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## Black Digital Publics, Pandemics, and Critical Race Pedagogy: Possibilities for Transformative Anti-racism Curriculum in Teacher Education

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**Black Digital Publics, Pandemics, and Critical Race Pedagogy:  
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Serena Wilcox

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## Introduction

During the Summer of 2020, historic global Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests erupted in response to police violence against Black people. BLM began as a hashtag in 2013 after the murder of Trayvon Martin by the hands of George Zimmerman (Khan-Cullors & bandele, 2018; Hinderliter & Peraza, 2021; Ransby, 2018). By 2014, they were a formal organization that used digital media as a central organizing, agitating, and persuading tool. The murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor in 2020 invigorated a resurgence of BLM protests, this time on a global scale which underscored the persistence of racism in our world (Michael & Joseph, 2021). A few months before the summer protests, the world entered the COVID-19 pandemic that has taken millions of lives. In 2020, the United States held presidential elections that were wrought with racist rhetoric and threats of government takeover which culminated on January 6, 2021, with an insurrection at the Capitol where Trump supporters attempted to overturn the election results. During the last few months of Trump's term, he issued Executive Order 13950 limiting diversity education and anti-racist training by federal agencies and other agencies funded by the federal government which ushered in a wave of similar bills at the state and local government levels (Farag, 2021; Wilcox, 2021). For instance, the language in Executive Order 13950 was copied in the so-called "divisive concepts" bill in Georgia that limits schools' abilities to discuss issues of diversity. The executive order was overturned by the Biden administration. However, school boards across the country are having heated and sometimes violent debates about implementing bans on anti-racism education.

Prior to the protests of 2020, there was already digital chatter concerning Black lives and whether they mattered. Digital publics are digital spaces where debates about strategy, tactics, and ideas are argued in sound-bite form (Hinderliter & Peraza, 2021). Since the digital world is fractured off by demographics and ideologies, it is no surprise that vibrant Black Digital Publics have emerged to discuss the positions and potential responses that Blacks in America are forced to negotiate. The BLM movement and the BLM protests of 2020 were birthed in this digital public sphere.

Black Lives Matter is an example of how hashtag activism can lead to transformative material and curriculum work (Wade, 2018). Black digital publics have led to more arrests and convictions of perpetrators of violence against Black people while creating spaces of resistance that foster national and international outrage (Hill, 2020). The BLM protests put pressure on institutions of higher

learning to create space for scholars and scholarship dealing with critical race studies across disciplines. Institutions of higher education released statements alleging solidarity with BIPOC and queer communities. This alleged solidarity is being tested as conversations of systemic racism are highlighting the persistence of segregation and intellectual colonialism in school curricula. Critical Race Pedagogies offer important critiques of racial hierarchies in subject matter, style of pedagogy, and relationships between BIPOC students and the American university system. Thus, critical race pedagogies are useful to transforming racial illogical public discourse regarding invisible systems of bias and prejudice that maintain the oppression of Black and other people of color, especially young people (Stevenson, 2015). This chapter will explore what the convergence of Black digital publics and the politics of what anti-racism education can mean to teacher education. It explores two research questions: What can Black digital publics and critical race pedagogies offer teacher education programs? How can a critical race-based curriculum move educational interventions beyond remedial discussions of privilege and simplistic, binary analyses of racial hierarchies?

## Black Digital Publics, Pandemics, and the Convergence of the Politics of Teacher Education

Barbara Ransby (2018) calls social media sites the public square of this generation where news of outrageous injustices is disseminated and people are called to action. Digital publics are digital spaces where debates about strategy, tactics, and ideas are argued in sound-bite form (Hinderliter & Peraza, 2021). Platforms like Facebook and Twitter are examples of digital public sites used for publicity and developing forums for debate and politicization (Hinderliter & Peraza, 2021; Ransby, 2018). Black digital publics use digital technologies to create audiences for the spectacle of violence and other forms of injustices against Black people. Marc Lamont Hill (2020) reflects on the role of visibility and violence in teaching the public about the power of white supremacy and the state's capacity to determine whether Black people live or die. Black digital publics are traditions of racial and gendered political discursive resistance to white supremacist violence (Squires, 2016). Digital media allowed the world to see how during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic marginalized and vulnerable communities were suffering through another enduring pandemic of racism (Michael & Joseph, 2021). Social media has created a transnational mode of communication, new epistemic logics, and ways of

imagining cultural communities and identities that can be understood and nuanced within local values and identities (Bouvier, 2015). Black digital publics is a critical interculturality that centers the knowledge and lived experiences of Africans, African Americans, and other marginalized people. It creates an untamed digital space for interaction and dialogue that confronts and interrogates structural inequalities, unequal power relations, and discrimination (James, 2008; Martin, Pirbhai-Illich, & Pete, 2017). While intellectual colonialism means that only the most marginal perimeters of change can be imagined (Lorde, 1983), Black digital publics are located within a decolonial framework that acknowledges the colonial project subjugates and erases the contributions of Indigenous and non-white people while privileging exclusively the knowledge of Euro-Western white male thinkers (Grosfoguel, 2011; Harrison, 1995). [Section on "the convergence of the politics of teacher education" omitted, as indicated in the original text]

Critical Race Pedagogy as Transformative Curriculum in Teacher Education Critical race pedagogy recognizes the power of race as a technology of control (Joseph, 2021) that is embedded structurally in our public policies and institutions. Critical race pedagogy seeks to attempt to abolish racist curriculum violence and educational processes that maintain the material effects of race and racism in educational spaces. Curriculum interventions such as culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) were a product of the Civil Rights movement in the United States to address issues of educational achievement of African American students (Ladson-Billings, 1995). CRP was designed to deal with deficit theories concerning African American students as characterized by white American teachers (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013; Pirbhai-Illich, Pete, & Martin, 2017). As noted in a research study by Christine Sleeter (2017), white preservice teachers, once they graduated from their teacher education programs, were unable to apply what they had learned in their limited culturally responsive education classes. Some white teachers apply versions of multicultural education that are palatable to them and are superficial in practice (Pirbhai-Illich, Pete, & Martin, 2017). CRP is situated in the critical race pedagogical tradition. However, theoretically the idea in this chapter is to pivot from such modes of teaching diversity education and present other ideas of how Black digital publics and other forms of critical race pedagogies can illuminate and question the role of systemic racism in education, particularly teacher education programs.

Dumas (2018) proposes that Black suffering in education will not end without abolishing the conditions that create the suffering. He believes that schooling must be imagined in a different way. He asserts that the

proclamation that Black Lives Matter reveals how much Black suffering has been normalized in society. The slogan Black Lives Matter is the minimum demand by Black people for centuries of violence and abuse (Joseph, 2021). The rebellions that took place during the Summer of 2020 were a response to the senseless and gruesome murders of Black people. The rebellions were a response to the continuous ritual of humiliation, dehumanization, and violence that Black people and other marginalized people face in the United States (Hill, 2020). George Floyd's murder was merely the catalyst. Hugo Canham (2021) asserts that Black grieving is a political act that is endemic to the Black condition of joy and mourning. He posits that protests are demonstrations of restless grief and that the epistemic value of the phenomenon is that Black people carry with them across pandemics a kind of mourning that is entangled with and births our resistance. Squires (2016) noted that the tradition of public mourning is a means to articulate and deepen commitments to the long-term struggle for equality for Black people in the United States. Black Twitter is a place where Black people can mourn and grieve together and sow the seeds of resistance and protest. Black digital publics provide critical pedagogy, political organizing, symbolic, and material ways to resist anti-Black state violence and reorganize relations of surveillance in the United States (Hill, 2018). Digital Black publics in the context of the #BlackLivesMatter movement contribute to the transformative process of creating counternarratives about systemic oppression in society.

## **Narrative Inquiry, Teacher Education, and Black Lives Matter**

Reflexivity is central to my teaching style and in helping students develop critical thinking skills. Preservice teachers in my cultural perspectives class were given various assignments such as short reflection journals, discussion forums, an observation diversity project, and qualitative short surveys. Data were collected from these sources. Students all used the events from the Black Lives Matter protests during the Summer of 2020 as an analytic for attempting to understand racial and social justice work and education. Narrative inquiry situated within qualitative research is a way that research participants transmit knowledge about their lived experiences. Studying participants' narratives and stories are data of human expression that employ interdisciplinary interpretive lenses to understand culture, society, and human actions (Kim, 2016). The value of using narrative inquiry as a relational research methodology is because discourses envelop ways of

being in the world and shape and are shaped by society and influence how we make sense of the entanglements of relationships involving social interactions, structures, and everyday lives (Clandinin et al., 2010; Soto-Manning, 2014). It is important to understand how white preservice teachers make sense of issues dealing with diversity, equity, and inclusion because in Kentucky approximately 95% of the teacher workforce are white (EdTrust, 2019). The lack of diversity in the teaching profession in Kentucky presents tensions of how a white-dominated teaching workforce can provide social and emotional and equitable educational opportunities for all students, especially those who are non-white. Narrative inquiry in education research allows researchers to explore the dilemmas of racial tensions that preservice teachers experience as they cross the boundary between educational spaces and society (Clandinin et al., 2010). In this chapter, tensions are not viewed as problematic, but as a catalyst for creating new pathways for knowledge acquisition for preservice teachers. One of my students named Madison demonstrates a tension between how she is thinking about her future as an in-service teacher considering the events of the Summer of 2020 in the following observation in one of her assignments. (Comments cited in this work from student class assignments are unaltered for writing mechanics in order to present their voices in this chapter as authentically as possible.)

Madison: Looking into the future, I am going to teach my students about the way life changed in 2020. The Corona Virus was something that changed our life, but the Black Lives Matter changed our lives as well. This was such a strong and powerful movement that I hope all teachers have started to discuss it in their classrooms. Whenever this was going on, I was so moved by everyone. There were peaceful protests that should have definitely happened. It was so moving that so many people were fighting for equality with all. There was even a peaceful protest here in Richmond. Although there were so many different opinions about this movement, I 100% agree that protests and this movement should have happened. Not only for George Floyd, but for the other Black people who have unfairly lost their lives. Teachers in the future and now should be teaching their students about this movement.

Madison's testimony exemplifies how systemic racism is weakened when it is revealed and critiqued through engagement with conversations about race-based remedies. Cho (2009) asserts that racial remedies in the United States are projected as divisive that only benefit certain groups in the U.S. versus all Americans. All lives matter rhetoric is an example of a form of false racial universalism. van Dijk (2021) posits that racist rhetoric is

how ethnic prejudice is acquired and discrimination is both enacted and legitimized. And, thus, we must confront this racist rhetoric in our classrooms with ways to remedy the pain and trauma that the rhetoric enables.

### *Role of the Researcher:*

I claim the country; I claim the rural. I am an African American woman who currently teaches in predominately white isolated educational spaces in institutions of higher education. Michael Dumas (2018) presents a critical question that I carry with me into the classroom: How do we serve as witness to Black suffering in ways that draw our attention, not merely to flayed flesh, but to Black life lived in the face of anti-Black terror in schools and other educational sites? Most of my students are white and woefully uneducated on social issues outside of the white isolated communities they live in. The first day of classes of new semesters are often challenging when I walk into class for the first time and my students see that their professor is Black. These courses begin with a brief conversation about my Blackness along with a short introduction about me to the class. This reflects sentiments from Gillen (2014) regarding where students are taught that school segregation is a thing of the past and that the university is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion while sitting in segregated classrooms. Other Black scholars have noted their challenges of teaching and doing antiracism work in educational spaces where they experience spirit murder and other forms of anti-Black terror (Cole & Stanley, 2021; Mustafa, 2021; Ohito, 2016). As Ahmed (2009) asserts, the politics of diversity work becomes about managing an institutional image and by adding words like diversity, equity, and inclusion to the organization's mission statement. This does not change the culture within the organization even if it allows change in appearance. When non-white faculty members are hired to teach in these predominately white institutions (PWIs), we become the diversity work. After the events of Summer 2020, many institutions of higher education have posted positions for faculty members who can teach and provide meaning to the racial and political turmoil that happened during those events and provide an analysis for the outcomes of the Trump administration. Possessing knowledge of Black digital literacies and critical race studies have been desirable on the academic job market.

### *Language Policy:*

I do not capitalize the term "white" when using it to describe a racial category unless it is the first word in a sentence. Here, I follow the Du Boisian tradition of capitalizing the word Black to acknowledge and render respect on the page for African Americans.

## Preservice Teachers' Racial Tension, Black Digital Publics, and Anti-Racism Education

The transformative potential of virality in Black digital publics is that it creates a means of understanding human relationships between Black social media practices and Black people's social conditions in society (Wade, 2018). Canham (2021) asserts that the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted community and ritual and that death is always attached to existing social fissures of inequality. Sarah made this comment about the murder of George Floyd:

Sarah: I remember the exact moment that I realized being involved was important. The day that the George Floyd video came out I saw it and understood. I understood minorities everywhere. George Floyd's case became a global issue and got a lot of attention. What happened to him was immoral and unethical in so many ways. But, more than that, it gave me insight to things that happen to minorities across the U.S. every day. I began to educate myself on the Black Lives Matter movement and more. The community around me was one that was always on the republican side of politics. Instead of questioning the police system and taking the time to learn about the issues happening around them, they continued to hang their Trump 2020 signs and drink the days away. I did not start challenging my own thoughts and preconceptions until that video blew up all over my social media. I did not begin to feel comfortable sharing my opinions until this class.

Sarah's comment reveals a particular critique that the #BlackLivesMatter movement provides for thinking about dominant narratives of Black life as less valuable than white life (Kirkland, 2018). It illuminates how Black digital publics, and the pandemic offered an opportunity for the social gaze of the Black body to become socially legible to white people living in racially isolated communities because our social lives were mainly digital during quarantine (Du Bois, 2008; Hill, 2020; Kirkland, 2018). Who and what is allowed to become visible is a form of social control (Elliot, 2007) that is used to construct and shift narratives of victimhood and who can and should deserve public sympathy and justice (Liebermann, 2020; Squires, 2016). Stereotypes and other forms of discriminatory markers about race, religion, gender and sexuality identities, and class create a gulf between teachers and their students (Underhill, Brunsmas, & Byrd, 2019; Kirkland, 2018). The stereotype that Black Americans are inclined to criminality and violence has helped police officers murder unarmed Black Americans without repercussions and municipalities fund the prison industrial complex with impoverished Black people (Peraza, 2021; Ray, Brown, Fraistat, & Summers, 2017; Ray, Brown, & Laybourn, 2017).

Grace reflects on a conversation she had with a friend while working on her diversity project for class:

Grace: During my observations, I was most surprised about my friend's experiences in school. She explained how teachers in her county were very opinionated and when election season was going on, opinions were stronger than ever. In class, her history teacher commented on black-on-black crime in response to a discussion on the Black Lives Matter Movement. She said what he taught was stripped so he could teach it to his white students.

Grace's comment reveals how through the visibility of Black digital publics, discussions of racial political thought have moved into the classroom. The history teacher in Grace's story used a deficit myth of "black-on-black crime" to defuse any critical conversations about the Black Lives Matter movement and its response to police brutality. The emergence of Black digital publics is significant for Black people because Black witness has always been insufficient whether in the court of law or in everyday life (Hill, 2020). For example, the racial data revolution between 1890 and the 1930s led to ideas that marked African Americans as racially inferior and criminally deviant (Muhammad, 2010; Peraza, 2021). The lack of analyses of knowledge production and power relations in technology often results in educational practices that inadvertently repeat historical patterns of injustice and inequality (Baroud & Dharamshi, 2020; Haight et al., 2014). Ohito (2016) says that whiteness in antiracist pedagogy shapes the norms and curriculum choices of white instructors in teacher education classes. Gillborn (2019) notes that many white teachers are aware of inequality in schooling, yet they may feel personally attacked when specific events are mentioned in classroom discussions. He suggests that it is important to have knowledgeable teachers who are members of diverse communities who can engage in transformative dialogue in educational spaces. Critiques of whiteness by whiteness will not produce beneficial outcomes to Blackness because whiteness by nature is antithetical to Blackness (Sithole, 2020). The rise of #BlackLivesMatter has been instrumental in reigniting public interest in the obscenities of anti-Blackness. However, the spectacle of Blackness and cultural fixation on the misery and trauma of Black life brought about by discrimination and violence are often misread as an earnest national conversation about racism (Murray, 2021; Linscott, 2017). Farag (2021) says that after the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, many people were encouraged to speak out about violence against Black people and how those occurrences have been minimized and misrepresented in public discourse. He suggests a critical role educators have is to help students develop critical analytical skills to approach

competing perspectives and cultivate evidence-based political views and identities.

## **Translating Digital Publics and Racial Tensions into Transformative Curriculum**

Many teacher education programs state that they are focused on preparing future teachers for social justice and culturally responsive teaching, while most preservice teacher cohorts are white (Carter Andrews et al., 2019; Sleeter, 2017). Culturally responsive pedagogy in practice requires teachers to access knowledge, skills, and interactions with people from diverse backgrounds. This kind of experiential learning and unlearning cannot be found in textbooks alone (Liao, 2018; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). In a discussion forum assignment, preservice teachers were asked to discuss the concerns they have about applying what they were learning about anti-racism education in their personal and professional lives since most of them grew up in white isolated communities. Some of their comments reflect tensions between race and curriculum while others reveal the impact of the events from the rebellions of the Summer of 2020 had on shaping their views on the social conditions of preservice teachers both inside and outside of schools as it relates to race relations.

Kara: A couple of concerns that I have about applying what I am learning in this class to my personal and professional life coming from a racially isolated space is when I should start teaching about race and diversity. Another concern that I have is that the curriculum that I am required to teach does not have anything about race or diversity. I know that I should teach it anyways, but this could also lead to parents getting upset with me for that. The parents that would get upset would be the white parents, who are the ones who come from mostly white isolated areas. So, this leads me to problems with not only the parents but also with the board of education if they plan to go to them about their concerns with me instructing their child about not only race and diversity but white privilege, the critical race theory, and other topics. This makes me worried not only about my job but about the students as well.

Kara's comments reflect what De Freitas and MacAuley (2008) refer to as the pedagogy of discomfort when white preservice teachers confront the realization of their resistance to and complicity in the inequities that are present in public school systems. She acknowledges the tensions she feels about teaching about race and diversity in her white isolated community. Few people challenge or

question the institutional policies and practices that benefit whites and disadvantage Black people and other marginalized groups because if they do, they are met with resistance as with the example of heated and tumultuous debates about critical race theory at some school board meetings around the country (Underhill, Brunsmas, & Byrd, 2019; Kim, 2021). Daily digital optics and other media soundbites from advocates of 'anti-critical race theory' laws flood the airwaves regularly after former President Donald Trump issued a memo and later an executive order banning critical race theory and diversity education training for federal agencies. Visual technologies effectively capture the inescapability of racial marking that is implicit to vision and visuality that functions as a powerful means to maintain power relations rooted in containment, repression, and social control (Murray, 2021; Fleetwood, 2011). Since June 2021, twenty-five states have proposed, and some have even passed legislation and executive action banning or limiting the teaching of tenets of CRT in public schools, leaving some teachers to worry about getting in trouble if they engage in curriculum that deals with race and gender issues (Kim, 2021). However, many teacher education programs have required courses on diversity education that preservice teachers must take. This phenomenon highlights the tensions between educational policies and politics that support the continuance of racial inequities in public schools and the perpetuation of racialized ideologies and beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning, students, their families, and the communities where they reside (Dyson, 2021). On the flip side, it also helps to illuminate how dimensions of identity and inequality shape social life and structures in the United States. It also explains what critical race theorists call interest convergence that asserts that institutional power does not yield to the demands of the oppressed unless those demands converge with their own interests (Hill, 2020). Institutions of higher learning do not want to contend with student protests on campus or low enrollment numbers.

Taylor: [Reflecting on BLM protests in Louisville, KY after the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor] Those who have taken action do it in violent ways, which in the end just continues to make the situation worse, such as the "peaceful protests" which turned into riots which has led to businesses having to board up their windows due to the threat of destroying downtown Louisville. There were roadblocks on the interstate because of the killing of George Floyd, let alone the killing causing an uproar, the danger level of the roadblocks was extremely high, also. Although the George Floyd situation caused a lot of riots and protests, which caused damage to a lot of businesses and caused injuries to others as well. Back home, we were not affected much by race, because where I am from, it seems that the only thing that was different about

the citizens was who had the most money. So seeing the different racial things happening in bigger cities really stunned me because in a small town, everyone minds their own business for the most part, in the eighteen years I have been alive, never have I seen my hometown be in an uproar about something. The different "white supremacy" has definitely played a huge role in all of the events that I listed, which is a factor that has led to all of the different situations that have occurred in return of "white supremacy." Critical race theory also plays a role in events that have happened, because it is not in schools anymore, we do not see critical race theory throughout an ordinary school day, if we do see critical race theory, it is because an event happened that needed to be discussed in the classroom.

Schools and schooling often mirror the communities where they are located (Burdick-Will & Logan, 2017; Corbett, 2010). Rural education scholars note that preservice teachers have challenges comprehending the diversity of social experiences and how power is exercised, resources distributed, and intersectional dynamics that shape social life in multicultural places (Anthony-Stevens & Langford, 2020; Corbett, 2010; Tieken, 2014; Wilcox, 2020). Taylor's comments reveal the tensions between race, space, and schooling that recognizes a connection between white supremacy, economics, and politics that disrupts and distorts the educational process. Taylor recognizes that there are consequences to racial actions such as the murder of George Floyd. Her comment about how "the different 'white supremacy' has played a huge role in all of the events...which is a factor that has led to all of the different situations that have occurred in return of 'white supremacy.'" A part of her analysis demonstrates that she believes the "peaceful protests" that turned violent in downtown Louisville and the destruction of some businesses is the result of white supremacy. Taylor's observation about the cause and consequence of the protests in Louisville illustrates what Dumas (2018) says about Black suffering and how public displays of anti-Black terror create a space for more incisive critiques of race and the work of racial justice. However, when violence happens in white communities, schools, and lives, the response by white people is that it should not have happened there, and this notion suggests that white lives are entitled to uninterrupted peace and safety (Hill, 2020). Rector-Aranda (2016) asserts that white supremacy is easily concealed in curricula that uncritically favors white narratives from some of the most revered leaders who were racial extremists historically. Taylor notes that difference in her white isolated community was based on class stratifications. She says that the protests happened because critical race theory is not in schools and that the only time it is recognized in the classroom is

when protests like the one in Louisville occur. Critical race theory is an analytic that helps explain structural racial inequality (Mills, 2003). The U.S. public education system woefully neglects to teach students about historic struggles against violence towards African Americans and other marginalized people groups which can lead to white fatigue or the tendency for white folks who may fundamentally believe racism is wrong yet may become frustrated with learning how racism functions systemically (Flynn, 2021; VanSledright, 2008). Kaylea's observation provides an example of white fatigue in her paper self and schooling, she writes:

Kaylea: [speaking about an AP U.S. History class she took in high school] Shunning the truth in my history class made me believe that racism was a thing of the past and that it should be nothing to worry about. And this idea is very unhealthy to continue to allow in preservice teacher certification [programs]. The racism within our American history should be talked about, as [white] teachers we have to deny our heritage and speak out about the wrongs in our society, so questions can be asked and change can be made and this needs to start in our school systems.

Culture in the United States is dedicated to preserving dishonest historical narratives that romanticize the exploits of brave and principled European explorers rather than reckoning with its true history of conquest, plunder, and genocide (Hill, 2020) both past and present.

Schools are racialized spaces that contribute to the production and reproduction of inequality in society (Blaisdell, 2016). Educational spaces can challenge or perpetuate societal injustices and teacher education programs must decide if antiracism education curriculum will be cosmetic in nature and continue to reflect white sensibilities (Sleeter, 2017) or if educators will leverage the possibilities that digital futures in education present for school transformation.

## **Conclusion: Digital Futures in Education**

Digital education has become an essential mode of teaching, even more so, since the COVID-19 pandemic. A reliance on digital networks for information and modes of teaching and learning will increase. Educators and educational leaders should think critically about how digital networks can be leveraged in times of turmoil and political crisis (Florini, 2019) to create curriculum possibilities for holding dialogues about intersectional issues in education and transforming teacher education programming that reflect their commitments to equity education. Critical digital pedagogies require the mastery



not only of technical skills but critical thought (Baroud & Dharamshi, 2020). The convergence of critical race pedagogies and digital education futures offers preservice teachers critical skills needed to ethically and responsibly read digital texts from their sociocultural positions and create curriculum content that diminishes inequities (Baroud & Dharamshi, 2020; Hobbs, 2010; Polly et al., 2020). The use of Black digital publics in curriculum design provides a model that demonstrates how critical race pedagogies and digital publics can contribute to institutional antiracism work in teacher education programs. One of the critiques that the multicultural education movement offers when thinking about the utility of digital futures in education is that it is imperative that teachers must be trained in analytics and theories that allow them to interpret and teach in this area. Some education scholars warn against reducing or eliminating foundations of education courses in teacher education programs for this reason because they provide interdisciplinary theoretical grounding that does not rely solely on teaching to techniques (Casey, 2016; Hartlep & Porfilio, 2015; Kerr, Mandzuk, & Raptis, 2011; Kumashiro, 2009). The value of the convergence of antiracism curriculum and digital education futures is that it offers an alternative means of teaching for social justice and resistance to systemic forms of oppression in educational spaces. Black digital networks are incubators that are spaces where public thought around how social movements like BLM advance globally. If educators in teacher education programs are not thinking about how to use digital technology to advance social equality in the classroom and society, then the programs will not be competitive for preparing preservice teachers for the future.

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