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Double Reading

Young Black Scholars Responding to Whiteness in a Community Literacy Program

Stephanie Power Carter and Kafi D. Kumasi

In a society where Black youth are characterized as academically failing, anti-intellectual, violent, and materialistic (Richardson, 2003; Taylor, 1995), a group of community members—comprised of parents, church members, pastors, African American youth, as well as teachers and administrators—believed that the African American youth in their predominantly White community needed a space that would embrace their culture and support them academically. They created Closing the Gap Literacy Intervention Program (CLIP), a pre-college afterschool literacy program for middle and high school youth. One main goal of CLIP is to acknowledge the strengths and possibilities of Black youth and the challenges they face from their own perspective and in their own words. CLIP has two main academic components: a writers' club and a book club. The program meets every Tuesday and Thursday for 2 hours and includes three primary components: tutoring, academic enrichment activities, and leadership skills. Academic enrichment is foregrounded as an opportunity to “re-search” and “re-examine” issues that CLIP students, whom we will refer to as CLIP scholars, feel strongly about and want to educate themselves and the larger community.

As a result of our collaboration with 13 CLIP scholars, we have begun to examine more closely how W.E.B. Du Bois's concept of double consciousness influenced their interactions during our academic enrichment sessions. Du Bois, a preeminent 20th-century Black sociologist, used double consciousness as a lens to help explain social and psychological tensions that African Americans encountered while negotiating their experiences in a societal context structured mainly by dominant linguistic and cultural norms (Fanon, 1967;

Goodings-Williams, 2009; Lee, 2001; Kumasi, 2008). In his classic work, *Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Du Bois described double consciousness as:

A peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two un-reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (p. 3)

We suggest that Du Bois's scholarship on double consciousness provides a lens to better understand how some Black youth interact, negotiate their identities, and engage intellectually in academic settings (Aldridge, 2008). Given that some educational data characterize Black youth as failing and/or lacking intellectual acuity (e.g., Spencer, 2005), using Du Bois's notion of double consciousness helps us “re-search” and “re-see” how a group of Black youth negotiate their identities as they navigate two sets of norms: dominant White and Afrocultural ways of knowing and speaking during the book club activities and discussions. This chapter addresses the following questions:

- In what ways does using Du Bois's concept of double consciousness make more visible how a group of Black youth in a community literacy program confront and respond to Whiteness in a book club?
- How does using Du Bois's concept of double consciousness as a lens to “re-see” provide insight to better support and understand how a group of Black youth in a community literacy program act and interact while reading and discussing literature by and about Black people?

To address the above questions, we provide a brief literature review, followed by relevant CLIP data that extend Du Bois's notion of double consciousness to the field of language and to a of a double reading model as a means to better understand how some students of color engage in reading. This data will help illuminate conceptual understandings of intersections between literacy and racial identity development among Black youth. We close with a discussion of the implications of how this model might be helpful in affirming and supporting Black youth's intellect, identity, and literacy learning.

BLACK ADOLESCENT IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Tatum (1992) writes that African American youth are more likely to be engaged in identity issues than their White counterparts and that their identities are often informed by race and ethnicity. She notes that because those around us influence identity—and this influence serves as a coping

mechanism in racially mixed environments—African American adolescents often sit together for support and comfort. Some scholars suggest that many African American youth have a heightened sensitivity to the ways in which Black people have been “othered,” or positioned as culturally deviant and/or deficient by mainstream (aka White) society and media. Fordham and Ogbu (1986) contend that African American youth develop oppositional collective identity and cultural frames of reference in response to their growing awareness of the systematic exclusion of Black people from full participation in U.S. society. Similarly, Cross (1991) articulates some of the identity challenges that Black youth might face. In his model of racial identity development, Cross argues that there are five stages of racial identity development for African Americans: 1) pre-encounter, 2) encounter, 3) immersion/emersion, 4) internalization, and 5) internalization commitment. He suggests that the first two stages usually occur during adolescence. During the first stage of pre-encounter, “African-American students absorb beliefs and values about the dominant culture, including the idea that it is better to be White” (Tatum, 1997, p. 55). The encounter stage “is usually precipitated by an event or series of events that force the young person to acknowledge the personal impact of racism” (Tatum, 1997, p. 55).

Tatum (1997) asserts that African American students in predominantly White environments have a heightened sense of their racial identities as they constantly have to resist stereotypes and affirm other definitions of Blackness. Such negotiations can also inform students’ educational experiences and ultimately have implications on their success in various academic settings, particularly school and classroom settings. According to Gadsden (1995), because the American educational system is based on Eurocentric norms, academic success is made even more challenging for Black students. Woodson (1933), an early 20th-century Black scholar, foreshadowed the educational challenges that currently plague the experiences of many Black students in the U.S. school system. He argued that American education had been used to teach Black people of their own inferiority. For Woodson: “When a Negro has finished his education in our schools, then, he has been equipped to begin the life of an Americanized or Europeanized white man” (Woodson, 1933, p. 5). Woodson’s scholarship on Black education continues to be timely as it not only makes visible challenges that Black students continue to face, but it illustrates how racism and discrimination have forced Black youth to develop an often unarticulated way of surviving their education (see Carter, 2007b).

WHITENESS

Woodson’s early work not only helps us to better understand Du Bois’s concept of double consciousness, but it also begins to make visible that double

consciousness can be seen as a response to Whiteness. Whiteness research is important as it helps to make explicit how White cultural norms inform and shape current educational experiences. It also works to illuminate how racism and discrimination have become systematically reproduced in the current U.S. educational system. In this light, McLaren (1998) describes Whiteness as a “sociohistorical form of consciousness,” in that it has done the following:

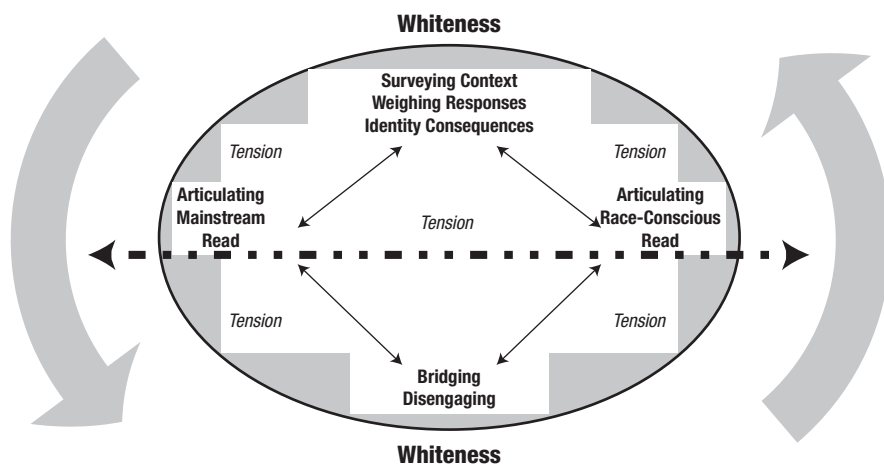
Given birth at the nexus of capitalism, colonial rule, and the emergent relationships among dominant and subordinate groups. Whiteness constitutes and demarcates ideas, feelings, knowledge, social practices, cultural formations and systems of intelligibility that are identified with or attributed to white people and that are invested in by white people as white. Whiteness is also a refusal to acknowledge how white people are implicated in certain social relations of privilege and relations of domination and subordination. (p. 67)

Issues of Whiteness are especially problematic for many Black students whose home and community literacy practices differ from those of the dominant group. Thus, viewing double consciousness as a response to Whiteness can further help make visible the negotiation process in which some Black youth engage (Greene & Abt-Perkins, 2003).

TOWARD A MODEL OF DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS: UNPACKING BLACK YOUTH INTERACTIONS

As we made sense of CLIP scholars’ interactions through the lens of Whiteness, a model emerged that extends Du Bois’s notion of double consciousness. We call this a *Double Read* model (see Figure 4.1). We define Double Reading as one’s ability to understand and be aware of the consequences of knowing both dominant White ways and Afrocultural ways of knowing and speaking. We suggest that tension is central to Double Reading. Du Bois hinted at this tension by stating “. . . two thoughts, two un-reconciled strivings” (Du Bois, 1903, p. 3). Thus, we argue that a Double Read is about being able to articulate dominant and nondominant ways of knowing and an awareness of tensions and consequences in a given context. It is also about an awareness of what articulating those consequences might have on one’s own identity in and across various contexts. We recognize that Double Reading involves cognitive processes and might be characterized as a conscious and/or unconscious unfolding of racialized perspectives, views, and ideas across contexts.

In this chapter, we focus more on the social and interactional aspects of Double Reading that center around language. We view language as central to providing material evidence for double reading. According to Voloshinov (1929/1973), “the actual reality of language-speech is not the abstract system

Figure 4.1. Double Reading Model

of linguistic forms, not the isolated monologic utterance, and not the psycho-physiological act of its implementation.” It is, according to Voloshinov, “the social event of verbal interaction implemented in an utterance or utterances. Thus verbal interaction is the basic reality of language” (pp. 94–95).

We view language as a highly contextualized action, and something that people do to and with each other and themselves in a particular context. Although there is an abundance of scholarship on double consciousness in areas such as African American studies and multicultural education, there are few people in the field of literacy education who discuss double consciousness with regard to literacy (e.g., Willis, 1998). We see our work continuing to build on the scholarship of other language and literacy scholars whose work supports the literacy learning of African American youth (c.f., Kirkland, 2009; Kinloch, 2010; Fisher, 2007; Mahiri & Sablo, 1996; Morrell & Duncan-Andrade, 2002; Williams, 2007). In our work with CLIP scholars, we have come to understand double consciousness as several different things, but most importantly as strategic moves across particular kinds of situations and contexts. We see these moves as situated in a larger interaction we call Double Reading, and we see Double Reading as situated in Du Bois’s theoretical construct of double consciousness. As stated earlier, we see double consciousness as complex and Double Reading as one way of capturing and articulating how the theoretical double consciousness can be used in the field of literacy to “re-see” how African American youth engage in literacy learning. In our attempt to represent the complexities of reading for some students of color, we have designed a double reading model. Given the constraints with writing a chapter, it might appear that we are discussing this Double Reading model

in a linear fashion; however, we do not see the model as linear, but as fluid, layered, and complex. In Figure 4.2, we attempt to illustrate various strategic moves that we view as central to the Double Reading model as well as material evidence for this model. It is important to note that our understanding of the strategic moves emerged during our interactions with CLIP scholars as they engaged in the CLIP book club. The CLIP scholars were central to our emergent understanding of “Double Reading.”

In the Double Reading model, we attempt to capture the complex interplay between Whiteness and Double Reading. Whiteness is the background to which the CLIP scholars were responding. In such a context, tension occurs at almost every level. The CLIP scholars we observed appeared to enter the conversation surveying the context for how Whiteness was being constructed in the immediate environment. The reading that occurred was not fixed, but complex, fluid, and contextual. Thus, the data we draw on provide material evidence for the value of employing such a model in relation to how CLIP scholars confronted Whiteness. We believe this model might provide insight into how teachers and educational researchers can better support the literacy learning of some Black youth as we seek to critically understand how some of them engage in reading.

METHODOLOGY

This study was part of a larger ethnographic study that took place in CLIP, which examined ways to bridge students’ home and school cultures to facilitate academic success. Data were collected during CLIP book club sessions, coined *Circle of Voices* (COV) by Kumasi (2008), to validate the experiences that each young scholar brought to the book club discussions. The main goal for the book club was to engage in discussions and “re-search” around issues of Black culture while reading young adult novels. COV met during CLIP on Tuesdays at the local public library. All 13 CLIP scholars participated in COV. Due to space limitations, however, only those CLIP scholars whose voices appear in the COV book club transcript are highlighted below.

CLIP Scholar Profiles

Monique is a freshman. She happens to be one of the youngest scholars in the group. Despite her youth, Monique is one of the most vocal participants. She readily offers her opinion and has strong reactions to a lot of the issues that are discussed. Monique enjoys shopping and hanging out with her friends.

Anthony is like a big brother to Monique. He is a sophomore who recently moved from an urban city approximately 3 hours north

Figure 4.2. Strategic Moves of Double Reading

I. Surveying Context/Weighing Response/Assessing Risks

This aspect of Double Reading is complicated and often appears cognitive in nature. Material evidence for these strategic moves with regard to language is often revealed from interactions across multiple contexts (e.g., 3 months later, the student references what he or she was doing or why he or she was doing this).

Examples of Material Evidence:

- When a person of color articulates an awareness of perceptions about Blackness that exist in mainstream society and or being “othered” and possible consequences of Whiteness.
- When a person of color articulates risks that may accompany taking certain positions on racially sensitive subject matter. Actions that might suggest risk include hand raising or being called on and refusing to provide an answer.

Tension: Du Bois describes as two warring ideas—when one’s identity and his/her community and cultural values and ideals are inconsistent or different from the identity that is being constructed in a given context.

Examples of Material Evidence:

- When a person of color articulates an alternative perspective about race and power that is counter to one that has already been articulated.
- When two or more alternative perspectives on race and power have been articulated in a given context.

Identity Consequences: The cost associated with constant struggle and contestation with mainstream culture about one’s own racial identity, culture, and/or community.

Examples of Material Evidence:

- When a person of color articulates tension around how he/she might be positioned by others with regard to racial issues. When a person of color articulates the costs of how one’s own racial identity, culture, and/or community are implicated and associated with constant struggle and contestation with mainstream culture.

II. Articulating Race Conscious Read

When one acknowledges the challenges of racial groups but also the possibilities, potential, and agency that are not often made visible in mainstream and Whiteness discourse.

Examples of Material Evidence:

- When a person of color verbally critiques issues of Whiteness with regard to issues of race and power regardless of consequences.
- When a person of color articulates the struggles and tensions around issues of race and power in mainstream society.

III. Articulating Mainstream Conscious Read (Race Neutral Read)

When a person of color does not acknowledge the possibilities and potential of people of color; instead, he or she consciously and/or unconsciously acknowledges their failures.

Examples of Material Evidence:

- When a person of color does not articulate the struggles and tensions around issues of race and power in mainstream society.
- When a person of color dismisses issues of race and/or power that exist in mainstream society.
- When a person of color devalues and generalizes the experiences of people of color in a particular context without taking into consideration the complexities of those experiences (e.g., Black kids are underperforming in school).

IV. Bridging

The ability to use the tensions that arise due to opposing perspectives to engage more deeply and educate and challenge around issues of race and power.

Example of Material Evidence:

- Two or more people articulating different race conscious reads, but instead of shutting down the conversation, they engage in the discussion more deeply. The end result might be a new emerging thought or some idea made more “visible” as a result of that interaction.
- Opposing mainstream and race conscious read(s) have been articulated and challenged, but instead of shutting down, people begin to engage more deeply and an issue is made “visible” as a result of that interaction.

V. Disengaging

One’s ability to choose not to engage on a subject that may be perceived to have negative identity consequences. It is important to note that disengaging is not fixed and could mean different things in different contexts. Similar to Surveying Context/Weighing Response/Assessing Risk, unless articulated, there is no real evidence and a person might not voice concerns immediately, but across time and context.

Example of Material Evidence:

- A student of color who declines to speak or does not raise hand or participate.
-

of this Midwest university town. He is involved in extracurricular activities such as the student chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and holds leadership positions in the community.

Ayanna is an 8th-grade student whose favorite subjects are math and family and consumer sciences. Ayanna enjoys cheerleading, attending church, and running track. Her mother is pursuing her teaching credentials at a local college. Ayanna's grandmother plays a large role in her life and is an active member of a local Baptist church.

Merriel is a freshman who talks fast and is very creative. Whether writing poetry or essays on timely issues, Merriel keeps her fingers on the pulse of what is happening in the world. She enjoys reading novels by and about Black people, and frequents the library in her spare time.

Erica is a sophomore who entered the program in its second year. Erica has a very strong personality. Beneath her tough exterior, Erica is warm and sensitive. She has aspirations to become a cosmetologist and to own her own beauty salon.

Mike is a senior originally from Detroit who entered the program in its 2nd year. He worked at one of the local television stations as an editing assistant. One of the major contributions Mike brought to the program was producing the video montage for one of the program's culminating community literacy events. Mike has aspirations to establish a career in the music video industry.

Data Collection

Book club sessions were audio taped and videotaped over a 4-month period. Transcriptions were coded for instances where participants articulated Black racial identity through "identity statements" (see Kumasi, 2008), or claims participants made about what it means to be Black based on how they believe Black people view (or do not view) the world; speak (or do not speak); and behave (or do not behave). Data were also coded for instances where participants articulated what it means to be Black by linking Black identity to the consequences of Whiteness. As an example, there are statements where participants linked Black racial identity to experiences with racial oppression and marginalization in a dominant White context.

Data Analysis

We conducted a microethnographic discourse analysis of the transcript highlighted below. We drew from Bloome et al.'s (2004) description of

microethnographic discourse analysis which is an approach to discourse analysis that examines human actions and interactions around language and theorizes the use of language in social contexts. A microethnographic discourse analysis approach lends itself to addressing the questions central to this study, questions that deal with tensions and struggles around race that inform how African American youth act and interact in the book club.

Moreover, a microethnographic approach is rooted in the theoretical precepts of sociolinguistic ethnography. Sociolinguistic ethnographers maintain that the processes through which social identities are named and constituted are essentially language processes (Gauker, 1994). A microethnographic analysis of discourse can make visible certain macro and micro power dynamics. By illustrating this negotiation process up close, the reader can better see the complex layers of interactions that might otherwise be invisible (Carter, 2007a; 2007b).

STRATEGIC MOVES: CAPTURING DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS INTERACTIONS

The following section utilizes excerpts from CLIP data to provide examples of various strategic moves as well as the ways scholars negotiated their racial identity in these two contexts. In Figure 4.3 we provide two single transcript segments from different CLIP sessions to help articulate the Double Reading model. In the following transcript segments, scholars are reading Angela Johnson's novel *First Part Last*. It is a coming-of-age story that deals with the trials of Bobbi, an African American teenage male, who is expecting a child with his high school girlfriend, Nia. Each chapter is written in alternating tenses of past and present. This format helps make a strong contrast between Bobbi's thoughts and habits before and after his daughter, Feather, is born. As the story ends, the reader is kept wondering whether or not Bobbi will succumb to family and peer pressures and give Feather up for adoption or decide to keep her and raise her himself. Prior to this segment, CLIP scholars had been discussing the aforementioned book and what it means to be a Black man in our society.

CAPTURING DOUBLE READING AMONG BLACK YOUTH INTERACTIONS

In this section, we use book club transcripts to provide material evidence of how Double Reading played out in the interactions of CLIP scholars as they discussed the novel *First Part Last*. It is important to reiterate that we view language as central to understanding and capturing Double Reading.

Figure 4.3. Transcripts of Class Discussion

Transcription Key

- / = Conversational pauses within the message unit
- [] = Inaudible due to speech overlap in conversation or other interference
- (*italics*) = Additional information inserted for clarity
- CAPITALS = Emphasis or accentuation on syllables
- ! = Increase in voice pitch or tone
- J = Group laughter
- . . . = Brief pause

CLIP Scholars

- AH: Anthony Houghes, African American male student
- AS: Ayanna Scott, African American female student
- DR. C.: Dr. Carter, African American female researcher/ co-facilitator
- ES: Erica Smith, African American female student
- KK: Kafi Kumasi, African American female researcher/ co-facilitator
- MB: Merriel Broddick, African American female student
- MW: Monique Williams, African American female student

Transcript Segment 1 of Book Club Discussion on *First Part Last* by Angela Johnson. September 19, 2006

- 34. DR. C.: Okay so what did you think about the novel so far? What are your initial impressions of the book?
- 35. AH: I didn't think it was realistic how the mother wasn't really involved once he had the baby. I mean most grandmother I see grandmothers help raise their grandkids. So that part was unrealistic for me.
- 36. MB: No but she did that on purpose. I think she was trying to teach him how to be a man.
- 37. DR. C.: Okay/ So I mean—man/ everybody has a concept or a notion about what it means to be a man/ a Black man/ and I say Black man/is that what y'all were saying?
- 38. ES: [Right I] Huh? . . . No!
- 39. DR. C.: No?
- 40. ES: What is/ What is that! / How you gon say/ what the? . . . Ne'mind
- 41. DR. C.: No tell me Erica!
- 42. ES: You just don't say what's a Black man/ like/ you actin like you have to be like/ you have to act a certain a way to be a Black man or sumthin like that
- 43. DR. C.: Okay/ So you don't?
- 44. ES: What are you talkin about?
- 45. J: Group laughter
- 46. DR. C.: Somebody help me out!

47. ES: Anyway/well/like/I was just sayin
 48. DR. C.: Okay so I guess I was just sayin/ Erica raises another point cause I said/ What does it mean to be a man and then I said Black man/ and she was like hold up, hold up you know/ you know/ you know like you tryna single Black men out like their different/ that's what I get
 49. ES: Right, yeah
 50. DR. C.: So
 51. AH: But they are different! That's the thing.
 52. DR. C.: Are they?
 53. AH: Yeah
 54. AS: Some of them are different
 55. ES: No/I don't know
 56. DR. C.: Some of them? Some of who?
 57. KK Elaborate
 58. DR. C.: Yeah elaborate
 59. MB: But no, but I didn't say it Ayanna said it/ so elaborate over there
 60. DR. C.: Oh, Ayanna elaborate/ I mean like / okay cause I/ Erica was challenging me in terms of the fact when I said
 61. ES: Yes, I shol was!
 62. AS: Some Black people act White/ some people
 63. AH: What is acting White?
 64. MW: What's actin White? It's just cause you talk like you suppose to
 65. ES: It's just talkin proper/ we supposed to talk proper/ even though we 't talk pro

Transcript Segment 2 Excerpt "But We are different" Book Club Segment on Black Males Continued on Thursday, September 21, 2006

5. DR. C.: Black men. Okay. And I just wanna clarify something. Um there were several different notions going on about Black men. One was/ one, it was don't stereotype/that they're no different. I'm not sure different from who or different from what. I wanna believe/ was it Anthony that said, "Can't explain it, it's kinds like a swagger"? Was it you Barack that said that?
 6. BARACK: Actually it was Anthony.
 7. DR. C.: Okay. So what/ what is this/ I just wanna I understand you/ so/ Black man/ when you hear Black man/ do you think different from any other group? Or do you think similar or do you see it terms of difference? Or how DO you think/ when you think Black man?
 8. MW: Difference.
 9. DR. C.: When you say difference, tell me what you mean when you say different.
 10. MW: We gotta explain ourselves?
 11. DR. C.: You always have to explain yourself.
 12. MW: Well then ne'mind they ain't got no difference
 13. J: Group laughter

(continued)

14. AH: A whole different perspective on life
 15. DR. C.: A whole different perspective on life
 16. AH: A hustle [inaudible]
 17. DR. C.: Like for example?
 18. AH: Like them White boys—difference
 19. DR. C.: I mean like when you say perspective/ what kind of different perspective?
 20. AH: Like they have more of a struggle.
 21. MW: You be makin the questions hard.
 22. AH: What they just supposed to be easy?
 23. KK: Remember you all are scholars.
 24. DR. C.: Yeah scholars elaborate, we talk. You said because, you said about struggle right? Okay so it's about struggle. So you think
 25. MB: Yeah
 26. DR. C.: Is that what you were saying Monique or you were saying something different?
 27. MW: No I was saying that
 28. DR. C.: Would anyone disagree? I mean you can. We don't all have to agree. Scholars don't have to think alike. So let me say this. Let me ask you this, it was interesting, at the library what happened? Why, why was it, what happened that? And you know I need you all to be real—with me. I need you to always to be real—with me. What happened? You know cause you all couldn't articulate/ you all seemed to not want to articulate/ that at the library. I just seemed that way. What happened?
 29. MW: We ain't want to offend nobody.
 30. DR. C.: Okay so you were concerned that you would offend someone
 31. MW: If I did I mean I would say sorry, but [inaudible]
-

Informed by sociolinguistics, we see language use as shaped by individual (micro) and societal (macro) forces and that one can theorize human interactions by studying language. Thus, we assert that by analyzing transcriptions of language in use we can capture Double Reading. Selected transcripts help show the dynamic, fluid nature of Double Readings across time and space. Again, the subsequent analysis involves data from two transcripts taken from two separate book discussions that occurred over a 3-day time period (Tuesday and Thursday). We draw from additional interviews with CLIP scholars that occurred outside the book session to bolster our analysis of double consciousness.

Double Reading: Disengaging, Weighing, Assessing, and Identity Consequences

As we looked across data, we noticed instances where CLIP scholars appeared to be pondering something or instances where some CLIP scholars

who were very vocal might be unusually quiet or abruptly disengaged from a conversation. Of course, such processes were always complex. We selected the above transcripts because they seemed to articulate some of the complexities of Double Reading. This portion of the analysis focuses on surveying the context, weighing responses, assessing risk, and identity consequences. In Transcript 1, we see Monique speaking for the first time. In line 63, she poses a question: *What's actin White? It's just cause you talk like you suppose to.* As stated earlier, Monique is one of the most vocal students in the group, and it was customary for her to engage in debate about controversial issues, particularly issues of race. However, during this session, Monique barely speaks. It is never fully made clear during this session why she is not vocal, as usual. However, it is important to note that during this session, there is a White librarian and a couple of pre-service teachers present. In retrospect, perhaps we attributed how she engaged to simply having a bad day.

However, it became clear in Transcript 2 during our discussion on Thursday that how Monique engaged was perhaps more strategic than we had assumed. In line 29, when the group was questioned about why they did not seem to want to talk, Monique states: *We ain't want to offend nobody.* It is not clear who “we” is. Perhaps Monique is attempting to speak on behalf of some of her peers in the group. What is clear is that Monique was weighing potential responses and assessing risk. In line 31, she continues: *If I did I mean I would say sorry,* which continues to illustrate what we call identity consequences. Her statement suggests that she was concerned about how she would be perceived by the White people who were present during our CLIP session. Thus, in the initial exchange in Transcript 1, she does not fully engage. Monique’s statement serves as an example of how these strategic moves are complex and fluid. What becomes equally interesting is that Monique was usually one of the most vocal students in the group, but when the context includes White people, she engages differently. Her statements in lines 29 and 31 suggest that when White people were present, she appeared to be negotiating not only how she engaged in the discussion, but also the possible identity consequences for her as a young Black woman.

Tension(s) and Race Conscious Reading

Based on the data, tension is a constant thread that runs throughout Double Reading. Just as Du Bois suggested in his understanding of double consciousness, tension is central to a theoretical construct of double consciousness, as evident in his reference to “two warring ideals.” Similarly, we have outlined the importance of tension to Double Reading. One might argue that tension is present at multiple levels throughout both transcripts. Given our data, it became clear that tension is often in response to a race

conscious read. We use the exchange between Dr. C and Erica during the book club discussion to illustrate tension and how tensions can surface after a race conscious read has been articulated. We suggest that Erica engaged in a race conscious read when she critiqued and articulated perceptions of Black manhood regardless of identity consequences. In line 36, Dr. C states: *Okay/So I mean—man/everybody has a concept or a notion about what it means to be a man/a Black man/ and I say Black man/is that what y'all were saying.* In line 37, Erica states: *Huh? . . . No!* and continues in line 39 with: *What is/ What is that! / How you gon say/ what the? . . . Ne'mind.* Erica openly challenges Dr. C's stance and makes tension more visible when she questions: *How you gon say/what the? . . . Ne'mind.* However, it is not until she is encouraged to continue in line 40 when Dr. C says: *No tell me Erica!* Erica's thus responds in line 41, stating: *You just don't say what's a Black man/ like/ you actin like you have to be like/ you have to act a certain a way to be a Black man or sumthin like that.* Erica critiques what she perceives to be a homogenized representation of Black men that depicts them as different from other men. Erica's response also hints at a larger tension that she might be responding to with regards to how Whiteness has informed perceptions about Black men, which can lead to a mainstream conscious read.

Other data suggest that Erica's family members who are Black males have highly influenced her thinking. In a separate interview during a follow-up focus group, Erica was asked to reflect on her thoughts about Black males. During the interview, she began to share a story about an incident with her brothers where she believed they were seen as criminals to a White passerby who came into contact with a group of young Black males on their way to a party. She observed: *Like when I'm around my brothers, we are not thinking about the person [White person] that is next to us, and people lock their doors when they see like a group of Black folk* (Focus Group Interview, 9/21/06). Erica's reflection on this event helps illustrate her level of awareness as to how Black people—Black males in particular—are perceived by dominant White society. Therefore, when Dr. C. raised the issue of Black males, it is likely that Erica drew on her prior knowledge and experiences of witnessing Black men like her brothers being depicted as threatening in a dominant White social context.

Bridging

Bridging, which is essential to Double Reading, is the last strategic move that we will discuss. Bridging is using the tensions that arise from differing reads to engage more deeply and to challenge others on issues of race and power. In Transcript 1, we begin to see bridging occur. Although we

use this segment of the transcript to illustrate bridging, we want to acknowledge that multiple strategic moves could be occurring at once. As the exchange between Dr. C and Erica continued, Dr. C tried to clarify by summarizing what she believed to be Erica's stance. She states in line 47: *Okay so I guess I was just sayin/ Erica raises another point cause I said/ What does it mean to be a man and then I said Black man/ and she was like hold up, hold up you know/ you know/ you know like you tryna single Black men out like their different/ that's what I get.* In line 48, Erica states: *"Right, yeah,"* suggesting she agrees that she did perceive that Dr. C was constructing Black males as different, and Erica's perception was that "different" was being constructed in a negative way. However, in line 51, Anthony articulates a response that is counter to Erica's when he says: *But they are different! That's the thing.* Later in the same book club conversation, Anthony was asked to expound on his thoughts about Black males being different. He described Black males as having a certain "swagger" (Field Notes, 9/19/08). In this instance, Anthony associated difference with the possibilities of Black males having distinct, positive characteristics that set them apart from others (i.e., a swagger). Although Erica and Anthony articulated race conscious reads, both attached a distinct interpretation to the way Black male identity was being constructed in the conversation. However, Whiteness was an undercurrent that remained unarticulated in their reactions.

While the concept of difference was being negotiated back and forth in the participants' conversation, Whiteness never moved away from its position as the normative center of the conversation. The next few lines in the transcript excerpt begin to make visible how Whiteness was serving as a backdrop to the conversation about Black males. For instance, in line 61, AS states: *Some Black people act Whitesome people.* Suddenly, the conversation about Black males has shifted to Black males acting White. What becomes apparent is that as a result of CLIP scholars pushing back against the tensions and through the conversation about Black males, the undercurrent of Whiteness is made visible. In the following paragraph, we briefly discuss the implications of a Double Read model for the field of language and literacy.

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Double Reading has the potential to help literacy scholars "re-search and re-see" how reading gets taken up by some youth of color in social contexts in which the "color line" (Du Bois, 1903) is ever-present yet constantly denied existence by many. We believe that the Double Reading model holds great

promise for characterizing and understanding the educational experiences of youth of color by capturing strategic moves that inform how some Black youth engage in literacy learning. We suggest that to better understand and academically support Black youth, there must be epistemological conditions for multiple types of knowledge that affirm and help to better contextualize Black experiences. What the CLIP scholars have taught us is that Double Reading is made visible in an intellectual space where students can contest and grapple with contradictions in their lived experiences and the world around them. We liken the space of CLIP not just to a community, but also to the space of a family, a group of youth united by common experiences who can also engage in heated debates and still have a sense of mutual respect for each other.

Our collaboration with CLIP scholars also illuminates the importance of providing resources for practicing and pre-service teachers to scaffold students' racialized experiences as a means to help them articulate their overt and covert thought processes, particularly around culturally sensitive topics or areas of inquiry. It is through this sort of scaffolding that practicing and pre-service teachers can create familial spaces where young scholars can grapple with the competing and often contradictory messages they receive concerning what it means to be a person of color in various contexts, particularly in educational settings. We believe that if educators understand how double consciousness works in theory, then perhaps they can refine their pedagogical practices with youth of color in ways that prompt truer and deeper expression of ideals, particularly around issues of race (see, e.g., Fuligni, 2007). CLIP and the creation of the *Circle of Voices* book club are examples of how to support the literacy learning of young Black scholars where sensitive issues are seriously debated and critiqued. Central to the creation of literate spaces such as this is a belief in the literate strengths and possibilities of youth of color.

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