Latinx, woman. Maya comes from a family that is still strongly rooted in their Latinx culture, though she prefers not to share which culture. Partially, Maya chooses not to share which culture to protect her identity. She also chooses not to say which Latinx culture because she has been disconnected from her family's traditions, language, and culture her whole life due to society's lack of acceptance of DeafBlind people living the DeafBlind way.

While others might problematize Maya's DeafBlind identity as a barrier to her access to family traditions, language, and culture, I instead argue that these barriers are a consequence of kyriocentrism operating at the ideological-cultural level. At the ideological-cultural level, kyriocentrism—a system of multiplicative, intersecting social structures of domination and oppression—makes gender, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, and colonial prejudice appear as normal. In Maya's case this means that society has normalized distantism—the reliance on and privileged position of the distance senses of sight and sound over close proximity senses such as touch. The ideological-cultural level of kyriocentrism places distance senses in the superordinate position and the tactile sense in the subordinate position. In regards to the proximity sense of touch, distantism is what has kept Maya's sight- and sound- reliant family from connecting her to their Latinx cultures via touch. Distantism is also the reason that Maya did not identify as DeafBlind until she was in college, and grew up conditioned to being “deaf with vision problems.” While talking about her school experiences, Maya's story demonstrates

how her identity development was arrested and the impact school had on becoming who she identifies as today:

*When I think of my K-12 schools and college experiences, one word comes to mind: ISOLATION. Now, as an adult who not too long ago graduated from college, who for the first time finally understands all my identities, I can recognize all the oppressions I experienced that lead to that isolation. At the same time, my school experience is a major reason why I'm just now understanding and accepting all my identities. Now at 28 years old, I identify as DeafBlind, Latinx, Pro-Tactile user, and female whenever I'm in a group of self-identified women. This is a big change from identifying as Deaf all my life, as Hispanic, using ASL, and having my Latinx culture impose the female gender on me. I mean you can't begin to imagine the level of oppression I experienced in school: to not even know that I can be DeafBlind. I went 25 years of being a Deaf person, with all those years of miscommunications and being disconnected from people because I was trying to communicate in the ASL and Deaf ways. It took me almost being arrested for a communication misunderstanding because as a Brown Latinx person arresting us is like the first reaction. After that situation, I started learning Pro-Tactile. That was when I realized I was language oppressed my whole life.*

Here, Maya talks about several experiences being: (1) gendered, (2) labeled, (3) kept away from knowledge of DeafBlind cultures, (4) disconnected from a sighted and hearing world, (4) racialized, and (5) granted access through the use of Pro-Tactile. Gender is a particularly strong concept in some Latin American cultures. So ingrained is the gender concept, that the Spanish language genders all objects and people. In this way, colonialism has also served to shape culture and identities through the imposition of language. The Spanish language colonized many Indigenous Latin American languages that were not gender-based languages (Mar-

Molinero, 2000; Xiang, 2016). Many of those languages use the “x” in place of the “o/a.” For this reason, Maya now identifies as “Latinx” instead of “Latina.” Through language, as well as cultural behaviors, Maya, who only feels comfortable naming her female identity when in the presence of other females, is constantly gendered as female. This gendering occurs through interactions, role expectations, and assigning gendered language pronouns (i.e., Latina instead of Latinx), to name a few.

Related to the “Latinx” identity choice, is the fact that most of Maya’s life, she identified as Hispanic. Hispanic is a label that has been placed upon Spanish speakers in the United States as a result of a movement by U.S. government, activists, and media executives for the purpose of census data collection beginning in the 1970s (Mora, 2014). This imposed labeling is one way that cultural imperialism manifests in Maya’s experience. The term Hispanic has rendered invisible the various Afro, Indigenous, and Latinx, cultures of Spanish-speakers into one group, despite the various cultural practices and languages used among those groups. Unknowingly, younger generations like Maya’s are often unaware of this history and accept this labeling as schools and other social institutions impose certain terms. Maya shares that it was not until college that she was able to be aware of and reject the label “Hispanic.”

Similar to the cultural imperialism of being labeled “Hispanic” and kept away from the knowledge of the diversity of experiences of various groups who are described by that term, Maya’s experience of never being told or granted access to DeafBlind persons, cultures, and communities is another way that cultural imperialism was enacted in Maya’s life. In this manner, Maya was socialized into (White) Deaf culture. Forcing Maya to disappear into (White) Deaf culture further socially disabled her and distanced her from the elite, male, abled, hearing, and sighted constructed norm; this social disabling is also a function of the curriculum of

colonization. The result was that Maya was placed at both educational and social disadvantages because school personnel—who are superordinated in contrast to Maya due to the power positions teachers hold over students as well as their sighted and hearingness among other dominant identities such as race and class—withheld opportunities for Maya to experience life as a DeafBlind person; to be appreciated for her whole DeafBlind self instead of just the “Deaf” self. What I have described above is one way that cultural imperialism manifested itself in Maya’s life, expecting her DeafBlind identity to fade into a White, abled, sighted, Deaf identity; an act of violence against Maya through audism, vidism, and distantism. All three of these kept Maya from experiencing her Latinx culture and the world because though they may have been constantly present, Maya’s culture and world were still presented through inaccessible mediums; namely, auditorally and visually. The time Maya spent navigating inaccessible spaces and experiences, delayed her in identifying as a DeafBlind person who requires or prefers tactile ways of navigating the world. When explaining ways that the curriculum of colonization has been deployed against Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing persons, the erasure and loss of tactile methods of communication from pre-colonial times was proof of Western society’s aversion to tactile ways and epistemologies. The fact that Pro-Tactile is only emerging within the last decade is further proof of U.S. society’s continued suppression of tactile methods, which present a barrier to identity development and knowledge (systems) development for many tactile peoples. As a result, Maya had to rely on sighted ways of existing in the world by relying on visual language used mostly by sighted and abled Deaf people. The consequences of this were loss of experiences, isolation from interactions in school and in the community, and vulnerability to peoples with access that misjudge(d) Maya.

Racialization also contributed greatly to Maya's school experiences. We can examine racialization in Maya's case as happening in two ways. In one way, Maya was assigned the "Hispanic" label because of her brown skin. Casting Maya as Hispanic simultaneously positions her in opposition to those that are excluded from the Hispanic label because of their black or white skin. For example, Afro/Black Latinxs; (Black) Indigenous peoples from Central America, South America, or the Caribbean; and White Latinxs are not presumed to be Hispanic. The United States has conceptualized Hispanic as brown-skinned people who speak Spanish. This places Maya on a racial hierarchy that privileges those lighter than her, but also oppresses those darker than her—the very definition of kyriarchy in relation to race. Though Maya may have experienced discrimination as a result of being brown, Maya's brown skin tone was also weaponized against those who have been placed outside of the Hispanic box, with more impact on those with darker skin and less social privilege because of their skin tone. Secondly, Maya experienced how society criminalizes dis/abled Women of Color. Annamma (2018) described the ways in which dis/abled girls of color are surveilled more often than White dis/abled and abled peers in schools; how this surveillance and punishment in schools leads to criminalization; and ultimately often times results in dis/abled girls of color being pushed into the carceral system. Society's racialization and criminalization of black and brown bodies like Maya's explains why Maya was almost arrested for a simple miscommunication. While in the school's academic store, Maya was automatically assumed to be stealing materials because she was exploring them tactilely. In other words, where window shopping (visually) is acceptable, and window shopping while White is acceptable, Maya was tactilely window shopping and doing it as a brown skin-toned person. In this situation, being dis/abled + woman-presenting + brown was criminalized and instead of the other actors giving Maya the benefit of innocence, she was

assumed to be stealing, with no way to present her innocence to the sighted, non-ASL and non-Pro-Tactile using accusers assigning her blame. This denial of innocence is another common experience for black and brown bodies, even as young as kindergarten (Atiba Goff et al., 2014; Epstein, Blake, & González, 2017).

Both Maya's experiences with racialization and her experiences with communication barriers were catalysts for Maya to learn Pro-Tactile. Pro-Tactile is a language developed by DeafBlind people for DeafBlind people in the United States, originating in Seattle, Washington. Pro-Tactile is grammatically distinct from ASL and tactile ASL—signing ASL on a person's body to make visual ASL accessible through touch (Edwards, 2014). However, below Maya discussed how access to information through Pro-Tactile, meant access to learning more about all the ways that she had been and continues to be oppressed:

*Even learning Pro-Tactile, my Deaf community didn't open up to me; I was oppressed more. I went to school with other Deaf kids in a mainstream program, it's not like I was the only Deaf student in my classes like other people experience in mainstream schools. Then I went to a Deaf university. I was always isolated because of my brown skin or because of my disability, or both. No one wanted to be with the brown Deaf kid that has something wrong because they can't keep up in conversation. But when I took initiative to learn Pro-Tactile, the blows felt so much more heavy. People think touch is part of Deaf culture but touch is DeafBlind communication and access. But the Deaf communities would tell me, "don't touch me" or accuse me of inappropriateness. That's rape culture for you. Rape culture is a barrier to my language. So, I'm expected to be 'just Deaf' or act hearing for the sake of keeping other people comfortable because our society does not like touch. Learning Pro-Tactile has been both a blessing and a*

*curse because now I have my language, but now I also understand how I am constantly oppressed related to my communication access.*

Often times, dominant group society members get to dictate what is acceptable behavior and what is not. For example, instead of problematizing rape culture and creating a culture that supports tactile communication and experiences within our society, sighted and abled society members would rather position being DeafBlind and a tactile citizen as the problem. The problematizing of the DeafBlind and/or tactile citizen is done simultaneously with elevating the comfort of dominant society members over the DeafBlind person's need to access the world. Therefore, Maya is positioned as unacceptable because of her brown skin (race), dis/ability (DeafBlind), and language (Pro-Tactile). This positioning was reinforced even at the university level where Maya was consistently treated as a second-class citizen behind her abled and sighted peers: last to receive access to course content, even those required to complete assignments, always pushed off by professors with comments like, 'I will tell you later', and dismissed from university job opportunities citing her dis/ability as a safety concern. This shows that higher education institutions are places and spaces of social reproduction (Harris, 2007); as a racialized, female-presenting, brown-skinned, DeafBlind, Latinx, the university experienced reinforced Maya's socially inferior position in relation to her non-racialized, abled, sighted, and hearing peers. Like K-12 schooling, higher education institutions also remain a site of struggle for people like Maya.

Maya went on to explain how societal norms influenced her ideas, identities, and experiences. Maya stated:

*I also think about my Latinx identity. All my life I identified as Hispanic which I learned a few years ago is a label that was imposed on Spanish-speaking communities by the United*

*States! All of my teen years in school they told me I'm Hispanic and I accepted that without knowing better. In 2015, Latinx was becoming more popular in the United States. So I gave up calling myself Hispanic and decided to use Latinx to combat prejudices. But I feel that I could have arrived at this place much sooner, if school didn't work so hard to make me Hispanic. On top of making me Hispanic, school never taught me about my Latinx cultures. I couldn't get it at home because no professionals would tell my parents about the benefits of them learning ASL to communicate with me at home. So school would be the only other place and instead, the school was busy conditioning me to be Deaf while completely ignoring my Latinx identity. Now my family and Latinx community are ashamed of me because they think I don't value cultural traditions. They say I am a woman, but I don't know how to cook our traditional foods. I don't know what important dates and celebrations are. I never learned our traditional dances. I lived like a stranger in my own worlds because I was never given the access to learn them at home or at school! I've missed so many details in life because of not having tactile access, but I've also missed so many details about who I am because my teachers actively denied me knowledge about my other identities.*

Maya briefly described the relationship between her parents and school personnel, which is worthy of consideration; namely, who has social and/or cultural access to school systems and school personnel. As I've shared in previous chapters, the Deaf Education field remains 90% hearing and 90% White. Plenty of researchers have found that cultural, social, and language barriers not only affect children and students, but also parents' ability to participate in their child's education (Liebkind, Jasinskaja-Lahti, & Solheim, 2004). Similarly, Maya's parents were placed at a disadvantage when it came to understanding school systems and connecting with professionals who could have reinforced the importance of access to ASL at home. It is possible

that some attention to this detail could have vastly enhanced Maya's livelihood and schooling experience. Additionally, with the overwhelming majority of Deaf Education professionals being hearing, audism and the desire by some to have Deaf (DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing) individuals to disappear into hearingness, might have been a strong influence on why Maya's parents were not encouraged to use ASL.

For historical context, Pro-Tactile was not yet developed when Maya was going through K-12 schooling. For this reason, I refer to Maya's parents using ASL. However, Pro-Tactile is also complicated and comes with strengths and limitations particularly for DeafBlind Persons of Color. Pro-Tactile is arguably one of the most recent languages to emerge in the United States. However, from a linguistics perspective, one must understand that language cannot develop outside of culture. In other words, Pro-Tactile was developed out of a community of DeafBlind persons coming together, regularly enough to develop a communication system that evolved into a language. This is a privilege that is afforded to most White DeafBlind people, while DeafBlind People of Color like Maya, spend most of their life in isolation. As a result, even with Pro-Tactile gaining more traction in DeafBlind communities across the nation, many DeafBlind people of color continue to be unaware or do not have community access to learning Pro-Tactile. Therefore, not knowing that tactile communication is a viable option to living and languaging, many DeafBlind (People of Color) continue to strive to survive on the insufficient access provided by sighted (and hearing) ways of navigating the world.

However, beyond the language and access barriers, Maya continued to explain how schools were a site of struggle for other reasons:

*... In combination with language barriers, with being denied access to tactile communication, and identity development in school, I also experienced safety issues. I later*

*realized the safety issues I experienced in school are the same issues I experience in larger society. Because of my brown skin and people gendering me as female, I am often assumed to speak Spanish and catcalled, especially by men. They sexualize me because of my skin and they objectify me. I know of so many examples of when male classmates would catcall me and I wouldn't respond (because I didn't know due to being DeafBlind). I would find out later when a classmate joked about what happened and a friend shared the joke with me. Or I would find out when my teacher asked my interpreter if I was ok and I had to ask the interpreter what the teacher was referring to. After the interpreter would fill me in, I would then realize why those guys became aggressive towards me because they assumed I was ignoring them or giving them attitude. Some would realize I had a disability and others would not. But so many school shootings on the news, and the recent one in Santa Fe High School where the shooter said he did it because a girl refused to talk to him...I often wonder, how many times that could've been me because people see me as a brown Hispanic girl and they expect me to behave a certain way and tolerate certain culturally conditioned behaviors towards me.*

Here, Maya is recognizing how her multiple identities intersect and present sites of struggles even moment-to-moment in schools. She discussed here how being gendered and sexualized as a result of that gendering intersecting with her brown skin and Latinx identity. The triple impact of being a female, brown-skinned, and Latinx is one that results in sexual violence. Sexual harrassment, which also includes cat-calling, is one of the most widespread forms of violence (Cortina, 2001; Koss et al., 1994). Lundström (2006) found that Latina girls were negotiating the intersections of ethnicity and femininity in their daily lives. She examined the experiences of Latinas from a frame of “femininity, ethnicity, race, class, and (hetero)sexuality” to show that Latinas are often made invisible by societal oppressions, but made visible when

represented in sexualized ways (Lundström, 2006, p. 205). In Maya's case, her DeafBlind identity was constantly made to suffer and be invisible, becoming last to her race, Latinidad, and gender. The school administrators' and teachers' failure to intervene when males catcalled her reified the social acceptability of the over-sexualized female-assumed Latinx body. Maya also hinted towards the danger of male violence when female-assumed Latina bodies do not respond to male advances according to society's script. The expectation that the brown Latina body is to be objectified, consumed, and subject to the male gaze, and Maya's unintentional rejection of this through her lack of responses, placed Maya in positions where she could have been the victim of further violence (beyond what she experienced due to being over-sexualized). Now that Maya has access to this information through Pro-Tactile, she is able to recognize the potential danger she could have experienced. It is important for school personnel and others in positions of power to recognize and acknowledge this dangerous intersection for people like Maya and intervene when they witness these things happening.

More than intervening in the moment of violence—physical or not— teachers and school personnel must never deny the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, or Hard of Hearing student agency. By communicating with the interpreter about what the boys were doing and saying to Maya, instead of using the interpreter as a conduit to communicate directly with Maya, her teacher denied her agency and autonomy. The teacher gave the interpreter power over Maya's voice and expression. Additionally, socially conditioned distantism prevented Maya's teacher from realizing that Maya may not have been aware of the cat-calling; and that the teacher had a duty to provide Maya access to that information. As a teacher with access to visual and auditory information, the teacher could have talked to Maya privately with the support of the interpreter to explain to Maya what the teacher witnessed and what information Maya potentially missed. The

teachers' misuse of the interpreter and failure to provide Maya with access to information about her own experiences demonstrates the need for professionals to have a better understanding of kyriarchy, how the intersections of marginalized identities potentially affect students, and ways to support students and discourage inappropriate behavior toward them.

### **Tatiana's Story**

Tatiana's story offers another way to understand how identity development is influenced positively or negatively by schooling. Like Maya, Tatiana is also Latinx and is assumed to be female. Therefore, it is expected that they have had similar experiences related to being gendered. However, Tatiana's experiences diverge from Maya's in many ways. Unlike Maya, Tatiana is black (dark-skinned as opposed to brown-skinned). As discussed in regards to anti-blackness, racialized persons are expected to disappear into whiteness and the closer one's skin tone—race regardless of ethnic identity—approximates to white, the more privilege one experiences. Whereas, Maya was sexualized and raced due to being Brown, Tatiana was racialized as Black American. In other words, due to cultural imperialism and essentializing, many United States persons assume anyone with black skin must be Black American. Tatiana describes the struggle of being racialized as Black American, and the erasure of her Latinx identity from both dominant group (White hearing) and within group (Latinx hearing and White Deaf). Tatiana's emphasis on the difference between race and ethnicity and the need to acknowledge both, demonstrates how crucial she believes it is for our communities to understand this:

*As a dark-skinned Latinx female-presenting person, I was often called Black. Through most of my school experience everyone thought I was Black. I mean I am, but I'm not just Black; I'm Afro-Latinx. I already have to deal with Latinx people not recognizing their blackness and*

*educating them that, yes, we can be Black and Latinx because of our African heritage. You can be White Latinx and you can be Indigenous Latinx. Latinx itself is not our race. The ignorance is why people like Amara La Negra have to be fighting to identify as Afro-Latina on national television! But in my school, as far as I knew I was the only Afro-Latinx. But for all they cared, I was Black. Being Black didn't make it any better though because they still never taught us about our Black cultures and heritage.*

*Now for many Deaf in school they go to mainstream schools where teachers don't have Deaf culture experiences and they probably have interpreted education all the way, if that. But I went to a Deaf school all my life. I had Deaf teachers all my life. Guess what? They were all White. All the Black people were staff like the janitor or the night time dorm staff. Not one time did any of the teachers talk about Black history, except for slavery. They didn't talk about Latinx histories or Indigenous peoples' histories. I remember I went home during one break. My parents are both Deaf and so we were watching Roots and that changed my life. I was in high school. From that moment all my previous experiences in school made sense.*

It's interesting how Tatiana was able to identify positions of privilege and simultaneous oppression; which is exactly what is posited by kyriarchy— a person can occupy positions of privilege and oppression which shifts given specific contexts and specific interactions. Below, Tatiana acknowledged the privilege of attending a school for the deaf. I might add that having two Deaf parents and several Deaf siblings might have been a major factor in the decision to send Tatiana to the residential school for the deaf, though it was a distance from Tatiana's paternal and maternal parents' homes. As Tatiana described the racialized experiences at the school for the deaf which impacted her identity development, her story also highlights the compromising decisions parents have to make in regards to schooling. Many (multiply)

marginalized families of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children are placed in similar positions; to place a child of color in a place where they can have race socialization in school with role models from their racial and/or ethnic groups; to send their child to a school where they may get language socialization in ASL but their race and ethnic identities suffer; and other times, their schooling choice means they lose both race and language socialization because it is the only site that serves Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. Tatiana described the privilege of attending a school for the deaf (for language socialization), but the racialized oppressed position of not being able to develop Afro-Latinx identity at school. Below, Tatiana explained how she was exploited and silenced in schools because of her intersectional identities:

*I was what my teachers considered smart. Later, I realized because I was smart, they felt obligated to support and encourage me. I made the school look good. I tested well. When I was younger, I was very assertive in class. I wanted to answer questions because I knew the answers. Then I noticed teachers would intentionally not call on me. They would pick other students. When I was older, maybe in middle school, I was the only Black kid in the classroom. I remember clearly one White hearing male teacher in science class who would call on me. I would answer and he would act as if I didn't say anything and move on to the next person. Regardless what their answer was, right or wrong, they would always get some type of reinforcement: "Oh that wasn't right but can you tell me why you said that?" or "Yes that's right!" But every time I made attempts I got nothing. Then there was another teacher for my social studies class that would call on me and say my answer was "Ok" but then the boys in my class would say the exact same thing I just said, and they would get praised for it! They would get praised for my answers, as if I didn't just say that and get brushed off. I started to not feel*

*smart. So I stopped participating. I don't think my teachers cared as long as I was still performing well on paper...as long as I was still having good test scores. But it was like they didn't want to see my intelligence in their face everyday. So they only encouraged me enough to keep me smart on paper.*

Tatiana's experience of being silenced within the classroom is an example of colonization working at a micro-level. Specifically, it is an example of how she is being conditioned and exploited by dominant group members; in addition to forced liminality within anti-blackness; and teachers' differential treatment of females; with the combination of the aforementioned affecting Tatiana's concept of self. In other words, every time Tatiana was silenced by the teacher, and male students were allowed to co-opt her voice, both her and her dominant counterparts were being reinforced in subordinate and superordinate positions, respectively. The exploitation of Tatiana's knowledge both on the school and classroom levels related to testing and the individual interactions with male classmates and the teacher is a common experience of women racialized as Black in the United States. This exploitation has almost always been coupled with erasure of history. This demonstrates that the material and non-material benefits to be gained from Black female (-presenting) bodies often outweighs the very existence and humanity of Black women.

Arguably, kyriarchy and the curriculum of colonization struggle to acknowledge Black women and society's dependence on the exploitation of Black women. Examples of this exploitation are Black women slaves serving as wet nurses for slaveowners' babies, to (non-consensually) providing life-changing cells for medical advancement as in the case of Henrietta Lacks, to theorizing in various fields, to the #MeToo sexual harassment awareness movement,

Tatiana's experience of having her intelligence and contributions replaced by a White face, is not an isolated event. In fact, according to Tatiana these experiences continued at the college level:

*Thinking back on it, I realize the same cycle happened in college; like déjà vu but worse. I went to a Deaf university and my eyes opened so much there. That was the first time I was exposed to large Black and Latinx communities. That was the first time I learned about our histories in school. That was where I was able to explore my Queer identity and have those conversations with people. But it was also where I was taken advantage of more, especially in the classroom in my major. I was one of the few female-presenting people in science field at that time. I would be in classes and I would be looked over by professors and passed over for research opportunities. I would have my male classmates steal my thoughts and ideas, with no acknowledgement that they were mine. Professors, who were also male, would allow it to happen.*

*Finally, I got a research opportunity with a hearing professor that knew ASL. That professor gave me a lot of freedom to do research in the lab and would routinely ask me to stay late and work on projects while my lab group would go home. He knew that I was single and didn't have other obligations, and he knew I would stay and work if he asked. So he would take advantage of that. None of my lab partners would get asked to stay; always me and my own classwork started to suffer because while my lab partners would leave lab at 5pm and go study, I was doing the work my research advisor requested me to stay over to do. He got a lot of publications from the work I did in the lab. I was never cited. But I was a student and I thought that's how it went. One Saturday, I was scheduled to take a makeup exam that I had bombed because I didn't have enough time to study from always being in the lab. My research advisor texted me saying we had a Senator's aide coming to the lab and he wanted me to be there. I*

*thought it was odd because he rarely asked me to come in on a Saturday alone, but I thought maybe having a Senator visit is a big deal. So I went. Turns out the aide was a Black man. Apparently, my research advisor wanted to show off the “Black Deaf woman” working in the lab in order to get more funding support for the lab. I ended up missing my makeup exam. I dropped out of school the next semester. The daily microaggressions were too much, on top of going to school and finally learning to be myself. But I felt like since I was able to find my Black and Latinx connections, and I was able to find my Queer identity, I got what I came for. So I was alright with leaving. Later one of my friends contacted me and said my former research advisor got the extra funding for the lab. I wonder how much my Black Deaf-ness had to do with that.*

Tatiana never returned to complete her college degree. Even though the professor contacted her several times to ask her to sign a release for him to write about her being in his lab, he has never asked if she was interested in returning to the lab, or tried to convince her that she should. She has declined every attempt to allow the professor to write about her. Now at 40 years old, she still has no regrets. As an Afro-Latinx, Queer, Deaf, female-presenting person, Tatiana always seeks employment that allows her to work with Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children of color. Tatiana feels that whether her students choose to pursue education or not, if they are able to know who they are at younger ages and if they are able to feel safe with at least one other person in school, they will be much better off in life. For a Deaf adult of color to prioritize and desire knowledge of self and identity for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children of color over educational attainment, communicates how great of a perceived impact identity development can have on the life outcomes of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals.

### **Musa's Story**

As a Black East African immigrant, Musa presents more layers to how schools can be a site of struggle for intersectional identities; layers that have not been explored through Maya and Tatiana's identities in schools. Namely, Musa's male privilege, his religious identity as Muslim, having immigrated to the United States as an adult with no experiences of K-12 schooling here. This means in Musa's case, he was not only dealing with how his peers and dominant group members responded to his multiple identities in higher education, he also had to figure out the school systems here. Since Musa was culturally socialized outside of the United States he had to be socialized to dominant U. S. cultural systems as well as U.S. Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing cultures. Musa's story provides an example of the complexities of multiply-marginalized identities and why it is not enough to assume that men consistently hold dominant social positions. Even with the previously listed identity differences, and though he had the advantage of having completed K-12 schooling, Musa still had many similar experiences to those of Maya and Tatiana, particularly related to identity development and racialization in schools.

*America is the place I came to as an adult to attend college. Growing up as a Deaf person in my country was not easy. The life for Deaf in Africa is not the same as here in America. America has so many more opportunities for Deaf, but that doesn't mean that it is easier here. I think about my college experience. When I came here, I saw so many Deaf for the first time in my life! The pride they have in their identity inspired me! I never loved my Deaf self and I never knew I was Black before I came to the United States. So college is where I learned that Black and Deaf are identities and it's where I embraced them as identities.*

Musa elaborated that while being schooled in Africa, he was the only deaf person. He was not given "special" treatment and was expected to perform equal to his classmates who were

hearing. However, he loved his primary and secondary schooling experiences because schooling in his country is very different from schooling in the United States. Specifically, teachers write everything on the board before beginning their lessons. Each student is expected to copy everything from the board. This contains all information which the teacher will speak about. Once all students have copied the information from the board, in a speedy fashion, the teacher begins “reading” everything on the board. This is the standard teaching practice in Musa’s home country. So in this way, Musa never felt he missed anything and he became an excellent reader and writer. However, outside of school in a community where many spoken languages and dialects are used, people would quickly ping him as deaf and not make accommodations to make him feel part of community dialogues. This is where Musa rejected his deaf self because he felt his hearing loss disabled him from being fully accepted by community members. He did however, eventually learn the seven more commonly used languages in his region. Though he can speak them, it remains difficult for him to understand when others speak to him.

Though he wrestled with his deaf identity, Musa stated that he never struggled with his ethnic identity. Like everyone in his country and region, he was the same; though he did not disclose his specific home country. It was not until he came to the United States that he “became” black. This “becoming black” is a significant point of interest. Musa does not deny that he has always had dark skin. However, everyone in his country looked the same, according to Musa. There was no race to name except White, who were typically British colonizers. Therefore, what Musa describes can be interpreted as the racialization in his country places all others in opposition to Black, which is the norm that doesn’t require naming. Contrastingly, in the United States, racialization places all People of Color in opposition to White, meaning Peoples of Color must be labeled. Musa’s dark skin in the United States is used as a point to be

racialized into blackness. Musa talked about how weird it was to go from no mentions of black to everything forefronting his black skin; from college applications, to health forms, to simple school surveys. College was the place where Musa reconciled with both his Deaf identity and his newly imposed Black identity. Below, he elaborated on how his immigrant identity sets him apart from other Black peoples and the struggle to attend a U. S. college with multiple marginalized identities:

*College was also the place where I was constantly judged for my identities. Being judged is the greatest barrier I face. As a Black, African, Deaf, Muslim I have had no positive experiences in school here. I'm sorry. I am immediately identified as Black and that makes my experience hard. But even more, somehow everyone knows I am foreign. I am always asked 'where are you from'; but Black Americans are never asked this. I came to this country speaking seven different languages. I have traveled the world working to empower various Deaf communities as my career. But I come here, and I am "foreigner" so teachers assume my English must be bad. Teachers assume I don't have the skills to do things. Seven languages...I know seven languages and I have a good college degree but every American reads my face as foreigner. I don't know how they know but they do. They see Black then they see foreigner.*

Musa points out to the implicit bias teachers have against individuals who immigrate to the United States. No matter how many skills he has to contribute to U. S. society, he is always limited to 'foreigner' status meaning he is inferior to individuals born in the U. S. It is also interesting that in Musa's experience, being an immigrant is automatically equated with subpar English language skills. This can be interpreted from a raciolinguistic perspective wherein colonialism has co-naturalized language and race (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Within a raciolinguistic theoretical framework, multilingual racialized (Black and Brown) persons are systematically

stigmatized and subordinated within a colonial nation-state such as the U. S. that holds “colonial distinctions between... whiteness and nonwhiteness” (Rosa & Flores, 2017, p. 2). Therefore, I argue that it is because of Musa’s blackness that his multilingualism is discredited and positioned as a barrier to his English language use in college. This intersection of race and language also collides with ableism and the general disbelief by abled persons that Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people (and those with disabilities) are capable of being multilingual. In other words, I argue that had Musa been a hearing and White immigrant, his use of seven languages would have been celebrated and his English would not have been problematized or even questioned by his professors. Yet Musa expressed that his negative experiences in school were further exacerbated by his religious identity:

*In other situations, I am criticized as a Muslim. I must be a terrorist and if I speak in defense of my positive experiences as a Muslim, I have a classroom of peers and a teacher who turn against me. I have so many identities, and I’m often the only one with all my identities. That’s a challenge for me...always feeling like I have to represent all my identities because I’m Black at the same time I’m Deaf, at the same time I am Muslim. In everything I do, I must work 3-4 times harder than my American friends...even harder than my Black American friends. It’s exhausting!*

*With my classmates in my major, I’m excluded. Especially I notice this worse during Ramadan. I am the only one in my classes who is fasting and tired. But in America, nothing stops during Ramadan. I must still go to school; still go to work. My classmates continue like business as usual and they notice me more. I think this is why I also cannot get internship teaching experience at my university. I see White Deaf and White hearing have no problem. If they want to teach, the university makes every possibility available to them. For me, they say I must have*

*work experience as a teacher to be able to teach. But a White person can access the system with no problems?! I know it is because I am a Black, foreign, Deaf Muslim. To me this shows university teacher and administrator bias. This is why we need more teachers and administrators who are Black and Deaf and Muslim and whatever other identity that we don't see. Because they will know; they will know that we can because they did!*

Worth noting is that unlike Maya and Tatiana, Musa never names his male gender identity as an identity to be reconciled in his university experience. From this omission, one can imply that Musa has only experienced privileges and access with respect to his male identity. However, also unlike Maya and Tatiana, Musa names how his minoritized religion intersections with his immigration status, his blackness, and his use of several minoritized languages from a predominantly Black country. Musa's story reinforces how schools are a site of struggle for those with multiply-marginalized identities and how the experiences are multifaceted based on the historical interaction of colonization with points of marginalization. For example, how the historical positioning of White people as valued multilingual users and People of Color who use multiple languages as problematic, uniquely oppresses someone who is Black, immigrant, Deaf, and Muslim.

### **Chapter Summary**

All the contributors found school to be a site of struggle in some way. Maya, Tatiana, and Musa's stories were used to explore this theme within this chapter. These three composite narratives show that the point of struggle depends on what identities are being centered. Points of struggle that were included in this chapter were being racialized, being gendered, being sexualized, barriers to identity development, religious oppression, violence against immigrants, and the different ways all the aforementioned identity markers intersect in the school context. All

three stories also highlighted the inability to hide these intersecting, multiply-marginalized identities in school. Statements like “I am all these identities at the same time” and “I cannot separate one identity from the others” shows that what the contributors experience in schools has led to both an affirmative stance of “these identities make me whole.” In addition to this affirmative stance, the contributors also seemed to embody a resistance to forces, that were often unnamed/unrecognized by the contributors, that would seek to reduce them to one identity in a given context. Multiple-marginalization based on their identities had other impacts that are explored more in the following chapters.

## **CHAPTER SIX: OPPRESSION DISTANCES US FROM OUR CULTURE/ETHNIC COMMUNITIES**

We must challenge “practices that perpetuate Western power by misrepresenting and essentializing [Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing] persons, often denying them a voice or an identity.”

—Denzin & Lincoln (2008, p. 5)

Another theme that spanned all the contributors’ narratives was the experience of being distanced from their cultural, ethnic, and/or language communities because of systems of oppression. Of note, is that the contributors’ multiple, intersecting identities were always centered as the reason or the source of the cultural, linguistic, and/or ethnic disconnect(s). Phrases like, ‘...because I am Deaf’, ‘...because I am Muslim’, ‘because of my deafblindness’, among others, typified how the curriculum of colonization worked to shape the contributors’ perception of their identities as the problem. This was the common approach to rationalizing their marginalization within their own communities. Only one contributor named systems of oppression as the reason why he did not feel embraced by his ethnic community. The contributor’s perception of his experiences is described through Brandon’s story.

### **Brandon’s Story**

Brandon is a 22-year old Deaf male who stated that he comes from a strong culturally Black family. He grew up in a major urban city on the east coast of the United States. He described his relationship with his family as close-knit. As a college student, he commits his work and research to his communities of color. As one of the few members of his family who has enrolled in post-secondary education, he feels he owes it to his community to give back the knowledge and skills he has achieved. He mentioned how fortunate he has been throughout his

schooling years:

*I was lucky I was born to a family that already had experience with Deaf. My cousin was born Deaf 20 years before me. So that gives me an advantage as a Black Deaf man. It's not fair that my family had to figure out all the education stuff for my cousin. So my cousin didn't learn ASL or Black ASL until late in life and there was a lot of struggle. But with me, I had ASL and Black ASL exposure from day 1. My parents knew exactly what to advocate for when it came to school stuff. I would say I had it easy...well easier than all the other Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people. I had language, I had a good relationship with my family, and I didn't have other disabilities.*

Brandon's comments provide many areas for discussion. First, Brandon expressed that his older Deaf cousin is female. Additionally, he outlined what she had to endure growing up, namely: a family who didn't know how to raise a Deaf girl, a family who did not know what to advocate for in the formal schooling context for their Deaf member, not being exposed to or having opportunities to learn (Black) ASL growing up, and being forced into different school settings until one 'fit' (according to the family's standards). Gender may be a huge factor to consider when comparing Brandon's experience with his cousin's; though it may not have been conscious or intentional on the part of Brandon's family, and their lack of prior exposure to Deaf individuals certainly played a role. Many researchers have found that society tends to expect Black women to tolerate more suffering (Anderson, Green, & Payne, 2009; Beal, 2008; Simmons, 2017). Though the research cited refers to physical and/or economic suffering, I argue that the emotional and psychological suffering of Black women is often ignored as well. With this frame in mind, it is possible that if Brandon had been the first Deaf person in his family, and being male, he might not have been forced to endure as much identity, language, social, and

educational suffering as his cousin.

Second, Brandon believes that his family's unpreparedness for his older Deaf cousin is common within marginalized communities, especially communities of color. He attributed marginalized communities' lack of knowledge about dis/ability to the systems of oppression that these communities experience. Specifically, Brandon believed these communities are so overwhelmed by their own daily experiences of oppression that they are unable to shift the frame to understand the experiences of their dis/abled community members. I would further add that many racialized and minoritized community members internalize dominant society perspectives about dis/ability. This would make sense within the curriculum of colonization because a primary goal of the colonial agenda is to indoctrinate members of society into want to assimilate and approximate the elite, White, abled, standard. This results in more elite persons pushing the abled (and White) agenda onto racialized/minoritized (dis/abled) communities. It is difficult for communities of color to recognize how their beliefs about and treatment of their dis/abled members has been instilled in them from a system that seeks the erasure of all difference, including race and dis/ability.

Though recognizing his positions of privilege—namely being male and having language access and satisfactory educational opportunities early on—Brandon also discussed his experiences of being excluded and marginalized within the Black hearing community and tied it back to the larger racial system of oppression:

*But I will say my biggest struggle was being with my Black people. I'm so proud of my Blackness, but our community is so broken. It took me going to college to realize what was the root problem. Outside of my family, I always felt excluded by the Black community. They see me and automatically we are drawn to each other because we are Black, and even though I can talk,*

*they identify me as Deaf and everything changes. It's like they don't know how to accept me. I was the middle of the middle, always oppressed in an oppressed community. I wanted to understand why. So I did research about our Deaf and hearing communities and I realized that this is nothing new. We have been divided for a long time. Dating back to segregation times, Black hearing people were so oppressed that they thought that accepting Black Deaf students into their schools would make them even more of a target for oppression. The Black community couldn't take no more hits, if that makes sense. And that's the issue you face with any community of color when it comes to accepting disability. Our hearing community of color goes through so much in society that they can't even consider us Deaf and Disabled peoples. So they end up oppressing us and excluding us or not knowing what to do with us; so they push us away.*

Brandon did not stop by simply explaining the relationship between hearing Black people and Black Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples. He showed that he recognizes the Black Deaf (DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing) community's role in marginalizing racialized immigrants. He continued:

*In the same way, I started to notice in college that us Black Deaf people do the same thing to Black Deaf immigrants. I had never met a Deaf African until I came to college. I mean I knew they existed but I never met them. Then in college I noticed that us Black Deaf "naturally" segregated ourselves from the Deaf Africans. I see people make fun of them for their signs or the way they dress, especially the ones that just came over for college. Then I realized, the same experiences we were having with Black hearing communities, we were dishing it out to the Deaf Africans, who are Black like us!*

Brandon has decided to use his: (1) understanding of systems of oppression, (2) education privilege as someone who will soon graduate college, (3) language privilege as a native user of

(Black) ASL, (4) male privilege, and (5) his networks within communities of color to attempt to address the marginalization and oppression that distances Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities from one another and from their hearing communities. Brandon believes that his work is extremely important to the communities at large as well as schools as exemplified in the following statement:

*So that's why I'm focusing within our communities of color. As People of Color we deal with a lot of oppression in the United States, especially in school. Most of our teachers are White and the teachers of color we do have, are always hearing. I have not yet experienced a Deaf teacher of color, or a Disabled teacher of color, or a DeafBlind teacher of color. That's a huge issue. That's evidence that we still have a long way to go in our society. Black hearing teachers are a step forward, but they still oppress us because our Black community doesn't teach how to have hearing and Deaf communities to live in harmony. So I want to start educating our hearing communities of color and our Deaf and Disabled communities of color. The more we know and the more resources we put into educating ourselves the more we can improve our communities and the relationship with Deaf and Disabled peoples. And I'm not talking about the education that we get in school; I mean really learning our histories and how oppression continues so we can break these cycles and heal these divisions. Our lack of knowledge stops us from being able to support one another hearing to Deaf, Deaf to DeafBlind and Disabled, etc. I'm devoting my energy into healing our oppressions "at home." Education is a key part of our weapon in the war against oppression; being oppressors and being oppressed.*

### **Kaleia's Story**

Further confirming the complexities of intersectional identities within the curriculum of colonization is the way in which the source of the distance from cultural, ethnic, and linguistic

groups shifted depending on which identity was centered as “other” and in what context that identity was problematized. I explore this complexity through Kaleia’s story. Kaleia currently identifies as a second-generation Haitian American DeafBlind woman. Though she grew up in the United States, her experiences were distinct because her immigrant parents held strong to their Haitian culture and language in their home. Like Maya, her parents had little experience with the United States schooling system and their immigrant status, language difference, race (and dark-skin) were centered by dominant society members as a reason for school personnel to not actively engage them in Kaleia’s schooling. Now as a 26-year old thinking about her schooling experiences, Kaleia expressed feeling disconnected from Caribbean Americans, specifically other Haitian Americans, because she uses ASL. She felt excluded from the Deaf community because she is DeafBlind. She felt distanced from the tactile DeafBlind community because she uses ASL and has never been exposed to Pro-Tactile. Now having recently graduated from college, Kaleia reflected on her schooling experiences and described how her DeafBlind identity became the source of how she was marginalized and excluded from hearing and Deaf communities in schools in the following way:

*For most of my life I’ve been a hard of hearing person who has vision problems. Seriously that’s how I identified myself because I have a cochlear implant and I can talk. But then I got to college and I realized that without my cochlear implant, I’m Deaf. Then after constantly having to explain to people that I have vision problems, I learned that I am Blind. So in college I realized I could identify as a Black Caribbean American DeafBlind woman and that’s who I’ve been ever since. Discovering my DeafBlind identity has also allowed me to have access to a certified Deaf interpreter (CDI) for almost all my classes. That just means I have a Deaf person who sits really close to me and brings the visual and auditory information within my*

*field of vision using ASL. One of my CDI friends just told me about Pro-Tactile, but I don't know what that is except that some DeafBlind people use it. So college is the first time I had a CDI and I feel like I have had the most education access in college than in my entire school life.*

The fact that Kaleia has only recently identified as DeafBlind and has little knowledge about Pro-Tactile reinforces the earlier point that Pro-Tactile has not been widely shared to DeafBlind communities of color. Kaleia's visual acuity and the belief of many Deaf persons that Pro-Tactile is just an adjusted form of ASL for people who cannot see is another area to problematize. By analyzing Pro-Tactile as only worth using if your visual acuity is beyond a specific range and describing Pro-Tactile as a modified version of ASL for those who cannot visually access ASL, applies a deficit perspective to the Pro-Tactile language. Kaleia's experiences of being excluded from the Haitian American, DeafBlind, and Deaf communities (of color) provides evidence for the previous point made in Brandon's story that communities of color are typically further behind in acceptance of dis/ability due to little knowledge about dis/abilities.

Kaleia explained her thought process behind making decisions to disclose her DeafBlind identity or not:

*...So when I had the opportunity, I would try to hide my DeafBlind needs. In high school, I wouldn't tell people I couldn't see. But I suffered for it because conversations keep going, socializing keeps happening around me and I miss all of it. So in college, when I embraced being DeafBlind, I was intentional to tell my needs to everyone. But every time I told people I was DeafBlind and how I needed them to accommodate me in order to socialize together, the power was in their hands. They still got to decide whether to exclude me or not. It hurt when they decided to exclude me. I witnessed other DeafBlind people or people with vision problems who*

*disclosed and hearing and Deaf classmates would treat them different. They would take over partner assignments or not let the DeafBlind/low vision person do anything. Like they think DeafBlind people are incapable. Teachers would witness this happening every time and not say anything. But I'm assertive and I complain because it is my right to do hands-on work and I am capable but they take my right to be capable away from me. So disclosing my DeafBlind identity has a lot of downsides.*

*I feel like I would've identified as DeafBlind at a younger age if I even knew what that was. I remember in school, I didn't want to tell people I had vision problems because they would leave me out, or they would exclude me. That's one thing I remember about being in an all White, mostly hearing school. I was always excluded as the dark-skinned Black girl with hearing and vision problems, whose parents were also immigrants. I was excluded from friendships and social groups. Even in class group work, the teachers would always allow my classmates to pick their groups and no one would pick to work with me because they don't see a DeafBlind person as capable. So the teacher would always be my work partner. I don't understand why the teacher did not encourage peers to work more together or to include Deaf and DeafBlind students in their work groups more.*

Kaleia's thought processes behind making decisions to disclose, highlight how the burden for both the disclosing and the outcome rest on the multiply-marginalized person. In the end, the power still lies with the dominant group member who can continue to exclude or can make the decision to include Kaleia. For Kaleia, exclusion was not limited to social aspects of school. Though the social aspects were important (i.e., chatting with peers in the cafeteria or on the playground, developing friendships, etc.), the combination of social exclusion in addition to educational exclusion, resulted in a schooling experience characterized by constant

marginalization.

Kaleia described educational exclusion as not being invited to join work groups and even when she was allowed by her classmates to join their work groups, they would not allow her to actually participate in the work. This brings up an important consideration about inclusion. Inclusion is a major topic of debate in Special Education. One argument that should be made clear through Kaleia's story is that inclusion does not automatically equate to full participation. Though Kaleia was included—in classes with her same-aged hearing, abled peers—she was still prohibited by those peers from fully participating; Kaleia described this as being excluded. For example, the times when Kaleia worked with her peers to complete mandatory group work, she stated that her peers would take over and complete all the work without giving her an opportunity to show that she could. Kaleia believed the reason for this was her peers' belief that as a DeafBlind person, she is not capable of the same quality work. Therefore, being physically present and receiving instructional time with hearing, abled peers was not enough in Kaleia's experience because there was no time or instruction dedicated to helping these peers address their implicit biases towards a DeafBlind girl of color. From Kaleia's experience we can understand that being in the same physical space does not suffice especially if no effort is made to change the mindsets of the dominant group members within that space.

Kaleia's experiences in school were also impacted by witnessing the struggles of other DeafBlind and low vision people. She described her thought processes upon encountering people who did not want to disclose or denied their DeafBlind identity:

*On the other hand, I witnessed people who clearly have vision problems but refuse to tell people and they just suffer through. In college, those people were still the high school version of me. They were living a life with gaps out of fear of being excluded from the Deaf and the hearing*

*communities. I wish I could say to them, “You don’t have to be afraid to tell people who you are. You are DeafBlind, that’s who you are.” But I don’t want to take away their agency and their right to not disclose who they are. But it’s sad, because I understand. The burden is on us DeafBlind people but the suffering is also on us if we don’t say anything; it’s on us if sighted Deaf people and hearing people still choose to exclude us.*

There has yet to be an examination of the psychological and emotional impact on Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people who witness the suffering of other Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people. Kaleia mentioned that when she noticed people who are afraid to inform others of their vision-related needs, it evoked feelings of wanting to encourage them and assuage their fears. However, this experience also triggered her and took her back to the time in her life when her fear of how sighted hearing and Deaf peers would respond disarmed her autonomy to acknowledge her DeafBlind identity fully. As a spectator to those who struggled to disclose their DeafBlind identity and those who outright rejected their DeafBlind identity, Kaleia relived her own experiences of helplessness. Therefore, in those moments, and even recalling those moments years later, Kaleia was still affected on emotional and psychological levels.

Kaleia’s story broaches the importance of considering the experiences of multiply-marginalized persons for both their impact on the individual level, but also on the level of larger communities. Those who can empathize with these experiences, in addition to having their own experiences of marginalization and oppression based on their various identities, are uniquely positioned to suffer both from their own experiences, as well as from witnessing the experiences of others. For this reason, it is important to address the multiple levels and intersections of oppression and marginalization within the curriculum of colonization simultaneously.

## Chapter Summary

I must emphasize that the dual impact of the curriculum of colonization affects those who are uplifted as a dominant group member in specific contexts as well as those who are denied the privilege of dominant group membership in said context. Both are harmed through marginalizing and being marginalized within a given cultural, linguistic, and/or ethnic community. Although both Brandon and Kaleia discussed how they were affected by being marginalized and excluded from their cultural, ethnic, and/or linguistic communities, we should also consider the level of indoctrination required for the dominant group members to participate in excluding and marginalizing them. As stated previously, within the curriculum of colonization the impact is within groups and across groups. In other words, while denying Brandon and Kaleia access to participate in their full humanity, those who denied them full participation in the cultural, ethnic, and/or language groups were also losing their humanity. Brandon made this connection clear in his explanation of the effects of oppression on communities of color causing them to historically and currently struggle to accept their dis/abled community members. Furthermore, considering the within group effects of the curriculum of colonization, Kaleia eluded to the emotional and psychological effects of witnessing other members of her community experience fear of marginalization and exclusion if they disclosed their identities. Kaleia also hinted towards another layer of this dual impact when mentioning teachers' failure to intervene when her peers did not allow her to participate socially, refused to invite her in work groups, and denied her opportunities to actively complete class work. Although teacher's failure to intervene may not always be the result of experiencing oppression, it is for sure a consequence of the curriculum of colonization conditioning their responses and making the oppression of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students normalized. In the following

chapter, other contributor stories depict other ways that teachers and other school professionals were complicit in their oppression.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: TEACHERS, INTERPRETERS, AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL AS AGENTS IN OUR OPPRESSION**

The role teachers, interpreters, and other school personnel played in the schooling experiences of the contributors was a theme that was extensively discussed. Five composite stories are shared in this chapter to allow for a more in-depth exploration of teachers, interpreters and other school personnel as agents in the oppression of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing contributors. The contributors expressed that teachers, interpreters, and other school personnel were largely complicit in their oppression—not intervening in their experiences of oppression; not educating hearing, abled peers about how to not oppress and marginalize them; or simply participating in schooling practices that had negative impacts on their educational experiences and identity development—as previously touched on in Maya’s story in Chapter Six. Other times, teachers and school personnel blatantly oppressed, took advantage of, or excluded the contributors; as described briefly in Musa’s story in Chapter Six. Related to interpreters, leveraging hearing social power over the contributors and refusing to self-analyze their ability to provide equitable language access in the school setting were major points that emerged from the contributors’ stories. This theme is explored by Shaneeka’s, Cierra’s, Darian’s, Desi’s, and Benjamin’s stories.

### **Shaneeka’s Story**

Shaneeka is a Black woman in her mid 30s. She was born and raised in what she describes as a traditional, religious, large (extended) Black family. She was raised in an urban city and had the opportunity to travel often as a child due to the family’s commitment to staying in contact with extended family members who lived outside of their state. Shaneeka considered her upbringing to be that of a typical Black middle class. She felt fortunate to have two educated

parents, with one of them who worked in the school system in the area of Special Education. Shaneeka expressed extreme pride in her womanhood and strong, collective family ties. She explained how lack of school services for Deaf children within the predominantly Black schools in their city, prevented her from carrying over strong family ties into the school context. Specifically, Shaneeka's siblings and cousins had shared experiences and relationships at school that Shaneeka was not able to relate to or be a part of. The lack of educational services for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students in schools that predominantly serve students of color is indicative of the limited resources allocated to these schools (Brown, Tanner-Smith, Lesane-Brown, 2009; Franklin, 2004).

She discussed how it felt to be educated in a predominantly White school:

*I grew up in a large, strong Black family. So I always had a sense of pride in being a Black girl, now woman. However, because of my hearing loss, I was the only one in my family who went to predominantly White K-12 schools. My siblings and cousins all went to Black schools on our side of town while I had to travel across town to school because at the time, that was the only school that had programs for students with hearing loss. I remember feeling like I just didn't fit and the only time I felt comfortable was when I came home and was with my siblings and cousins. At very young age I noticed that something was not right, even though I couldn't put my finger on what it was. Now as an adult, looking back I remember that I was placed in the basement classroom for special needs kids and the majority of us were students of color. Being in the basement, was kind of like the physical reminder that we were "below" those "normal" kids. I started to realize early that the teachers were categorizing Deaf students into who would be placed on vocational track and who would go on academic track. This was as early as third grade that I remember my mom coming to the school and advocating to have me*

*moved from the self-contained special needs classroom to the mainstream program. My teachers didn't think I could succeed but because of my persistent mother, I was moved. It was going into the mainstream classroom that I realized all the White Deaf students, except the ones that were severely disabled, were in mainstream classes on the academic track, while the Deaf students of color were pushed into the vocational track. But even worse, I think subconsciously I realized that the students who used ASL were also pushed to the vocational track, unless they were White and high achieving. I think this was a subconscious realization because I remember being scared to be associated with ASL using Deaf students. I felt like I had to distance myself from the Deaf kids in order for teachers to not push me into the vocational track.*

Shaneeka's recollection of the differential treatment between the mainstreamed, hearing, abled students and the students in the self-contained special needs classroom is common in the literature. Educational tracking has been a common way of "penalizing disadvantaged [and marginalized] youth with inferior scholastic opportunities...which later materialize into lesser occupational opportunities" (Brown, Tanner-Smith, & Lesane-Brown, 2009, p. 385). Shaneeka's teachers demonstrated how the intersection of ableism and racism worked together to track more 'severely dis/abled' and dis/abled and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students of color out of scholastic opportunities that would give them access to higher educational attainment and into trade jobs. Placing these students into the vocational schooling track not only limited their educational attainment, but also denied them opportunities to advance in material and immaterial gain, in turn limiting their social mobility. Therefore, the implicit biases of teachers inform how they approach teaching and learning for dis/abled students of color with, in most cases, lifelong impacts and implications for these students. What Shaneeka observed related to how her teachers labeled, categorized, and tracked dis/abled and Deaf,

DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students at her school became part of Shaneeka's ethnic/racial socialization but also part of her dis/ability socialization. In response to this, Shaneeka felt the burden of not identifying with the "Deaf" and "dis/abled" (children of color) if she wanted to become a high achieving student.

Shaneeka talked about the burden she felt and the work she had to put in, in order to not fall into the same pattern of tracking into less academically challenging opportunities:

*...I had to work twice as hard. I had to excel in ways that my peers didn't have to excel just to prove that I was worthy of being in the academic classes. That means I also had to suppress my learning of ASL. Even though my parents supported me, and my mother tried to push me to learn ASL, I felt unsafe to learn it for fear that my teachers would associate me with "those" Deaf people. Looking back, I feel like I have lost years of being who I am because of my teachers. I watched them hold other students back. Again, as an adult, I realize that most of those students were Deaf students of color. I may remember one White Deaf student being held back a grade in my entire K-12 schools. I don't think that's a mistake. I think that's a sign of oppression. Since I've graduated five years ago, there has only been one other Deaf student of color that has graduated in that time. There should be a lot more; but they are dropping out or only being given certificates of completion. But I think when students like me don't have parents who know the system or parents who can be strong advocates, we fall through the cracks. I think now it's only more recent that Deaf students of color are finding other ways to fight back against discrimination in schools. I watch Deaf students of color protesting like the Marlton School protests in Los Angeles and I feel a sense of pride for the fight they have in them. They aren't powerless like many of my peers were. They are taking back their power and bringing it to the larger society's attention. However, I also feel a sense of shame and disappointment that school*

*continues to be a place where we face discrimination and oppression. Has much really changed since my time in school?*

Shaneeka hints at an important consideration, namely, the fact that when a multiply-marginalized student has parents or other community members who understand the (school) system and advocates on their behalf, there are pathways to resisting systems of oppression that manifest in schools. Like Tatiana, Shaneeka was fortunate to have ethnic/racial socialization at home because they both shared common languages with their parents and families; this is not typically the case for many Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children. Less than 20% of hearing parents use sign language with their Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children (Rainer, Altshuler, & Kallman, 1969; Rawlings, 1973; Meyers & Bartee, 1992); however, there is still no clear data on the number of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children who develop spoken language as their primary and preferred means of communication.

Like Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children, immigrant children face acculturation problems in school such as lack of communication and social skills and inability to negotiate some of the expectations and behaviors of the hearing school context. For immigrant children, parent support was found to be a positive determinant of school adjustment (Liebkind, Jasinskaja-Lahti, & Solheim, 2004). Likewise, we can assume that parental support (in its various forms), can positively impact the experiences of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. In Shaneeka's case, she felt the support of her parents was one of the factors that mitigated some of the behaviors and biases of her teachers against her. However, it is important to note that parent support requires parent knowledge of the systems. This was one benefit or privilege that Shaneeka was able to take

advantage of that was not afforded to the other contributors, particularly those who were 1st, 1.5, and 2nd generation immigrants to the United States.

Tracking Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students as well as discussions of graduation rates is often a point of reference for determining academic success for this population of students. However, what is less discussed is that measures of academic success are always placed in the context of hearing, White, abled standards. Therefore, the more a Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, or Hard of Hearing student can “disappear into hearingness”, the more likely they are to be gauged as successful. In Shaneeka’s case, there were clearly attempts on her part to disappear into hearingness, even to the point of refusing to learn ASL despite having parent encouragement and support. However, there was also a disappearing into whiteness which is a central point of anti-blackness. Shaneeka noted that Deaf students who were placed on the vocational track and those retained in their grade level in her school were overwhelmingly Black. Therefore, there cannot be a separation of the affects of racism and ableism. They must be considered at their intersections. The more Shaneeka was able to avoid being engaged by teachers at those intersections, the better chances she thought she had of being given a chance to excel academically.

Lastly, Shaneeka discussed the importance of youth activism as a form of resisting oppressive systems in schools. Though youth are typically shut out from participating in adult institutions and political decision-making, “activism groups, often populated by youth of color living in poor and working-class neighborhoods, have worked to improve failing schools; ...expose[d] environmental polluters; and...persuaded policy makers to stop the building of *super jails* for juvenile offenders” (Kirshner, 2007). Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing K-12 students have traditionally been denied access to the same type of youth activism

related to their schooling experiences due to the deprivation of and late access to language, which provides context and increased understandings of their experiences of oppression. As stated by Maya in her story, it was not until she had acquired Pro-Tactile that she was able to understand the extent to which she had been oppressed her entire life. Shaneeka praised the ability of K-12 students to protest their experiences of discrimination in their schools at the hands of their teachers and school administrators. Kirshner (2007) stated that youth activism provides opportunity for collective-problem solving, youth-adult interactions, exploration of other frames of identity, and bridges academic and civic institutions. The multiple protests related to oppressive schooling experiences that have resulted from a collaboration between Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students and their communities, are a testament that Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students are now rising up to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by youth activism. These forms of resistance are also allowing Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students to connect with and leverage intergenerational community ties within the adult Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities which may strengthen their intersectional cultural, racial, Dis/abled identities at even younger ages (Ginwright, 2007).

### **Cierra's Story**

Cierra is a Black woman in her late 20s. She attended mainstream, public school for her entire K-12 schooling. She went through schooling having never received interpreter services and because of her perceived intelligence, also did not receive direct services from a teacher of the deaf; however, the teacher of the deaf did consult with her mainstream teachers about making sure her FM system was functioning properly to boost the teacher's speech signal in the classroom. Using an FM system meant that the teacher wore a microphone that would increase

the volume of their speech so that Cierra could auditorily access the teacher's voice, sometimes above peers and other classroom dialogue that we know to be essential to students' incidental learning opportunities and improved social and academic outcomes (Smith & Ramsey, 2004). Like many other students in the mainstream, Cierra came into contact with ASL around high school, which coincided with her first encounter with another Deaf person. As a result, she started spending her extracurricular hours taking ASL classes at the school for the deaf in her region, and socially immersing herself with Deaf high schoolers at that school.

Though Cierra considered herself Hard of Hearing until her college years, and credits her auditory access and intelligence as reasons for having a more positive experience in the K-12 mainstream settings, she described how teachers' behaviors impacted how she felt at school and possibly how her peers perceived her:

*...My school experience wasn't that bad. There was clear lack of representation of Black Deaf teachers, or Deaf period, but I never had any issues directed towards me specifically. I was in mainstream school with about 50/50 Black and White students. There were some teachers who valued my identity as a Black Deaf female student and some teachers who said they didn't see color. Overall, all my teachers were supportive regardless of their race or if they were hearing. There were some things that my teachers did that made me feel uncomfortable; this was mostly in high school and college.*

*The teachers made me out as a model student; put me on a pedestal for the other students to follow. They would say things like "set an example" for the other students but it just didn't feel right. They would make comments like, "Cierra, you always submit your assignments on time, you do good in class, never cause any problems. You act a lot better than most Black people." I didn't know how to take or interpret those remarks at the time. It happened again in*

*college. I applied for the master's program for ASL Linguistics. It's a pretty rigorous program and they are very selective about who gets accepted. My professors and White Deaf classmates would often make comments like, "You sign beautifully for a Black person." But they would often make those comments where other Black signers could see. I started to realize, their comments were directed at me as much as they were directed at the Black people around me.*

In the United States, group messaging is a common tactic used by dominant group members in order to rally subordinated society members into submission or to behave in ways that have been deemed appropriate for the subordinated group members. One can consult the history on slavery for an early example of how group messaging was employed. Often times, Black bodies would be lynched, hung, and left for all other Black peoples to understand what they would be succumbed to if they attempted to step out of their imposed social positions. Though this type of group messaging has evolved over the years, what Cierra experienced could be considered a subtler, yet equally violent form of group messaging.

In this form of group messaging, Cierra's behaviors and identity is weaponized by her teachers against other Black students. Using the teachers' implicit bias and stereotypes about Black students being troublemakers, not submitting work on time, and acting in unfavorable ways, Cierra is positioned in opposition to "those" type of Black students and closer to well-behaving (White) students. Simultaneously, the teachers' phrasing keeps Cierra within the Black realm and upholds her as the standard for which other Black students should aim. All without explicitly, directly telling other Black students that they should be like, sign like, behave like Cierra.

Though these teachers were still considered "good" in Cierra's opinion, she continued to describe a more emboldened professor who's messaging and weaponizing of Cierra's identity

was more direct and explicit. This particular professor's approach involved attempting to indoctrinate Cierra into weaponizing her identity through 1:1 conversations pointing out how she stands in opposition to other Black students and why she should leverage this difference to condition others to be like her. Cierra explained how this attempted indoctrination occurred in 1:1 conversation with the professor as well as in a public classroom setting:

*I remember one professor approaching me after class and asking me, "What's wrong with those other Black people? They always skipping class. They wear baggy clothes and bright colors. The women talk so loud or always have an attitude. What's wrong with them? You are not like that. You can teach them how to not be like that." I was young, about 20 at the time. I didn't know how to respond, especially to a well-respected professor. In class, it became "You should be more like Cierra" and "Look at Cierra, she's not loud." The signing communities were the same too, "Cierra doesn't make all those strong facial expressions when she signs. You should sign more like Cierra."*

*It didn't stop with my signing and my personality. It also included my physical appearance. The teacher would say things about my clothes not being tight like the other Black girls and that they should dress more like me. It felt never-ending. I wonder how much other students were hurt because of me and how teachers used me. I never said anything, I never told other students they had to be like me. But the teachers constantly threw me in their faces. Maybe they hated me for just being me...*

Cierra's mentioning of her physical appearance and how it was centered by teachers is an important point of discussion as it relates to a concept theorized by Fanon (1952). Black (women's) bodies have been a point of spectacle within the colonial state (Fanon, 1952; Woods, 2013). Woods (2013) described the specter of Black bodies as "sexual violence intrinsic to

empire generally, and to anti-blackness in particular” (p. 120). In other words, the sexualization of Black women’s bodies has become a function of Western civilization and colonization (Woods, 2013). Fanon (1952) explored the idea of how Black (women’s) bodies have been situated within a colonial state as ‘negrophobia’ or the “sexual neurosis of white supremacy” (Woods, 2013, p. 125). This over-sexualization and obsession with the Black woman’s body has been a central point in colonization. Within colonization, Black bodies are simultaneously sexually repulsive and lusted-after objects. Woods (2013) argued that this is both a condition of colonization and anti-blackness. Cierra’s teachers’ focus on her physical appearance and the looseness of her clothes, while positioning her in contrast to the “tight” clothes of her Black female peers, is one way that Cierra was weaponized as a tool to police how other Black female students dressed.

To this day, Cierra cannot ascertain whether she was distanced from other students of color due to her hearing loss or her teachers weaponizing her identity against them, or both. She never had close relationships with Black students in her K-12 experience although her school was about 50% Black. It wasn’t until her college years when she began developing more relationships with Black people that she began to reflect on this. Now as an instructor of ASL Linguistics, she finds it essential to forefront the positive aspects of her blackness as a model for her Black students but also to break the negative stereotyping of her White students. She remains self-conscious about how she dresses and signs and wonders about the message she is delivering to her Black students; hoping that they understand that she is only portraying one of the many ways to be a Black Deaf woman.

## Darian's Story

Darian is a Black male in his mid- 20s. Like Cierra, Darian identified as Hard of Hearing growing up. However, unlike Cierra, he continues to identify as Hard of Hearing and believes this label fits his current identity well. Darian grew up in an all hearing family that had no exposure to hearing loss. Darian feels because of this, they did not have an understanding of how to and what to advocate for in the school setting. Their lack of knowledge of hearing loss also made his home life very inaccessible as his family expected him to behave and be reared as a hearing child in their home. Darian grew up in a Southern Black family as an only child in a large urban city. He never met or experienced another Deaf person until early high school. This was also around the time he began learning ASL through an interpreter.

Darian shared about his mainstream schooling experiences:

*I don't think my school experience was too bad. I mean I'm hard of hearing, I'm a guy, I'm athletic, I have street smarts I guess. I went to mainstream school where I never really had an interpreter in class. I was only in Special Education for a few years when I was younger. After that I was with everybody else in the general education classroom. I loved sports. I was really active. In gym class while I was in high school, my teacher realized I was really good at track and field. So he had me join the team. I heard stories of other Deaf kids who wanted to join sports like wrestling and the coaches wouldn't advocate for them, or their parents were afraid they would get injured and have "another" disability. But the gym teacher/track coach fought for me. He went to my home and talked with my parents and finally convinced them that it was "safe" for me.*

*After a couple of the first meets, the coach realized that I struggled because of communication. When everyone was on the field, it was too loud and I was missing things at*

*practice and at the meets. So he convinced the school to provide an interpreter for our practice times and for our home meets. At the time, I thought it was cool. I had so much access and I was able to be a better athlete. But now I think it's strange that the school was willing to provide an interpreter for me to participate in sports, but not for the educational part of my school day. Yeah that's very strange.*

*Because of my athletic performance, all my teachers knew me. They all praised my physical abilities. Nobody ever really talked to me about school things. Well...actually, now that I think about it, I was always called on in class to talk about sports things or Black things. Anytime my teachers wanted to make a point about Black people, they would always call on me or ask my opinion. "Right Darian don't you agree that..." "Darian, is it true that Black people don't get sunburned and maybe that's why you are able to train so well for track." Things like that. I felt like maybe they wanted me to be the voice for all Black people. At the same time, they never really acknowledge by Deaf side or my Deaf needs, except for providing an interpreter on the track. I could've been so much more if I had a Black or Black Deaf teacher, especially. I never knew about captions until I went to college. I remember watching my favorite shows and always wondering why everyone was laughing. A Black Deaf teacher would've known that and told me that. A Black Deaf teacher would've told me that I could've advocated to get an interpreter in my classrooms too and not just on the track field. But I won the school a lot of sports records. Sigh...yeah.*

There are several points from Darian's school experiences that need to be explicated more. First, the other Deaf students' parents' fear of placing them in sports as a risk for 'other disabilities' is an example of how ableism manifests even in parenting choices. In other words, the parents Darian referred to thought preventing their child from potentially having another

disability was more of a priority than their child having the same opportunities as their abled peers to explore extracurricular likes and interests. The reach and affects of ableism within our society clearly reach into many aspects of Disabled and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students' lives.

Similarly, Darian expresses the he feels he could have been so much more, achieved much more, and experienced so much more if he had been provided with a Black or a Black Deaf teacher. The intersection of racism and ableism is one reason why Darian never experienced a Black Deaf teacher. Even in the past 20 years, the number of Black Deaf teachers has not increased with only about 1% of teachers of the deaf being Persons of Color (Simms et al., 2008). Since integration of schools in the United States, Black (and other Persons of Color) access to the teaching field has consistently been well below that of White women. Specifically, for teachers of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing, only about 10% are Teachers of Color (Simms et al., 2008). I argue that the consistently low numbers of (Deaf) Teachers of Color is due to a colonial schooling system that continuously fails these populations as students working in tandem with a teacher preparation system that devalues the unique knowledges and epistemologies that potential future Teachers of Color bring. In turn, recruitment and retention for (Deaf) Teachers of Color remain low. As a result, Black Hard of Hearing students like Darian have fewer chances of having a Black and/or Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, or Hard of Hearing teacher in their schooling career.

A third point of discussion is the support Darian received for his athleticism via the provision of an interpreter, while also being under-supported in his academics. Darian's experience typifies how Black boys are often stereotyped as athletic, yet underachievers; which contributes to "racialization and marginalization that in turn structure [Black boys'] learning

processes, social opportunities, life chances, and educational outcomes” (James, 2012, p. 464). It is also clear that Darian’s ability to achieve on the track because he had full language access, did not translate to providing an interpreter in the classroom setting to support his academic achievement. In a way, this phenomenon is also representative of negrophobia and liminality; Black bodies are meant to be consumed but not intellectuals; supports are provided for excelling in entertaining society (sports) but not for contributing to the intellectualizing of society. Beyond negrophobia and liminality, another aspect of anti-blackness was characterized within Darian’s experience; the permitted mobility of Black and Brown bodies when it suits dominant society members. In Darian’s story, mobility referred to receiving acknowledgement and praise from his teachers related to his athletics but also to validate their perception of the Black experience. Calling on Darian to agree with them when describing their opinions about Black people was one way Darian was leveraged and weaponized by White teachers. It is possible that if Darian had refused to validate their comments and/or did not excel on the track field, his social mobility would have been rescinded or denied altogether.

Despite the lack of full access to the academic aspects of his school experience, Darian explained that he managed to attend college:

*I made it into college on a sports scholarship. My world opened up! Because I had the ASL interpreter on the track, that set the foundation for me to keep learning ASL. So I took ASL classes in college in addition to my major courses. I found myself getting more interested in my studies instead of just sports. Some hearing researchers associated with the University invited me to join their study as a research intern in the health field. I didn’t ask how they found out about me because I was so happy to have the opportunity. They had me work on one project that was researching a health factor in the Deaf community. They wanted me to use my ASL skills*

*and my speaking skills to interview about 200 Deaf people. That's all I had to do. They paid me for each interview I conducted. It was easy enough.*

*After the internship was over, I contacted them because I was curious about the results. I had no part of the data analysis or the write up so I wanted to know what they found. Basically, they found that Black Deaf people had a higher health risk factor than Asian and White Deaf peoples. So I asked when they were going to share this with the communities for Black Deaf community education. They said they didn't plan on it. They had presented these findings at a conference and everything! But they didn't plan on sharing this important health information with the study participants. I was furious! They basically used me because they felt a Deaf person interviewing Deaf people would get more honest answers. I was a puppet for them to get the information they needed; that's all. I felt obligated to share this information but I was stuck because I had no way of getting into contact with all those people. I begged them to share the results with the participants, but they said the study was over and the information would be "published" soon. I felt guilty; I felt responsible. Where was accountability for this research?! So I took it into my own hands to go and reach out to the few people I did remember from the study and told them what they found. To this day, I still feel like I haven't done enough to make up for that.*

*I see this happening in research more and more. As more hearing people enter research, they seem willing to use Deaf people to do the leg work, especially when the study participants are Deaf people: interview these people, maybe even analyze this data. But they are publishing this "research" in academic journals that are not accessible to the community. Then they build off this information and share to more hearing people. When Deaf people try to step out in front to benefit the Deaf community, they block us; they overload us so we get too overwhelmed to*

*make the impact we intended to make; they don't allow us to be role models; etc. That research experience was an eye-opener for me. From then on, I refused to do research under hearing people, especially when they didn't have a specific plan on how they were going to use that research to directly benefit the Deaf community when they were done getting their data.*

Though a sports scholarship provided Darian with the access and opportunity to enter higher education, he discussed how he used higher education as a site to take advantage of all the various opportunities he had missed out on or was denied in his K-12 schooling. Specifically, he took ASL courses in addition to the mandatory courses for his field. The extra work Darian had to devote, the additional work that potentially his hearing and abled peers did not have to invest, demonstrates how Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals still assume the burden of compensating for the social and learning opportunities they are denied in the school context. Without his sports scholarship, Darian would have also had to assume the financial responsibility for the ASL classes he took, as well as the cost of the classes for his degree.

Darian committed to using the lessons he learned from the oppressive behaviors of hearing teachers and researchers to improve the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities. He also believed that sharing his story in research for and about Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people who experience multiple forms of marginalization and oppression, that his experiences could become a point of caution for others to protect their communities from teachers and researchers who do not have the communities' benefit and priorities in mind.

## Desi's Story

Desi is a 1.5 generation Indian American. Desi came to the United States as a 6-year-old boy with his mother who did not speak English. To this day, his mother is fluent in Hindi and a few other Indian dialects, but does not speak English well. His mother's limited English use and immigrant status have been centered as reasons for limiting her work options to trade jobs, though she has an accounting degree and is considered an educated woman in India. He identifies as a Deaf, Queer, male in his late twenties. Desi, now working in industry as a chemist, described his experiences in school, highlighting both the positive and negative:

*I immigrated to the United States as an elementary-age kid. I came here with my mother who didn't know English. My mother and I had no knowledge of the systems here and that put me at a major disadvantage as a child with all these identities. I am an immigrant, Asian, Deaf, queer, guy. And it's only during my college years that I have been able to say that. As a matter of fact, I am still struggling with my Asian identity because I continue to feel disconnected from that identity.*

*But I was fortunate to have been offered all the range of services. When my mother realized how comfortable I seemed using sign language, I was placed in a Deaf school for my first few years of school in the United States. Then in middle school and high school I had to go to mainstream schools using an ASL interpreter. There was a major shift between elementary school and middle/high school. In elementary school, the teachers seemed caring and they made sure to communicate with my mother even though she didn't know English well. They made sure an interpreter was present for meetings with my mother so that she could be active in my school experience. I'm grateful to those teachers for that.*

Desi was fortunate to be presented with a range of services upon his entrance in school in the United States. He was able to try schooling approaches that using spoken language approach, as well as ASL immersion and bilingual approaches. When his elementary school personnel and teachers recognized how quickly he was progressing and acquiring ASL, they supported this option and sent him to a school for the deaf where he would be instructed through ASL and acquire English through reading and writing. His elementary school teachers and school personnel also valued language access and decision-making power for Desi's mother and demonstrated this by providing a spoken language interpreter for all meetings with her. Desi explained how the family engaging teachers he had in elementary school contrasted with his subsequent experiences with teachers:

*There was a major shift in middle school. I don't know if that has to do with being in a Deaf school verses a hearing mainstream school, or if it's related to teachers being more caring for elementary school-aged children and middle school teachers being less caring...I can't say without a shadow of a doubt. In my opinion, the professionals made no attempts to connect with my mother, and this was especially true for explaining to her the importance of using ASL at home with me. What I can say is middle school and high school were hell for me, even though I was a well-performing student. Well... I was a well-performing student in spite of my teachers and the interpreter.*

*I was one of two Deaf students in most of my classes; the other was a White Deaf guy, we can call him Tony...Interestingly, I was the only Deaf Person of Color that was being mainstreamed. All the other Deaf students of color were in a small Deaf classroom. The other White Deaf students were older than me or younger than me, except for Tony. So I never had classes with them. In middle school we had a pretty good interpreter and I thought we had a*

*good relationship. Tony and I both looked up to this interpreter as a mother figure, even though she was White that didn't matter to me because she used ASL. But then I realized that the interpreter was inviting Tony and his family to outings outside of school and wasn't inviting me. It was at that point that I started to wonder: Was it because I was a brown Asian boy? Was it because my mother was an immigrant who didn't speak English well? It was another one of those things where I couldn't say for sure. But what could I do? What could I say? I was just a twelve-year-old kid.*

*That interpreter eventually left for some reason and was replaced with another interpreter. This time a Queer White guy. At this point I was feeling excited because I was becoming more strong in my Queer identity, even though I didn't know that word and I wasn't out yet. But this interpreter sucked! The interpreter was awful! But he wouldn't say anything! He would give me wrong information or just not give me information all the time! I complained about this interpreter several times to my teachers. And they knew how often I had to raise my hand in class to ask for clarification. But I guess they thought, "That's just the Deaf boy being deaf." That was frustrating! What if I didn't know I was missing something? What if I couldn't advocate for myself in that way? What if I was less assertive? What if I was a woman and they were sexist to me and ignored my demands for access? All these thoughts cross my mind because in any other scenario where I had less privilege, I wouldn't have survived the rest of middle school like that. And high school too because despite my complaints in class, my complaints to the Special Education Director in my school, they gave me the exact same interpreter in high school! The same interpreter! For every class!*

Though teachers are often the topic of discussion when it comes to the oppression of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students, Desi brought up the less

commonly discussed issue of educational interpreters. Desi eluded to both interpreter skill as well as interpreter attitudes and ethical behavior concerns. Though educational interpreters are one source of access to the general education classroom content and social aspects of schooling, there has been much debate surrounding the quality of the interpreted information for the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing student. Schick, Williams, and Kupermintz (2006) found that of the 2100 education interpreters evaluated using the Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment (EIPA), 62% of these interpreters scored below the 3.5 minimum standard score that most states in the United States have adopted. Only 21% scored in the 3.5-3.9 range. However, even at this level, an interpreter's skill level would: lack knowledge of complex, technical, and academic terms in ASL; potentially have incorrect grammatical productions for complex statements in ASL but accurate for routine communications; and would often lack depth and subtleties from student's original ASL utterance to the English interpretation (Schick, Williams, and Kupermintz, 2006). Interpreters at this level would require continued supervision and continued education and training. This data shows that by in large, Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students in mainstream settings with interpreters "receive interpreting services that will seriously hinder reasonable access to the classroom curriculum and social interaction" (Schick, Williams, & Kupermintz, 2006, p. 3).

On an ethical level, it is of concern that educational interpreters do not recognize and/or admit to the limitations of their skillset. Oftentimes, interpreters put their comfort over the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students' language access. For example, in Desi's situation, the interpreter would not admit to his inability to fully and accurately convey the course content. There is already an imbalance of power between interpreters and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students due to interpreters' hearingness (Hall,

Holcomb, Elliot, 2016). Unfortunately, there has only been anecdotal evidence of what multiply-marginalized Deaf students like Desi have suffered at the culturally incongruent hands of predominantly White, heterosexual, hearing, abled, female interpreters who in large part don't learn about Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, or Hard of Hearing communities until their college years. In Desi's case, the interpreter's refusal to acknowledge his lack of skill could have arose out of the intersections of his Whiteness, hearingness, abledness, the Western belief that adults are superior to children, and the fact that in contrast to Desi, all these identities were superordinated.

Desi continued with how the teacher's support of the interpreter served to oppress and disregard his access needs as well:

*In one of my high school science classes my 10th grade year, I complained to the teacher again about the interpreter. The teacher literally said to me, "The interpreter is fine! You're just not studying and you're looking for someone to blame for your own slacking off! You need to do better or I'll have you put in a remedial class." I was crushed! How does this teacher know the interpreter is doing "fine"? The teacher didn't even know ASL or anything about Deaf students!*

*I don't know if the interpreter was getting frustrated with me or what, but he started to refuse to voice for me in class. I would have to stand up to get the teacher's attention. Otherwise, he would continue to let other students talk and discuss and never make an attempt to put my voice in the class discussion. Then the interpreter would cover his tracks by saying "A hearing person was talking, make your comment again." Where were my rights? Hearing students talk over one another all the time, as the interpreter, he should insert himself whenever I lift my hands to sign, regardless if it interrupts a hearing person or not. My experience with that interpreter showed me that interpreters can be patronizing people who look down on and pity*

*Deaf people. It disturbs me reflecting on those experiences. I felt defeated. I felt alone. I felt like I had no self-determination in my own education. I was a fifteen-year-old boy who was trying to survive normal teenage stuff, realizing I was Queer with no Queer role models, being oppressed by a Queer interpreter; I didn't know what to do. Who would expect a fifteen-year-old to have the answers of how to solve those type of situations?! They were the adults and they had the power.*

What Desi described is how both teachers and interpreters used their White, hearing, abled, adult privilege over him. The teacher in this case had no qualifications for basing their judgment of the interpreter's abilities as "fine." More than defending the interpreter, the teacher projected the interpreter's failings onto Desi, assigning him the blame and used tracking as a method of threatening Desi. This shows that like Shaneeka's story, teachers are fully aware of the social meanings behind mainstream, remedial, and special classes for students with dis/abilities. In regards to the interpreter, instead of acknowledging his shortcomings and finding supports to improve his skills or a more qualified replacement for Desi's classes, the interpreter put his own feelings over Desi's language access; responding in retaliation by further denying Desi access, and outright reinforcing the superordinated social position of hearing students over Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. Both the teacher and interpreter created a classroom environment that was hostile and oppressive for Desi in attempts to marginalize his voice and silence his complaints. This further shows how professionals, teachers and interpreters alike, can use their power over Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students in the schooling context.

### **Benjamin's Story**

Benjamin provided the perspective of a brown-skinned Filipino male who immigrated to the United States as a teenager. Though Benjamin acknowledged that being male, heterosexual, able to speak, and Asian made his experiences of oppression 'not as bad', he still questioned whether coming to the United States to be schooled was worth all the family sacrifice and personal experiences he endured in schools here, especially when his family to this day remains in the Philippines. As a first generation immigrant to the United States, his perspectives were influenced by his early years in the Philippines and unfamiliarity with systems of oppression in the United States. His mention of what his family sacrificed for him to have the opportunity to be schooled in the United States, and understanding Benjamin's collective culture background, leads me to believe that his family's potential thoughts and feelings may have been a source of why Benjamin was willing to tolerate many of his inequitable and inaccessible schooling experiences; as family serves a major role in Filipino culture (Wolfe, 1997). Benjamin's story highlighted the type of oppression experienced in both secondary and higher education schooling spaces:

*I wish I knew back then what I know now. Now I'm out of college and in the industry. If I knew that I would go through the same experiences at work that I did throughout school, I would have done everything differently. I came to the United States when I was 17 years old. My family stayed in the Philippines. In some ways, people treated me like a model minority because I was Asian I guess. They assumed Asians don't need help, they denied me a lot of the things I needed in school. I didn't get an interpreter; I didn't get English as a Second Language (ESL) support; I didn't get tutoring services. Because I already went through most of my school years in the Philippines, I was able to recognize my own needs. So I spent all my time outside of school with*

*my face glued in books. I would go to the library during lunch time; I would study in my room after school since my host family wouldn't let me do anything or go anywhere. But I never advocated for myself in school. I always told myself, "I just have to get through these two years then I'm out of here. I'm going to college and things will be better."*

Benjamin's point of struggle was related to teachers' implicit bias that Asians are model minorities and over-represented in higher education (Teranishi, 2002). However, with this implicit bias comes the essentializing of Asian cultures, despite the fact that they are quite diverse in regards to ethnicity, social class, immigration patterns, and educational attainment (Teranishi, 2002). This imposed label of model minority coupled with the United States' general xenophobic attitudes towards immigrant children is also evident in Benjamin's story. Implicit bias in tandem with being denied educational services such as interpreters and tutors, showed the school personnel's indifference to Benjamin's suffering due to lack of (1) knowledge of the schooling systems, (2) access to school information, (3) social capital due to being an immigrant of color, and (4) parental support and access to the same systems and capitals. Benjamin's experiences and struggles echoed those of several other stories including Maya, Musa, and Kaleia.

Benjamin briefly mentioned his (hearing) host Filipino family and how he was, for all intents and purposes, isolated from the outside world in the home. Although Benjamin perceived this isolation as a form of captivity, it is important to contextualize this behavior on the part of the host family in the Filipino value of close familial proximity and in beliefs about what Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children are (in)capable of doing. Not having a shared language with his host family placed Benjamin in the position wherein he was not able to decipher their motives for not allowing him to have experiences outside of the home and school

environments. Therefore, in a sense, Benjamin continued to be stuck within a transnational struggle within home and school cultures and his own expectations of the development of a social life which were in contradiction to the expectations of his host family (Wolfe, 1997). This tension described demonstrates that the struggles of immigrant Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing minors often extend beyond the school context and into the home, especially if barriers to language access (no ASL use) and little experience with social life in the United States are a reality.

However, Benjamin thought it appropriate at the time to tolerate these experiences at home and school with the hopes that his situation would improve upon entering college. Instead of putting up resistance, he resorted to coping strategies (i.e., staying in the library, reading books all the time, and sending emails to his family in the Philippines). However, entering college did not bring these expected improvements. College became the place where his experiences of oppression extended beyond teacher complicity and into blatant interpreter and other administrator disregard for Benjamin. Benjamin continued:

*...But college wasn't better. I got minimal services from disability services. The interpreters were awful. Several times I wanted to complain or give the interpreter feedback to improve, but I thought to myself, "Having an awful interpreter is better than no interpreter at all." Finally, I went to the disability services coordinator to ask for more qualified interpreters, interpreters that at least understood my major. She basically said that I just wanted to get ahead and earn more money; that I was requesting better interpreters so I could do better than other students and become successful. I was already in college so what more could I want; I could speak so why am I demanding better interpreters. I was shocked! And there was nothing I could do.*

*On top of that, the interpreters were only provided for my class time. No out of class group work, no meetings with professors, no student organizations. These were all areas that were potential networking and professional community building activities, which all my peers were able to take advantage of! I had no access. I felt I had no way of fighting it. So I put up with it for 4 years of college. I graduated and went on to do a master's degree and PhD with the same treatment at a different institution.*

*The United States was the place everyone said had good access for the Deaf. It was the reason my family fought so hard and suffered so much to send me here. In high school, I looked down on the American Deaf students for how they didn't seize opportunities. I would critique the Deaf communities here for not being more further ahead. I was naïve then. I had no experience with Deaf life and the Deaf struggles in the United States. But then I did; then I understood. All these opportunities are there but then they are placed just beyond reach. They're placed on the other side of a lousy interpreter who won't admit they are lousy. They are placed on the other side of university programs that are hearing-centered and almost impossible for Deaf to excel without many accommodations. They are placed on the other side of accommodations that are available for limited hours of the day. It's like window shopping for your entire life. The opportunities are on the other side of the glass, but you can never break through the glass; you only get little cracks and dents that you can sometimes reach through.*

College presented Benjamin with many “firsts” such as: having ASL interpreters in the classroom, dealing with administrators regarding his access, and being independent of his host family. College was also the first time, according to Benjamin, that he considered putting up resistance to the teachers and administrators who limited his opportunities, denied him access, and refused to acknowledge their participation in the aforementioned. However, he felt his fight

was futile because he was powerless to the policies and systems in place (i.e., interpreters only provided during class time, disability service center that was ill-equipped to determine quality of interpreters). Benjamin's descriptions of his experiences make it clear that teachers and other school personnel are only parts of a large system which only supports Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing children who are "failing." Additionally, the system is not designed to address the unique needs of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students who are marginalized on multiple fronts (e.g. Persons of Color, low socioeconomic backgrounds, unaccompanied immigrants, etc.) and who may not be knowledgeable about the various financial, social, and scholarly opportunities that are available to students in higher education. Yet, while many multiply-marginalized hearing students struggle to locate these sources of opportunities, multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students in higher education face the same struggles which are compounded by being denied equitable language access to people and sites where they could obtain this information. For example, because interpreters are limited to class times, Benjamin was denied equitable language access to networking opportunities where other students and school personnel could have shared information about grant-writing and scholarships that potentially could provide funding for interpreters outside of the classroom.

An underlying assumption operating in the teachers' and administrators' denial of access to Benjamin is rooted in audism and ableism. It is their failure to recognize that bodies and minds function differently and should not be contrasted by the hearing and abled standard. They assumed that having the ability to speak equates to having hearing thresholds that allow you to perceive speech sounds. Therefore, if you can speak, you do not need an interpreter. Their actions are also rooted in the belief that minimal language access is giving a Deaf, DeafBlind,

DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing person an advantage. This was demonstrated through the Disability Services Coordinator, who although the coordinator was not qualified to judge an ASL interpreter's interpreting skill, found their opinion about the interpreters more privileged than that of Benjamin. Like Desi's administrators and teachers who opined that his interpreter was "fine" (skilled enough) despite Desi's complaints, this pattern of behavior shows that hearing, abled peoples' beliefs and feelings, continue to be valued over Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students' access to the world and to information.

The Disability Services Coordinator behavior and comments also revealed the belief that multiply-marginalized individuals should remain in socially inferior positions. Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing (Persons of Color) do not deserve to do better than other (hearing, abled, White) students. They do not deserve to advance their social positions. The Disability Service Coordinator (and hearing, abled individuals in general) perceived the provision of an interpreter to be a luxury, giving (multiply-marginalized) Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students an educational and/or social advantage. Instead, the provision of interpreters (and other services) should be framed as minimal access to the world, within a restricted time and context, that barely makes up for a lifetime of inaccessible experiences and schooling. While skilled qualified interpreters minimize some of the burden, but often times contribute to it, multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students are tasked with compensating for all their missed experiences while also staying equal and performing on par to their abled, hearing, White peers.

Yet, Benjamin expresses that though sometimes the barrier is not having an interpreter provided; other times, the barrier is having an unskilled interpreter. What makes this matter worse is that unskilled interpreters often won't acknowledge their skill mismatch from what the

Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing person needs and what the interpreter can skillfully interpret. Again, it is important to contextualize the lack of interpreters skilled at interpreting educational content (both in K-12 and higher education) as being rooted in a system where most interpreters are not exposed to ASL until college; where they are simultaneously learning ASL and learning to become interpreters of ASL. This system approach to preparing educational interpreters contrasts language acquisition and learning research which proves that most second language learners require 2-5 years to develop conversational fluency in a language—basic interpersonal communication skills—and 5-7 years to develop academic competence equal to native users in a language—cognitive academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1979; Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa, 1976). Despite this minimum of 7 years needed to develop academic level language as a second language learner, most ASL interpreter programs require 2-4 years for obtaining a degree with most interpreter candidates developing ASL competence simultaneous to their enrollment in the interpreter programs; making it impossible for an interpreter to be prepared to provide equitable and adequate interpretations of a native ASL user such as Benjamin using higher education academic content. Benjamin elaborated on the experience of working with interpreters as an university professor with a doctoral degree:

*That's why I decided to become a university professor. I thought I could make that glass a little thinner for Deaf students of color; make it easier for them than it was for me; show them they have someone rooting for them. I got the surprise of my life when I realized that the same treatment I got as a student, was the same treatment I got as a professor. I am looked down on by my colleagues, my administration, and my hearing students. No one thinks I'm capable and they make it impossible for me to show them I am capable. I'm a PhD professor who gets assigned*

*interpreters with associate's and bachelor's degrees. How can they interpret content at my knowledge level?! How can they convey my range of skills and expertise if they don't have it! I have to deal with that every day of my career. I have expectations to do research and publish the same as my hearing colleagues with four times the barriers. The only saving grace is the occasional Deaf student of color and the Black American students that take my classes. The way we are able to connect; when they tell me I am the first (Deaf) professor of color they have had; when some of the Deaf students realize that I can speak and they feel like it's ok to identify as Deaf even though you can hear some ranges of speech and speak on the telephone and watching them become more confident in their Deaf identity; whatever that looks like for them. When that happens, I feel like maybe there is hope. That hope goes away as soon as the Deaf students tell me about their struggles; same as mine. That hope also goes away every time I walk down my department hallway as the only Deaf person and all my colleagues are talking around me, without a care in the world for what I'm going through. And I feel like that powerless student being denied everything all over again.*

Now as a professional, Benjamin highlighted how (multiply-marginalized) Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing person's social mobility and access to material gain continue to be bound by hearing and abled people; namely, how much access hearing and abled people are willing to allow Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people to have. For example, Benjamin's (White) hearing, abled students will judge Benjamin's teaching effectiveness and competencies based on how the hearing, abled interpreters portray Benjamin (how they interpreter his words and mannerisms, how knowledgeable the interpreters are of Benjamin's content, how they culturally convey Benjamin's messages, etc.). It must be noted that the students' and interpreters' perceptions of Benjamin cannot be isolated from Benjamin's

Person of Color identity. Within a predominantly White institution (PWI), a large number of the student body population will be White and the institutional practices value the conformity to whiteness (Bourke, 2016); and in the interpreting field as a whole, the majority of ASL interpreters are White women (MacDougall, 2012). In 2006, 87% of the registered ASL-English interpreters in the United States identified as women and 89% identified as White (MacDougall, 2012). This demographic imperative between interpreters and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing (Persons of Color) is another factor of negative impact in the K-12 environment that persists in the lives of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students of color into their postsecondary and workforce lives, especially when the workforce environment is predominantly White. Therefore, the intersections of race-based marginalization and oppression and ability-based marginalization and oppression will potentially affect Benjamin's ability to demonstrate his competence and excel as a scholar, researcher, and professor because his career advancements are reliant on arbitrary factors such as student evaluations and concrete factors such as interpreter skillset to accurately depict and interpret Benjamin's Person of Color identity and his intellectual abilities. Therefore, Benjamin's professional and personal lives continue to be left in the hands of hearing, abled, White dominant society members.

Finally, Benjamin touched on two other common denominators for most multiply-marginalized teachers/professors (of color): (1) colleagues' indifference to their struggles within higher education and (2) their relationships with multiply-marginalized students in higher education. Often times, the research discusses the experiences of professors of color with their colleagues related to not understanding their suffering under anti-blackness; heterocentrism—superordinating heterosexuality; and androcentrism—superordinating the male experience—in

the case of women of color. For example, Stanley's (2006) review of literature on the experiences of faculty of color found that they experienced marginality, isolation, alienation, and invisibility. Faculty of color are also disadvantaged in comparison to their White colleagues because their research agendas are less valued; they tend to provide mentorship to students and communities of color which increases their service loads; and experience oppression and covert and overt discriminatory practices, attitudes and beliefs from White colleagues in relation to teaching, research, service, and campus climate (Stanley, 2006). However, these experiences with colleagues have yet to be explored at their intersections with audism—privileging the hearing experience and ableism—privileging the experiences of those with socially constructed normative body/mind functioning; which would account for Benjamin's experiences with his colleagues.

In relation to connecting with students of color in higher education, Truong, Museus, & McGuire (2016) found that the relationship between teachers of color and students of color can be characterized by vicarious racism—students of color experience racism indirectly as a result of witnessing it being targeted at teachers of color. Vicarious racism directly affects “individual psychological and emotional well being” of students of color (Truong, Museus, & McGuire, 2016, p. 227). Vicarious racism [ableism, audism, heterocentrism] has been reported to result in multiply-marginalized students experiencing trickledown racism [ableism, audism, heterocentrism], which refers to being structurally affected by oppression and marginalization directed at multiply-marginalized faculty members; normalization of these types of oppression, which refers to multiply-marginalized students accepting that oppression and marginalization are a part of their higher education experience; and observed racism, which describes the negative psychological and emotional effects of witnessing the oppression and marginalization of

multiply-marginalized faculty members (Truong, Museus, & McGuire, 2016). Using Benjamin's case, this means that though he may have had a tremendously positive impact on his multiply-marginalized students in higher education, his own experiences with colleagues, superiors, and administrators, may have become a point of psychological and emotional distress for his students. As a result, the cycle of oppression and marginalization is realized in multiple ways for Benjamin as he becomes a weapon through which oppression and marginalization is continued for future generations of multiply-marginalized students.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, the stories of Shaneeka, Cierra, Darian, Desi, and Benjamin were used to illustrate how teachers and other school personnel serve as agents in the oppression of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students in both the K-12 and higher education contexts. School professionals' behaviors were more out of complicity in an oppressive schooling system and society in the cases of Shaneeka and Cierra. However, Cierra showed the danger of complicit professionals because their behaviors still result in violence through indirect tactics such as group messaging to reinforce subordinate social positions. In some cases, though the school professionals did not blatantly act in oppressive or marginalizing ways to the contributor, they instead used the contributors' identities as weapons against other multiply-marginalized students, resulting in violence for those students and negatively impacting the contributors who were implicated. Furthermore, this chapter presented the cases of Darian, Desi and Benjamin to show that professionals have also been outright oppressive to multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students by leveraging their privileged position(s). The chapter explored how teachers, interpreters, and other school personnel served as agents in the oppression of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind,

DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. The stories presented helped to depict the layered experiences of doubly- and multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals within the school context. In the next chapter, I contextualize these significant findings from the themes explored in the previous three chapters within the curriculum of colonization and revisit the purpose of this dissertation.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I provide a brief summary of the dissertation. I then discuss the guiding question of this study, the themes that emerged from the research process, and how the question and themes relate to the curriculum of colonization. This is followed by the theoretical and methodological framework which I discuss as possible solutions to consider in the research and education of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples who exist at the intersections of multiply-marginalized and racialized identity markers. The implications of this inquiry are discussed. Additionally, as a hearing person doing this research, there were several comments addressed to me from the contributors that should be provided here for the sake of transparency. These are briefly discussed with the hopes that it will provide direction and instruction to other “outsiders” conducting research with communities with whom they do not belong. Lastly, I outline future directions for this work and what I hope to accomplish in working to dismantle the curriculum of colonization in the field of Deaf Education.

### **Dissertation Synopsis**

I opened this dissertation with my positionality as I thought that an appropriate place to start. My position as a hearing, sighted, multilingual, multi-ethnic, Person of Color can not be separated from how I engage in this research and how this research engages with me. I also discussed how I came to use many of the terms in this dissertation and the relation of language use to kyriocentrism at the grammatical-linguistic level. In Chapter Two, I described the curriculum of colonization in relation to the construction and employment of disability in the United States. I then delved specifically into how the curriculum of colonization has been historically, and currently continues to be deployed in relation to the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities in the United States, with particularly

devastating consequences for those who are doubly- and multiply-marginalized/minoritized. Examples are provided for how the curriculum of colonization results in oppression at the local level, specifically through audism, ableism, vidism, distantism, linguisticism, and anti-blackness. Theoretical frameworks that have previously been applied to the schooling context to address other minoritized or marginalized student populations were presented in Chapter Three; specifically, the asset pedagogies and cultural competence. I further added why these frameworks were not used for and why critical indigenous pedagogy (CIP) and critical race theory (CRT) were more suited for the current study. A theoretical description of CIP and CRT were also provided in Chapter Three. Chapter Four expanded on CIP and CRT beyond theoretical frameworks and into methodological applications. I discussed how intersectionality and counterstorytelling were applied in the current study to address the guiding research question through my newly theorized praxis methodology: the decolonizing-intersectionality framework. Data collection and analysis methods were also presented as well as how intersectionality as a research tool was applied to both these processes. I provided a demographic breakdown of the contributors to this research study. I discussed possible limitations to this study and how I attempted to address these limitations when applicable. Finally, Chapters Five, Six, and Seven each presented one of the three major themes that characterized the experiences of the contributors; the themes were: schools as a site of struggle for our intersectional identities; oppression distances us from our culture/ethnic communities; and, teachers, interpreters, and school personnel as agents in our oppression. These themes were presented in the form of composite personal narratives, a form of counterstorytelling. In the next section, I address the guiding question of this research in relation to the themes used in the counterstory.

### **Addressing Guiding Question**

The guiding question for this dissertation was: How do Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people living at the intersections of additional marginalized/racialized identities describe the experiences they have had in formal schooling spaces? It was important to me to address the constructed nature of being Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, or Hard of Hearing as being dis/abled in the United States, in addition to having other marginalized and/or racialized identities for this study. Examining the experiences of individuals that exist at the intersections of several socially constructed marginalized/racialized identities afforded an opportunity to describe the pervasive and detrimental impacts of the curriculum of colonization. I chose to limit my exploration of the curriculum of colonization to the schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples in the United States for several reasons. First, using the schooling context only for this study, allowed me to provide a richer exploration; although the results of my interviews with the contributors to this study showed that the curriculum of colonization has impacted all areas of their lives, in addition to their schooling experiences. Second, exploring the impact of the curriculum of colonization in the schooling context, provided an opportunity to discuss a local context often used in the research of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in the United States. Finally, examining the curriculum of colonization in the schooling context gave me the opportunity to indirectly challenge the foundation of research and teaching pedagogy in the field of Deaf Education that does not address the historical and current deployments of colonization which have and continue to affect the experiences of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals with schooling systems in the United States.

I argued that schools are primary sites for conditioning all individuals in society into their social positions. At the same time, schooling works at the social-institutional level of kyriocentrism and erases how the curriculum of colonization works to condition us into these social positions. In the context of Deaf Education, schools have been the center of the language wars; to school Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals through spoken English or through American Sign Language and (spoken, written) English. However, I framed the language wars as part of the curriculum of colonization working to: a) expand its reach to the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities; b) assimilate Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals into abled, hearing, elite society; c) maintain Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals as inferior to hearing society members; and, d) maintain hearing domination by placing school-related decisions for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in the hands of hearing, abled, White society members. Therefore, I assert that it is essential to examine the role of schooling as a major player in, and tool of, the curriculum of colonization. Discussing the schooling experiences of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals was a natural place to understand the impact of the curriculum of colonization.

Previous scholarship has focused on the experiences of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in the high school and in the higher education contexts (Fernandez Garcia, 2014; Stapleton, 2014). Like this inquiry, those studies used intersectionality and critical race theory as theoretical frameworks. The current study expanded on the previous research by exploring colonization. Additionally, this study used critical race theory and critical indigenous pedagogy within the decolonizing-intersectionality framework as a research methodology. This inquiry also considered all levels of schooling within the United States. The

results of the interviews with the contributors revealed the intricacies within the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing communities and the differences in experiences with schooling based on the intersections of identities at which individuals lived.

### **Curriculum of Colonization Revisited**

It was important for me to frame the curriculum of colonization within the context of disability and the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing contexts in the United States prior to addressing the research question for this study. The main reason for doing so, was to challenge dominant (White, abled, hearing) and elite perspectives that promote neutrality in and unbiased approaches to research. These perspectives would claim that I cannot assume that dis/abled or Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples of color experience marginalization, minoritization, or oppression in the schooling context. However, as I have presented in Chapter Two, the construction of disability and the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing populations in the United States has been defined through their placement in opposition to White, abled (hearing, sighted), elite, men. Therefore, it is not enough to only examine those with assumed, imposed or negotiated Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing identities. We must also examine those who have additional identities that are placed in contrast to White, elite men. That involves at minimum: LGBTQI individuals; non-binary and/or gender non-conforming individuals; Persons of Color (particularly those who cannot be read as/assumed to be White); individuals who are poor; those who use languages other than English; and especially those with a combination of the aforementioned identities, as well as others not listed here. Additionally, purporting that one cannot assume multiply-marginalized/minoritized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people may not experience oppression in schooling does violence and ignores kyriocentrism at the social-institutional, ideological-

cultural, and symbolic-cultural levels; which serves as a function for sustaining the curriculum of colonization. Therefore, I was intentional in structuring this dissertation in a way that not only described a phenomenon, but also in a way to challenge the dominant (White, abled, elite) perspectives that research should be approached in a neutral way. As previously discussed, science (and research) has already been constructed as biased and partial. Science and research has historically, and continues to be a tool of the curriculum of colonization, working against populations such as the ones taken up in this dissertation. Therefore, research approaches that do not challenge the purported neutral and impartial methods that require (multiply) marginalized folks to “prove their pain or it doesn’t exist”, also serves to sustain the curriculum of colonization and the deployment of science (and research) against (multiply-) marginalized persons.

Operating on multiple levels simultaneously, the curriculum of colonization can be conceptualized as a well-oiled machine that is deployed against (multiply-) marginalized individuals. The curriculum of colonization uses many functions and tools to sustain itself. I specifically discussed the stratification of people based on the concept of who is deemed human, who is deemed to be an inferior species of human, and who is deemed to be sub-human; science, which has been weaponized by dominant and elite individuals against (multiply-) marginalized individuals particularly through eugenics in the United States; all levels of schooling, which is where individuals are indoctrinated into social positions; and erasure, which removes and obscures the curriculum of colonization at work. I stressed that the curriculum of colonization implicates all individuals within the United States society. For this reason, any attempts to address the curriculum of colonization must address those who have been colonized and targeted through kyriarchy, as well as those who have traditionally been labeled as the colonizers and/or the oppressors. In the field of Deaf Education, the curriculum of colonization impacts hearing,

abled, White, heterosexual professionals as well as (multiply-marginalized) Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. Historically, research in the field and teaching pedagogy has been geared towards addressing (multiply-marginalized) Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students as the “problem” to be addressed. Instead, I argue for the interrogation of audism, ableism, vidism, distantism, linguicism, and anti-blackness as a function of the curriculum of colonization which has resulted in the dismal state of schooling multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. Furthermore, the curriculum of colonization, specifically schooling, has resulted in the maintenance of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing persons as second-class citizens in the United States; particularly impacting Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples with multiply-marginalized identities. For these reasons, I believe addressing teaching and research in the field of Deaf Education must take the curriculum of colonization into consideration, including the effects on both Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing multiply-marginalized students and the hearing professionals in the field.

### **Shifting the Gaze on Myself**

A major part of this dissertation process was shifting the gaze from Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students to professionals. This entailed interrogating my position as a hearing professional of color in the field of Deaf Education. One way of interrogating my role was to state my positionality and subjectivity, how I came to the field, my motivations for doing the current work, and expressing my own struggles with coming to terms with my colonization and journey of decolonization. Another way that I shifted the gaze, was by allowing space and inviting the contributors to this study to provide feedback and critiques about my actions and approaches to doing this research. I also invited them to share their expectations

of me after this dissertation was completed. Several important points and critiques were provided as a result of this invitation. I wish to share them here, without additional commentary, so that the contributors' comments may remain valid based on their own merit. All names below are pseudonyms.

### **Journeying Together**

Jordan: *I really enjoyed [the interview]! The first questions really hit me and made me think. At first when Candy sent me the link to your research, I wasn't sure I could participate because I have no experiences. But you forced me to think deeply and look back on my past and how I feel. So I appreciate that.*

### **Passing on Awareness and Resistance**

Musa: *What I experience here in this college is that it is hard for me to get into the academic system. I have a good degree. I have experience. Yet if I want to teach a semester-long class, for example, they won't allow me. I get resistance. Because of discrimination clearly. They say I must have work experience [as a teacher]. But how do I get it?! HOW?! But a white person can access [the system] with no problems. You need to expect that. You will graduate soon and you need to be ready to experience that too.*

### **Critiques of My Approaches: Room to Grow**

Esperanza's typed feedback: *I noted throughout the research is the terms: ASL or TASL. In my honest opinion, I do not think its necessary to add it under questions. Those comments do not apply to me as I do not use either ASL or TASL [tactile ASL]. If I wanted an ASL version of the questions, its more practical to send a vlog to specific people. For TASL, or PTASL [Pro-Tactile ASL] (in my case) would need direct contact in person to translate questions for those with maybe limited English skills... In a culturally sensitive approach, others may feel that their*

*culture is not inclusive as the approach is focused on sighted language in reference to ASL or TASL: (TASL means directly tactile ASL, very different from PT/ PTASL) PTASL is a fairly new language so many people are still learning that there is a DeafBlind language and its not TASL. I am only considering from a PT [Pro-Tactile] perspective if others may take offense to not including their language and it feels like a mind set that TASL is the DeafBlind language while reading through the questions. I also wonder how [Hard of Hearing] people feel who may use SEE [Signed Exact English], or PSE [Pidgin Signed English] instead of ASL. I have no negative mentality to this research as I think its great to research multiple identities as there needs to be more researches on it, especially those who instills a disability and/or race.*

#### **Instructions to Researcher: Community Accountability**

*Ciara: I hope moving forward is that you will publish your research in sign language. That means you give more people access to this resource. Deaf people's writing can be so-so BECAUSE of [awful] education, based on their former teachers. I would like your research to be released in ASL. Make it bilingual. It will be nice to see that kind of progress. People can feel like they understand your content and they can relate better. Plus, it makes you become part of the community because you give that access and you're not just keeping your research English-based. Often times research has heavy English terminology and it's not in a way people can understand. It would be nice if it's possible for you to make it bilingual. So other people can have the same benefit from this work.*

*Fatima: I want to comment that your intelligence and work is VERY powerful. Keep it for us Deaf people, I don't want you to share it with these hearing people. If you do, hearing people will use it against us. Keep your work in our Deaf communities [of color]. It's good work. I look at your work and how you've made me become aware of my experiences; how much I've learned*

*from you. Our entire Deaf communities of color need that. We can all learn so much from this. So feed it to the Deaf communities of color instead of to the hearing communities. Your knowledge, your intelligence, keep it and share it with us.*

### **Implications**

I embarked on this dissertation research and writing hoping to provide pedagogical implications for the field, particularly in regards to Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students of color and multilingual Deaf students. However, my own decolonization journey, began impacting not only my personal life, but how I came to interrogate research methodologies, teaching pedagogy, and my past and future impact as a professional in the Deaf Education field. Naturally, this dissertation research evolved as a result of the aforementioned realizations. There are three strands of implications I discuss in this section: theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical.

#### **Theoretical**

In this dissertation, I developed and put forth the curriculum of colonization as a complex system of oppression that encompasses and impacts all aspects of life in the United States. In Chapter Two, I specifically described how the curriculum of colonization operates in the dis/ability context and I emphasized the work of the curriculum of colonization in the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing contexts. Schooling and the field of Deaf Education were the local contexts for which I explored the curriculum of colonization for this dissertation. It was also important to not just discuss the essentialized White Deaf culture when looking at the affects of the curriculum of colonization. Therefore, I examined the specific impacts of the curriculum of colonization on doubly-/multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in the United States.

The curriculum of colonization as a theory has broad implications that can be used to understand all aspects of life in the United States, from economic processes, to class structures and the maintenance of poverty in a well-developed country; from research practices and who has the power/privilege to conduct research to the silencing of researchers from particular marginalized and minoritized backgrounds; from educational policy to schooling practices from the higher education context down to the K-12 context. These are only some of the areas in which the curriculum of colonization can be, and should be explored more. Though I advanced the discussion of the curriculum of colonization within the context of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing peoples who are multiply-marginalized, the curriculum of colonization has implications that can be explored in depth in other Disability communities.

It was important for me to take on the task of not just describing the curriculum of colonization, but also providing a path forward to addressing the curriculum of colonization. It was essential to engage with theoretical frameworks that interrogated colonization and the experiences of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in the United States. Critical race theory (CRT) and critical indigenous pedagogy (CIP) provided those theoretical frameworks. In Chapter Three, CRT and CIP were both discussed in detail in how they addressed colonization and intersectionality. Though CRT is being applied more to the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing contexts, CIP has yet to be applied to this population. Though CRT provides a comprehensive framework for addressing the experiences of multiply-marginalized (Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing) individuals, an important implication of this dissertation is that intersectionality, or multiple marginalization in the United States, should be addressed in tandem with colonization.

Though I may not have stressed this enough in this dissertation, when examining the curriculum of colonization, turning the interrogation inward is as essential as turning outward. I chose to highlight the experiences of multiply-marginalized Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing people in the schooling context in order to demonstrate that the *theory* of the curriculum of colonization has real-life consequences in the field of Deaf Education. However, it is my hope that the dominating group of hearing professionals in the field will take this dissertation as a challenge to interrogate themselves; their own colonization; and their own role in the continued colonization of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. In this way, I hope that the theoretical implications of the curriculum of colonization can move to be explored in practice, potentially using the decolonizing-intersectionality framework as a tool to engage in this interrogation.

### **Methodological and Pedagogical**

As a hearing professional in the Deaf Education field, I attempted to model some of the ways I applied the decolonizing-intersectionality framework to interrogate myself, in addition to interrogating the field of Deaf Education as a central site of colonization. This was what I presented as my positionality in Chapter One and in the framing the colonization of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing in Chapter Two, respectively. For me, a part of my methodology needed to provide space to investigate my own position(s) and impact while simultaneously addressing the issues within the field which I identified as rooted in colonization. The decolonizing-intersectionality framework allowed me to scrutinize my own position(s), as well as my research approaches and teaching pedagogy in the field of Deaf Education. In this way I consider my methodology to be disruptive. Disruptive methodologies in the case of this dissertation refers to the contemplative aspect of this work (Bhattacharya, 2018); specifically,

how as a person with hearing privilege I impact the field and Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. It is not yet a common occurrence in the field to move beyond the expectations of positionality that are encouraged within the qualitative research paradigm. For me, I wanted to tap into the expectations of transparency set by my cultural communities, regardless of and moving beyond the expectations of qualitative research. In this sense, I sought to do culturally engaging work (Bhattacharya, 2018). My methodology was also disruptive in my explicit attempts to move from theoretical work to methodological work coming specifically from the perspective of a colonized person interrogating a system of schooling and research that was never built with me, or (multiply-marginalized) Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals in mind. This disruptive methodology has major implications for the field of Deaf Education.

One implication that I would like to highlight here is that my approach resulted in the development of a framework of my disruptive methodology. The framework has implications for any hearing, abled, heterosexual person (and other persons that embody dominant identities in the teaching and research context) in the field of Deaf Education. This is especially important for a field that has continued to be 90% White and 90% hearing. Though I do not intend for this framework to be prescriptive, I believe it has implications at the educational policy level, the higher education research and teacher preparation levels, as well as the K-12 schooling of Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students. In conducting this dissertation research, all of the theoretical and analytical tools listed in the framework were used to influence this work and develop my line of inquiry.

Critical indigenous pedagogy and critical race theory were the frameworks I felt more driven to apply within the decolonizing-intersectionality praxis methodology. I was able to

expand on the current literature by using them beyond theories and into research methods. I was able to extend the current literature by applying them to the schooling of (multiply-marginalized) Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing individuals. I was able to use CIP and CRT in the conceptualization of the study, in the theoretical framework, the interview question design, data analysis, and data interpretation processes. My application of CIP and CRT in this dissertation opens up the space for future work in this direction in the field of Deaf Education, as well as other disciplines within education and educational research. I believe this framework has implications for engaging in research that moves beyond ethical requirements for Institutional Review Board approval and into culturally engaging ethics. This framework also has implications for teaching pedagogy that departs from the co-opted “critical thinking” and returns to critical consciousness; the reflective practice of critiquing and analyzing social and political life (McLaren, 2003).

Most importantly, this framework has implications for shifting the gaze of analysis from Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing students as the “problem” to be fixed to interrogating the hearing researchers and teachers in the field. All of the analytical tools used in my approach provided pathways of examining my privileged identities and in what ways they reified colonization in the Deaf Education field. I hope my approaches may be critiqued and/or expanded on to provide a better way forward towards decolonization in the Deaf Education field.

### **Future Directions**

The aforementioned implications yield various areas for further exploration. First, I have only applied my decolonizing-intersectionality framework to my research and in limited contexts teaching in higher education. I would like to apply this disruptive methodology to teaching at the K-12 level. I would also like to apply the framework in the higher education level as a teacher

with full autonomy to make decisions in my classroom, which was not the case in teaching as a doctoral student. Using this framework as a dialogue space for teaching potential future teachers of the Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing would open up several lines of inquiry. These lines of inquiry could involve examining future teachers' journeys toward critical consciousness and how it impacts their teaching pedagogies. An additional line of inquiry would be how potential future teachers, that are demographically mostly White, hearing, women, respond to a Black woman multilingual professor; and a professor who also engages in disruptive teaching pedagogies, unlike what they may have experienced previously.

On the research front, I would like to use critical race quantitative intersectionality (CRQI) with my decolonizing-intersectionality framework. CRQI uses critical race theory with quantitative research methods to challenge the theoretical underpinnings of quantitative research and the proclaimed objectivity and neutrality of statistical methods (Covarrubias & Vélez, 2013). CRQI was developed in response to the lack of impact that critical race theory and qualitative research approaches have had on educational policy due to the fact that quantitative methods still dominate as “hard science” (Covarrubias & Vélez, 2013). Covarrubias and Vélez (2013) also developed CRQI to challenge how statistical methods have been used in the past to the detriment of marginalized groups. Using CRQI with my own disruptive methodology in research, I would like to develop a tool that addresses systems of oppression within the Deaf Education context. I would like this tool to initially be for use in teacher preparation programs and apply the guiding principles of CRQI with the additional stories and data provided by the contributors to the current study.

Finally, to honor the feedback and requests of the contributors, this dissertation will be released in ASL. It is also my desire to make it a community resource, if it is esteemed as such. I

await in anticipation of the critiques and communities' feedback of this work. I hope the dialogues that will come from this work will move all of our communities forward both on professional and personal levels to restoring our ability to live out our full humanity.

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## APPENDIX

## **Appendix A Consent Form**

### **Introduction/Purpose:**

You are invited to participate in a study entitled, “Researching from Without and Within: Removing the Colonizer’s Coat in Deaf Education.” This study is being conducted by Glosanda Lawyer through the department of Theory and Practice in Teacher Education, in partial fulfillment of requirements for the doctoral of philosophy degree at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. The purpose of this study is to understand the educational experiences of multiply-marginalized/oppressed Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing (DDBDDHH) individuals in the United States.

### **Procedures:**

Participation in this study consists of being interviewed in online focus groups of 3-6 people or private 1:1 interviews. All interviews will be done in American Sign Language or Tactile ASL (face to face interview). Interviews are expected to last approximately 1 hour. You will be asked about your experiences as a DDBDDHH person with intersecting, marginalized identities being schooled in the United States. Ultimately, the information you share will be used to develop group narratives (composite stories) of the experiences of diverse DDBDDHH people to create counterstories to the hearing, monolingual, educational researcher perspectives in the field. You will also be invited to participate in a follow-up interview which will give you the opportunity to provide additional information from your perspective and to critique my interpretations of your original thoughts. You are not required to participate in the follow-up interview, however, it would give you the opportunity to express your thoughts about the first interview and make any additions to your original comments if desired. All interviews will be video recorded for later data analysis.

### **Risks:**

The perceived risks associated with participating in these interviews are no more than those encountered in every day life. However, you may feel uncomfortable sharing some opinions and experiences. Despite any potential discomfort, I ask that you please give honest and detailed responses. You may choose to terminate the interview at any time and all of your responses will be discarded. It is possible that someone will find out you participated in this interview. However, I will take the precautions outlined in this consent form to try to ensure your confidentiality. If you choose to participate in a focus group session, all participants will be instructed to maintain the confidentiality of other focus group members. However, there is no guarantee that other participants will keep what is shared within the group confidential after the study is complete.

### **Benefits:**

A potential benefit to your participation is that you may have the opportunity to tell stories that you may have not been able to share prior to this study. If you elect the focus group option, you may also potentially connect with a group of individuals who share or have similar experiences of oppression based on their intersecting identities. On a societal level, this research may highlight the connection between teacher preparation programs and the educational experiences of DDBDDHH individuals at the K-12 level. The composite stories that come out of this research may be used to develop community-led changes in Deaf Education teacher preparation programs.

### **Compensation:**

As a token of my appreciation for your willingness to share your stories, you will be compensated \$20 for participation in this study. Once your interview(s) are completed, you will be sent an electronic (Cash, Square, or PayPal app) payment of \$20. If you do not have an account, your compensation will be sent to a mailing address of your preference with confirmed delivery. If you withdraw from the interview before completion, you **will not** forfeit your right to the \$20 cash. In the case of withdrawing, you will receive email confirmation that all your information and contributions have been deleted and at that time, you will be sent an electronic (Cash, Square, or PayPal app) payment or mailed payment of \$20.

**Alternatives/Participant's Rights:**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to participate without penalty. If you agree to participate, you may withdraw from the interviews at any time without penalty and without any loss of benefits or compensation to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before the data collection is completed, your data will be destroyed immediately.

**Confidentiality:**

Several safeguards will be taken to ensure your confidentiality and protect your identity. The information shared within the interview session(s) will be kept confidential. Your interview(s) will be saved directly to a password-protected computer. All data analyses will occur in a private room. No one besides the researcher will have access to the recorded interview(s), notes about the interview(s), or data analysis. Only the researcher will have access to your information and the data will be stored in a secure, password-protected computer that is owned by Gloshanda Lawyer (the researcher). Although the results of the data will be discussed in a dissertation defense and potentially published in a professional journal, you will not be identified as an individual, nor will data be shared that could identify you. Although others may find out that you participated in this study, the use of group narrative stories to share the results are an additional measure I will take to ensure your experiences cannot be connected directly to you as an individual. Once the study has been completed, all data will be permanently deleted by June 2019.

**Contact:**

If you have questions about participation in this research, you may contact Gloshanda Lawyer at glawyer@vols.utk.edu or my faculty advisor, Dr. Chonika Coleman-King at ccolem21@utk.edu. If you have questions regarding the rights of human participants or concerns about your treatment in this study, you may contact the University of Tennessee IRB Compliance Officer (865) 974-7697 (voice) or utkirb@utk.edu.

**Consent:**

You agree that you are at least 18 years of age and have read the consent form in its entirety. You also agree to participation in the study described above.

Do you agree to participate in this study?

## Appendix B Semi-Structured Interview Guide

**Study Title:** Researching from Without and Within: Examining the Colonizer's Coat in Deaf Education

**Principle Investigator:** Gloslanda Lawyer

**Research Question:** What are the educational experiences of individuals living at the intersections of being DDBDDHH and at least two additional marginalized/racialized identity markers?

**Purpose Statement:** The purpose of this study is to document the experiences of individuals living at the intersection of being DDBDDHH and at least two additional marginalized/racialized identity markers. The goal is to use these experiences as the basis for arguing the application of intersectional analyses to the issues within the field of Deaf Education. These analyses should come directly from the communities impacted. Therefore, this study seeks to forefront DDBDDHH peoples in the creation of solutions to improving the K-12 educational experiences for this population.

### Interview Questions/Probes:

How do you identify yourself?

Can you describe the first time you became aware of your DDBDDHH identity?

- Your ethnic identity?
- Your language status?
- Your gender identity?
- (And other identities participant used to describe self)

Can you describe the first time you became aware of your multiple marginalized status ("multiple marginalized" signed in ASL or Tactile ASL as "exclude me, take advantage of me, oppress me, or negative perception of me because I am (identity) AND (identity) AND (identity)... at the same time; or maybe I cannot say for sure which identity of my identities cause others to treat me this way")

Can you describe your educational experiences as (name identities they used to describe themselves)?

What are things you wish your teachers/school knew when you were being educated?

Did you experience barriers in school as a result of your multiple marginalized identities? If so, can you share a story...

- Why was it a barrier?

Did you have any blatant experiences with discrimination or oppression? If so, what were those experiences?

- Tell me about a situation in which you felt oppressed based on two or more of your identities in an educational context.

Did you have any experiences of covert oppression while in school? (“Covert oppression” signed in ASL or Tactile ASL as “oppression not blatant; maybe situation didn't feel right at the time but I noticed others with different identities did not have same experience; the oppression was “vague”, I couldn't say for sure)

Maybe these were not recognized as oppression at the time but as an adult you can identify these as oppression.

Were any of your experiences in school liberating? If so, share a story... (“Liberating” signed in ASL or Tactile ASL as “de-oppressed, barrier torn down, fists in chin (frustrations) resolved related to your identities”)

- Why was it liberating?

If you could go back in time, what qualities would you bestow on your teachers so they could be the best teachers for you?

- What are qualities you wished your teachers had?
- What are qualities you would like for teachers of students like you to have?
- What are competencies you wished your teachers had?

Was there ever a time you chose not to go to an event because it did not meet your needs? Tell me about that time...

Was there ever a time you had a great experience at an event hosted by your job, school, or community. Tell me about that time...

- What made it a great experience?

What does educational liberation/decolonization look like for you? (“liberation/decolonization” signed in ASL or Tactile ASL as “experience school as true (name identities) self; oppression none, barriers none, hold on head and heart released (at same time)”

Have you had experiences working with researchers before?

- Describe those experiences?
- What were the identities of the researchers? (Hearing or DDBDDHH, abled or disabled, People of Color or White, bilingual/multilingual or monolingual)

What does a decolonized researcher-participant team look like for you?

Is there anything else you would like to share?

- Is there any feedback for me as a researcher, or this process that you would like to share (at this time or at a future time)?

## VITA

Gloshanda Lawyer was born and raised in South Carolina. She attended the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities where she obtained a liberal arts bachelor's degree with concentration areas in Linguistics, Spanish Linguistics, and Deaf Studies. She continued on to complete her Masters of Education degree in Special Education, with concentration areas in Deaf Education and Early Childhood Special Education. Gloshanda worked at Metro Deaf School (MDS) in the pre-school program and helped to launch the first Track and Field program under the direction of MDS's Athletic Director and Student Life coordinator. In addition to teaching, Gloshanda has worked as a medical interpreter since 2008 and medical translator since 2013. After years of teaching at the preschool level and then at the birth- 3-year old home intervention setting, Gloshanda received a fellowship under the National Leadership Consortium on Sensory Disabilities (NLCSD) to complete her doctoral studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Gloshanda will receive her PhD in Deaf Education with a focus on colonization and decolonizing methodologies in August of 2018. The dissertation is titled, "Removing the Colonizer's Coat in Deaf Education: Exploring the Curriculum of Colonization and the Field of Deaf Education." Gloshanda's research interests are in decolonizing methodologies and pedagogies, bringing critical perspectives to teacher and interpreter preparation programs, and multilingual language acquisition in all children.