

Essay

We Have Met the Enemy in Teacher Education; It Is Us—Teacher Educators and the Bad Faith of Our Niceness, Not Teachers

Brenda G. Harris

MEDEX, Department Family Medicine, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, USA; bharris3@uw.edu

Abstract: In this conceptual essay, the author draws on the concept of bad faith to explore its connections to Niceness and role in sustaining the historical failures of U.S. teacher education to prepare future teachers to effectively teach learners from diverse backgrounds through culturally responsive pedagogy. Bad faith is a useful, albeit underutilized, concept in considering and challenging the patterned historical inequities maintained by Niceness in teacher preparation programs. Applying a critical race theory (CRT) methodology and analysis, the author presents and interrogates three representative exemplars of a logic of racism operationalized through bad faith, then insulated by Niceness in U.S. teacher education. These exemplars serve as conceptual case studies that are constituted as composite scenarios of patterned enactments of bad faith authorized by Niceness within U.S. teacher education; these cases demonstrate how [and why] the bad faith–Niceness interplay informs the work and [good] intentions of stakeholders most often in ways that further, rather than challenge, historical failures of U.S. teacher education for culturally responsive pedagogy.

Keywords: Niceness; bad faith; teacher preparation; educational equity; culturally relevant teaching; social differences



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1. Introduction

In this essay, I draw on the concept of bad faith to examine how the *price of Niceness* [1] sustains the enduring failures of U.S. teacher education to prepare teachers to effectively teach increasingly diverse student populations in U.S. public schools [2–5]. Bad faith is a useful, underutilized concept in considering and challenging the patterned historical inequities maintained by Whiteness through Niceness [6–8]. The usefulness of bad faith lies in its capacities to pierce the protective layers of socialized pleasantries to elucidate the machinations and hold of processes and narratives privileging Whiteness (i.e., characteristics, aims, goals, histories, accomplishments, etc. associated with White people collectively) on society and its institutions.

Specifically, I apply a critical race theory (CRT) methodology and analysis [9] to create and interrogate three representative exemplars of a logic of racism operationalized through bad faith, then protected and furthered by Niceness to sustain the systemic race-based domination of Whiteness in U.S. teacher education [10]. The three exemplars in this essay serve as conceptual case studies [8] or representative intervenors [11] that are constituted as composite, storied scenarios of representative, patterned interactions, actions, and decision-making grounded in bad faith and permeated by Niceness within U.S. teacher education; these three cases demonstrate how [and why] Niceness informs the work and [good] intentions of teacher educators, school administrators, and educational leaders most often in ways that further, rather than challenge or eradicate, the pervasive, historical failures of U.S. teacher preparation programs for culturally responsive pedagogy.

Existing literature has documented that Niceness is not actually “nice” [12], but is instead a barrier to equity work despite the good intentions of “nice” teacher educators and other educational leaders [2,13–17]. Less examined is that which Niceness insulates to protect from view and action—the seeming paradoxes of multicultural teacher education that

continue to graduate teachers best prepared for learners who most closely reflect U.S. society's White mainstream as manifestations of bad faith that sustain U.S. teacher education's persistent, pervasive failures in culturally responsive pedagogies [18,19]. By naming and exploring the interplay and modus operandi of practices and narratives steeped in bad faith protected by Niceness, this essay seeks to create opportunities for better understanding, then interrupting the White world of U.S. teacher education toward racially, linguistically, and otherwise equitable, inclusionary forms of teaching and learning. Intentionally or otherwise [20,21], teacher preparation in the U.S. continues to best prepare future teachers for communities that do not widely exist (i.e., White, middle-class, primary English-speaking, heterosexual, two parent, Protestant-Christian families and communities), rather than the demographically rich diverseness of today's society and student populations [22,23].

In the paragraphs below, following Tichavakunda [8], I introduce and discuss in further detail the concept of bad faith, its connections to Niceness, and its usefulness to studying and working against U.S. teacher education's historical failures in culturally responsive teaching. The first case study highlights bad faith and Niceness operationalized within a teacher education hiring committee. The second case study features bad faith and Niceness enacted respectively in a movie night event for future teachers intended to illustrate good teaching, organized by teacher educators, and hosted by a college of education. The third case study foregrounds the dynamics of bad faith and Niceness within a collaborative endeavor focused on professional development for in-service teachers that was developed by a committee made up of three educators including a local school district leader, a tenured teacher educator serving as department chair, and an untenured teacher educator.

Pointedly, as Tichavakunda [8] observes, the concept of bad faith is not a solution to U.S. teacher education's historical failures of culturally responsive pedagogy or racism generally in higher education. Rather, it is the ability to identify and better understand how bad faith is operationalized to sustain U.S. teacher education's historical failures of culturally responsive pedagogy, which provides the possibility of informing endeavors to eradicate all forms of racism in higher education and elsewhere.

2. Bad Faith, Niceness, and Culturally Responsive Teacher Preparation

What is bad faith, then, and how do its manifestations connect to and help explain Niceness within the White world of U.S. teacher education [24] and its work of teacher preparation for multicultural education realized as Whiteness [25]? Like the notion of evidence, bad faith is a concept recognized within U.S. society's everyday parlance as having legal connotations and being associated with accountability and contractual obligations; bad faith refers to intentionally dishonest acts committed by individuals or institutions against the backdrop of contractual obligations [8].

With roots also in philosophy, the dishonesty associated with bad faith likewise refers to the tendency of people, consciously or not, to lie to themselves for the purpose of maintaining the positive self-images they hold of themselves, or to protect their individual personal feelings and perspectives, thus circumventing any need to interrogate self-interests or carry out significant self-assessments [26]; bad faith references the patterned ways individuals and groups regularly work to evade choices, responsibilities, and truth by privileging deceptive, distorted, selective perspectives, experiences, memories, and lies to thus protect themselves from having to take restorative, corrective action or engage in critical self-reflection and dialogue [27]. Bad faith is hence sophistry and justification enacted by individuals and groups within their institutions, which have historically worked to privilege White people's shared, collective interests, values, histories, and more at the expense of those associated with minoritized groups, often with deadly consequences [28].

Niceness, in turn, denotes a socialized disposition, particularly among White women, which compels stakeholders to prioritize the neutrality and emotional comfort of the self and others while sabotaging or eradicating resistance against systems of White racial domination [2]. Within U.S. teacher education, Niceness implies presumptions about

teacher educators, school administrators, and other educational leaders of teachers as well as other individuals and groups in U.S. society, which deem stakeholders, particularly if they are racially identified as White, as fundamentally good, well-meaning people whose acts of harm and aggression are unintended or reluctant, passive mistakes that are exceptions to the general rule of their good intentions, actions, and outcomes from which they deviate from only if provoked or in cases of self-defense. Research in U.S. educational contexts has documented ways that Niceness is embodied and enacted by those positioned in positions of more institutional authority in contrast to the demands of Niceness applied to and used to limit the participation and access to resources of those who seek to challenge institutional power [29].

Bad faith and Niceness, then, both prioritize and operate to protect and resist change to emotions and [systems of] beliefs that maintain the status quo. In turn, the status quo of U.S. society has historically overprivileged and valued the individual and collective emotions, interests, characteristics, histories, and accomplishments of White people. However, bad faith and Niceness are not interchangeable; bad faith instead works in the service of and is covered or obscured and protected by Niceness to thus continue to legitimate and insulate from interruption and or transformation the racial and other difference-based seeming paradoxes like multicultural teacher preparation for Whiteness.

I thus begin this essay by breaking down the protocols of Niceness [1] to directly name the bad faith that permeates U.S. teacher education's failure to prepare future teachers for culturally responsive teaching. In the spirit of disrupting the bad faith insulated by Niceness, I then directly name the possibly disruptive, uncomfortable topic of the bad faith of U.S. teacher education [14] in ensuring the enduring, overwhelming failure of teachers in public schools instead of the usual practice of avoiding or reframing the seeming racial paradoxes of multicultural teacher preparation for Whiteness toward more soothing, pleasing, or harmonious perspectives [16].

It is the bad faith of U.S. teacher education that allows teacher educators, school district administrators, and other vested educational leaders to consciously, or otherwise, embrace and protect a positive view of themselves as proponents successfully implementing culturally responsive teacher preparation and educational equity, regardless of pervasive counter-evidence over time and even as Niceness protects stakeholders in U.S. teacher education's failures from direct contact with or conversations about it. Hence, it is *not* to teachers, given the bad faith of U.S. teacher education's failures of culturally responsive pedagogy, that we must look to for a better understanding of how and why teachers are, with few exceptions, so profoundly ill-prepared to effectively teach today's increasingly diverse student populations, but *instead* to teacher educators, school district administrators, and other associated educational leaders across higher education, school districts, and beyond (e.g., textbook, test/evaluation, software publishers, policymakers, unions, etc.) as well as their roles and participation in preparing, supervising, and evaluating teachers.

As the author and someone who identifies as a White woman, in this essay, I therefore violate the expectations of Niceness by directly explicating the racial participants and bad faith dynamics in U.S. teacher education that authorize and contribute to ongoing educational failures and inequities related to social differences and culturally responsive teaching. Specifically, regarding Niceness and U.S. teacher education's continuing failures with culturally responsive pedagogy and teacher preparation, I do not portend to neutrality or colorblindness nor prioritize others' potential emotional discomfort. Furthermore, I contend that the persistent failures of U.S. teacher education in culturally responsive pedagogy is not an unfortunate, good faith-based disconnect between the good, equity-oriented intentions and the Whiteness-infused, racialized lived practices and outcomes of teacher educators, school administrators, and educational leaders who teach, evaluate, supervise, and direct pre- and in-service teachers as the protocols of Niceness might suggest.

U.S. teacher education's bad faith claims of culturally responsive pedagogy are protected from scrutiny and intervention by Niceness. Insulated thus by Niceness, the logic of bad faith allows teacher educators from U.S. teacher preparation programs (TPPs) to

at once vigorously promote culturally responsive pedagogy *and* forcefully work against culturally responsive pedagogy to the status quo [3]. Culturally responsive pedagogy refers to the knowledge, skills, and disposition requisite for teachers in today's increasingly diverse public schools to effectively center the learners' cultural identities and tap the rich histories, perspectives, and traditions of the students' backgrounds and communities to foster successful, equitable learning opportunities, experiences, and outcomes [30,31].

The pressing need for and importance of culturally responsive pedagogy to the principal mission of teacher preparation for educational equity in contemporary public schools has now long and widely been acknowledged across U.S. higher education, school districts, and beyond [32,33]. For teachers to begin teaching, prepared to successfully teach all learners, teacher educators must guide future teachers in learning to how to recognize and address the ways "race and racism negatively impact African American students [and other minoritized learners] and their ability to successfully negotiate the school and classrooms" [25], p. 211. However, today's teachers continue, with few exceptions, to exit their preparation programs (TPPs) best prepared to teach learners from U.S. society's White, primary English speaking, mainstream (Whitestream), and are profoundly under-prepared to realize educational equity through culturally responsive, relevant teaching in the demographically diverse classrooms of U.S. PreK–12 public schools [5,34].

At the same time, teachers in PreK–12 public classrooms, much like teacher educators in the schools and colleges of education across U.S. higher education, are overwhelmingly monolingual, primary English-speaking White women, while students are increasingly from minoritized backgrounds and communities outside of U.S. society's Whitestream [35,36]. Moreover, also permeated by bad faith, teachers and the patterned characteristics associated with teachers (e.g., their typically negative racial attitudes, their generally limited exposure and experiences outside of the Whitestream, and their tendencies to resist learning about oppression) are typically the first to be highlighted in empirical and other investigative, explanatory endeavors focused on U.S. teachers' widespread failure to teach in and through culturally responsive teaching, identities, experiences, resistance to learning about social differences and oppression, and more.

Importantly, there are consequences, often deadly in both the long- and short-terms, of life chances, experiences, and opportunities to the persistent, pernicious failures of U.S. teacher education to effectively prepare teachers for culturally responsive teaching and learning. The bad faith of U.S. teacher education's failure to prepare teachers for culturally responsive teaching is a form of both physical and symbolic violence perpetuated against teachers and students to set them up respectively to face immediate and long-term schooling and social failures individually, collectively, and in relation to each other. While the direct naming of U.S. teacher education's continuing failure to prepare teachers for culturally responsive teaching and the deep harm it consistently inflicts may thus generate a measure of discomfort for some [readers], it is the discomfort of, even pain, faced by recipients of U.S. teacher education's bad faith failures of culturally responsive pedagogy, rather than the discomfort of those who participate directly or indirectly in sustaining these bad faith failures that must foregrounded, if the goal of public schooling and teacher preparation is to tap the democratic, inclusionary potential of public education and realize equitable teaching and learning for all learners.

3. Critical Race Theory and a Counter-Storytelling Methodology

Tracing the logic of bad faith and understanding its connections to Niceness and the U.S. teacher education's failures of critical pedagogy require ways to explore the interplay among individuals and institutions and the operationalization and machinations of racism in higher education [6,7,9]. Critical race theory (CRT), constituted by its five tenets, foregrounds the development and inclusion of individual and group voices, perspectives, and narratives that challenge racism and the structures of oppression; as consistent targets of racism and oppression, minoritized peoples have historically developed caches of insights, understandings, and experiential knowledge concerning the constitutions and

machinations of racism and oppression [15,37,38]. In this essay, I draw on two of CRT's five tenets to create and analyze the cases of bad faith enacted, as presented below.

Constituted as CRT's first tenet, knowledge developed from the perspective of minoritized peoples historically targeted by racism, rather than the perspectives of those who, individually and collectively, have perpetuated racism, is viewed as useful for exposing the logic of bad faith and exposing its connections and machinations in relation to Niceness and the preparation of future teachers for culturally responsive pedagogy. To tap the racial knowledge garnered by minoritized groups and individuals requires careful examination of the explanations, sayings, and other shared communicative devices to identify the nuances of interconnections among bad faith, Niceness, and racism.

The second tenet of CRT, in turn, focuses on the experiential knowledge of minoritized peoples, which may be elicited from the structured stories and storytelling of minoritized peoples historically subjected to racism. The stories and storytelling of those targeted by racism and oppression highlight the perceived realities of individuals and groups who likewise face the workings of racism and oppression [11]. These stories and storytelling, from the perspectives of minoritized groups and individuals, expose the assumptions, contradictions, values, processes, and other mechanisms of bad faith and Niceness that operate to co-opt and subvert egalitarian aims and perpetuate the domination and subjugation of minoritized peoples and groups despite the good intentions of stakeholders; these stories and storytelling similarly render visible the creative, resilient, and even wily ways that minoritized peoples and groups may employ to elude, challenge, and or sabotage the intersecting forms of Whiteness and oppression they are subjected to as a way to promote their respective humanizing survivance [39].

Creating Case Studies

To create the composite case studies for this essay, I draw on a variety of data sources including respectively my own personal and professional experiences, those of colleagues and friends from minoritized backgrounds as well as those published and shared informally or formally. The experiences used to create composite case studies for this essay focused on the stakeholders' experiences with challenging and being targeted by bad faith and Niceness in teacher preparation programs across the U.S. over a period of the past twenty-five years to the present.

I also draw on knowledge about racism and its functions and functioning derived from traditional teacher education research and from historical and literary sources, the arts and humanities, and the social and other sciences to inform the creation of these case studies. In particular, I use these wide-ranging sources to create an interdisciplinary data foundation for each of the three case studies.

Additionally, as noted elsewhere [24], I have included as data, derived from extensive analyses of teacher preparation programs with and by colleagues across the U.S. over two decades, documents, mission statements, memos, meeting minutes, and other written institutional sources as well as formal and informal individual and focus group interviews conducted as part of ongoing studies of multicultural teacher preparation. Very importantly, each of the three case studies in this essay is a composite counter-story made up of characters and events based on actual individuals, events, places, and situations cobbled together to serve as representative exemplars of how bad faith operates in relation to Niceness and U.S. teacher preparation for culturally responsive pedagogy.

4. Setting the Scene: Introducing the Cases through Counter-Storytelling

To present each case study in the subsequent paragraphs, I use the literacy devices of, first, a snapshot of a teacher education hiring committee meeting, second, a snapshot of a movie night planning meeting among teacher educators, and third, a snapshot of professional development for an in-service teachers planning meeting hosted by a teacher education-school district collaboration.

Importantly, through the characters interacting in each of the three snapshots, each case features a counter-story followed by an autobiographical narrative performance to develop the composite narratives of the three case studies. Autobiographical narrative performances refer to points within the composite storyline where the performer(s) typically speak about acts of racism, for example, witnessed, experienced, or understood through personal and or intergenerational, collective experiential wisdom [31].

4.1. Case Study 1: Teacher Education Hiring Committee Meeting Focused on Diversity Hire

At a rural university located in the American West, six teacher educators serving on a hiring committee for the teacher education department are meeting to review applications for an open tenure track faculty position that they hope to fill with a scholar holding a terminal degree in education and demonstrates expertise in addressing issues of educational equity, social differences, and culturally responsive pedagogy. This hiring committee is tasked with reviewing over 25 applications; the gender of applicants appears to be mostly women and some men, with the male applicants typically coming from K–12 administrative positions such as Principal or Vice Principal, and the women applicants identifying as classroom teachers who have completed terminal degrees and are seeking to move out of K–12 classrooms. Four applications were submitted by applicants who held or were currently working on completing master's degrees. Of the master's degree applications, one was submitted by the only applicant who identified themselves and their experiences as Native American. The most common characteristics across all of the applications were religious background and familial ties reflected by the hiring institution and hiring committee.

Of the six faculty members at this meeting, one individual is a tenured Full Professor who identifies as a White man and serves as the teacher education department chair with the other five individuals, who are all White women, with two of the five tenured as Associate and Full Professors, respectively, and the other three holding the status of teaching staff and untenured Assistant Professor.

This hiring committee represents a teacher education department that is made up overwhelmingly of White women, with a small percentage of faculty members who identify as White men, tenured and untenured, filling all positions of authority in the department and college of education except for the Deanship, despite being a much smaller percentage of the faculty population; only one faculty member identifies as a minoritized scholar in the college. The only other characteristic representing social differences by the faculty was in sexuality, with two members not identifying with the normative standards of sexuality in a White, Christian, middle class, English speaking context.

Teacher Education Department Chair: Has everyone had a chance to review the curriculum vitae of the candidates who have applied to our open faculty position? It was nice to see so many applications.

There are affirming nods of heads and assenting murmurs from the five other members of the teacher education hiring committee.

Teacher Educator 1: Thank you for sending out that matrix form for us to fill out by listing our preferred candidates in order of preference before this meeting. I think it will help us to move more efficiently through the applications and begin the process of elimination of some applications.

Teacher Education Chair: Yes, that was my hope. Shall we begin by sharing our respective lists of our top three candidates?

Together, the committee of six teacher educators review the chart of potential hires with a column with three rows for each teacher educator to denote the candidates they selected as their top three preferred candidates to bring to campus for an interview. There is conversation among the six teacher educators about which individuals they each selected and their corresponding rationales for their ordered lists of preferences.

Teacher Educator 3 (untenured Assistant Professor): Has anyone noticed that there are very few differences across five columns and rows of our matrix chart and only the sixth column and its rows are significantly different?

The other five teacher educators laugh and affirm the existence of significant similarities in their listed preferred candidates.

Teacher Educator 5: Well, I promise we did not “cheat”—(laugh). . . I mean work together without you.

Teacher Educator 3: Of course! (laugh). Yet, do you not see that it is striking that most of the columns and rows in our matrix chart list individuals who have attended institutions of higher education that most of us have attended; these individuals are overwhelmingly from the same region and communities most of us are from; they are also nearly all White.

There is some uncomfortable laughter from the other five teacher educators.

Teacher Educator 3 continues: Look at this matrix closely [long pause]. We have re-created ourselves in our own White image!!!

In response, the Teacher Education Department Chair tries to make a joke and the other committee members chuckle at this comment, thus relieving the tension of the moment.

This meeting continues to closure as if Teacher Educator 3 had not spoken. Ultimately, this hiring committee did hire someone in their own image, just as it happens regularly across U.S. teacher education. This hiring committee furthers bad faith in U.S. teacher education by perpetuating the Whiteness of its teacher educator population and using Niceness to redirect away from the operationalization of the continued privileging of Whiteness in their hiring practices. The bad faith of this hiring committee’s task and process is manifested by a job description and search that call for the intentional inclusion of diverse perspectives and backgrounds while selecting for inclusion only those applicants who most closely reflect the committee’s racial, religious, linguistic, and other norms. The norms of Niceness prohibit race- and difference-based conversations to promote colorblind, universalist conversations or discussions that do not include potentially polemical topics like the racism, sexism, and privileging of shared religious backgrounds.

4.2. Case Study 2: Teacher Educators Plan Movie Night Asynchronously via Email

In this snapshot, there are four teacher educators involved in planning a movie night for future teachers at this university’s college of education, where the privileging of Whiteness is reflected in the teacher educator and future teacher populations as well as in the teaching and learning processes. All four of the teacher educators involved in this scenario identify as White; two are women, one tenured and one untenured, and the other two are men, neither tenured but both holding positions of authority within the college.

Bob, one of the White, male teacher educators, has invited the entire college of education faculty to work with him on preparing an evening for future teachers to explore an example of exemplary teaching via film. The film is a movie based on a relatively recent true story of a male teacher who taught in a public school serving Latinx and Asian-descent learners from a community struggling against poverty in the American Southwest and became known nationally for instilling in his middle school students a deep love of classics from the Western canon (e.g., works by Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Joyce).

The three faculty members who responded to Bob’s invitation are also teacher educators including Steve, the other White male teacher educator, and Mary and Sue, the two White female teacher educators. Bob began organizing for the movie night to be held a month hence by emailing his colleagues to invite them to meet in person to discuss the film; he explains that he wants his colleagues’ input and feedback in hosting this film event for future teachers and offers to host a film previewing session on campus or at his home at a time convenient for his colleagues.

Bob’s three colleagues respond affirmatively about wanting to meet prior to the movie night. However, together, the other three teacher educators recommend that each of the four teacher educators watch the film independently before coming together for further planning. A few days later, Sue sends an email to Bob, copied to both Mary and Steve, on the communication.

Sue writes: Hi Bob! I wanted to reach out to you and include Steve and Mary as well with a few of my concerns as we prepare to meet to talk about hosting the film you have

recommended. I haven't seen the film yet, but I have some concerns about the film already just from the title and doing a little background search on the teacher featured in the film.

Specifically, it seems like this film may fall in the category of White Savior teachers working in the so-called jungle of public schools serving minoritized communities. The film's title focuses on Western canon knowledge shared with this minoritized community, but doesn't seem to have any room for the inclusion of the gifts and community knowledge and resources that the students from this minoritized community bring to school with them. Any exemplar of good teaching should demonstrate three things: (1) foster high levels of academic achievement, (2) foster high levels of cultural competence, and (3) foster high levels of socio-cultural awareness.

Bob replies, copying Steve and Mary: LOL, Sue! We aren't interested in all of that political correctness. The focus of this film is on a teacher who is an inspiration to learners and goes above and beyond to promote the students' love of learning.

Sue replies to the reply, copying Steve and Mary: *Great, Bob. You know I didn't make up those three factors of successful, culturally responsive teaching and learning—not just my personal opinions. I'm drawing from the research base on culturally responsive pedagogy, specifically the works of Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings, for example. Teaching is not just teaching; all teaching (and learning) is political in the sense that it highlights some forms of knowledge and not others. Culturally responsive teaching works to center the knowledge of minoritized communities to decenter Whiteness.*

Bob replies yet again, copying Steve and Mary: *Thanks for your thoughts, Sue. This film shows great teaching and just great teaching. I know about culturally responsive teaching. I am writing a book chapter right now where I am drawing on the work of Dr. Geneva Gay. And, as you have noted, you have not seen the film yet, so you don't know.*

Sue replies again, also copying Steve and Mary: *Wonderful, Bob. Then you know that I am correct about what makes up exemplary, culturally responsive teaching requiring attention to issues of unequal power relations and hierarchies of difference.*

Mary replies to Bob, Sue, and Steve: *Why don't we all view the film and then talk about it?* This email chain ends for the moment and is revived two weeks later.

Sending an email, **Sue** writes to Bob, Steve, and Mary: *Hi Bob, Mary, and Steve. I wanted to let you know that I have the film if anyone hasn't seen it yet. I am happy to lend it out. I watched it and just as I suspected, the film is of the White Savior trope, just as I suspected from the title.*

I want to let you know that I have no problem with showing this film. I want my students to have opportunities to deconstruct and analyze examples of teaching.

My issue with this film is that if it is being presented as an example of successful teaching—it is not. There are so many things problematic with this teacher's approach to teaching. Apart from the exclusiveness of Whiteness in the curriculum, the teacher consistently spends two or more hours before and after school each day as well as his holiday breaks and taking learners on field trips across the country on his own dime. He moonlights to pay for these trips—this is not a healthy life-work balance for teachers; indeed, it reinforces the idea that White women, the people who are usually serving as teachers, are supposed to give their all and sacrifice themselves completely in the service of others. This is not right.

No one responds to Sue's email, not Bob, not Steve, and not Mary; this email chain thus ends.

The faculty previewing session was never organized or held. The film was hosted by the college of education with Bob as the MC. About 15 future teachers attended, four of them being Sue's students. A lively dialogue ensued about the film, with the many limitations of the film brought out by Sue and Sue's students—whom she notes that she did not prep ahead of time. Mary, the other White female teacher educator, also spoke out during the discussion of the film to note that the community knowledge was not drawn into this teacher's teaching in the film and was a serious deficit.

Interestingly, the interplay of communication between a White male teacher educator and his White female educator demonstrates the power of bad faith and Niceness in action. Bob, as a White man, refuses all evidence that his viewpoints do not represent culturally responsive pedagogy despite his claims of drawing on the works of Black women scholars.

As Audre Lorde warned against, Bob seems to have thumbed through the works of Black women scholars, and then in bad faith persisted in the privileging of Whiteness while rendering Sue as a troublemaking agitator. Note that Steve did not participate in the dialogue and Mary chose to redirect a difficult conversation away from hard topics and silence. Bad faith is once again perpetuated through Niceness to sustain the supremacy of Whiteness in U.S. teacher education, as manifested in the interplay of individuals and narratives in this case study.

The bad faith of the movie night event within this teacher preparation program reflects the privileging of Whiteness in practices, events, and policies across U.S. teacher education. The normalizing of U.S. society's White, Western canon is not unique to this program or movie night. Dynamics of Whiteness and maleness combine in this scenario to ensure the silencing of alternative perspectives projected into the dialogue by the White female teacher educator.

4.3. Case Study 3: Professional Development for Inservice Teachers: A Collaboration between Teacher Education and a Local School District

The future teachers at this university spend time learning to teach as student teachers in the classrooms of teachers who work at the local school district. Like the teacher education department at this university, the local school district faculty and administration are overwhelmingly White and serve a community that is largely middle class and White, but includes a small community of Latinx learners and is located on the traditional homelands of the Southern Paiute Nation.

Recently, an incident occurred that caused much distress to a future teacher, his cooperating teacher in a first grade classroom, the school principal, and the school district leader as well as the teacher education faculty at the local university. The incident that occurred involved a transgender female-to-male White future teacher who was introduced in the first grade classroom he was assigned to complete practicum observation hours in as Mr. Smith. In response, one of the first graders in the classroom blurted out that Mr. Smith did not look like a Mr. Smith, but a Miss Smith. In an anxious, stressed rush, the first grade teacher did not know what to do, so she went to the school principal who, in turn, called the school district leader.

The teacher education department chair and the teacher educator, who was the instructor of record for Mr. Smith's course, were notified of the incident and met with the school district's leader and the school district's representing attorney to talk about the incident and consider plans of action. In the short-term, Mr. Smith was asked not to return to the first grade classroom he was assigned to until further notice. Eventually, he was placed in the classroom of a teacher who volunteered to allow Mr. Smith to observe in her classroom, being aware of the incident that had caused such furor that even the state's district attorney weighed in.

Importantly, some of the teacher educators from the college of education were concerned that the rights and well-being of Mr. Smith were not being addressed or accounted for. Instead, the discomfort of the first grade teacher, the confusion of the first grade student, and the upset of the school administrator and school district leader were centered as the focus of concern and planning in terms of easing their discomfort.

There was dissent among teacher educators regarding Mr. Smith's rights and experiences as a university student and the concerns of the teachers, parents, school administrators, and district leaders in the community due to the presence of Mr. Smith as a transgender future teacher in the public school classroom. One White female teacher educator proclaimed, for example, that there should be no talk addressing transgender issues because children do not know or see issues of sexuality due to their young ages. In response, another White female teacher educator noted that clearly it was not that the children were too young to know or see issues of sexuality because it was a first grader who articulated aloud her confusion about Mr. Smith, seeming to her to represent a Miss Smith. Another teacher educator, a tenured White man, noted that a talk about sexuality and all

that it entailed was not appropriate in public schools. However, another White female teacher educator noted that it was possible to speak with children in age appropriate ways about the world they are seeing around them; this is more honest, she stated. She noted that it is a silencing strategy to suggest that one must provide a dissertation explanation to eight year old children when no one is suggesting that.

Finally, the teacher education department chair and the school district leader decided on providing a professional development seminar for in-service teachers in response to the issues of sexuality that had emerged with the presence of a transgender future teacher in the local public school. The department chair tasked a faculty member with expertise in the social foundations of education to develop a survey that might be administered to the teachers of the school district to better prepare a professional development seminar for and with them.

Once the survey was completed, it was emailed by the department chair of teacher education to the school district leader. Mr. Barnes, the school district leader, responded via email regarding the survey and the focus of the proposed professional development for teachers.

Mr. Barnes writes: *Thank you for sending your survey. Based on the questions, it seems that your department is interested in persuading our teachers to change their instruction in ways that promote diverse life options and alternative perspectives.*

Our mission in this school district is to support students and families in learning skills and knowledge needed for college and careers and to respect all others' humanity. We stick to our state core curriculum standards and want to help students to value the dignity of all human beings.

Our idea of professional development is to help our teachers learn how to better respect all visitors to our schools, especially future teachers who are using our schools to meet the requirements for teaching licensure. How should we handle situations where students are confused about a student teachers or a practicum student? This is what we want to learn.

This response from Mr. Barnes was the end of the collaborative effort between the local school district and the university's department of teacher education regarding culturally responsive pedagogy. The survey was not authorized for distribution among teachers in the school district, and no professional development was held. The status quo was maintained at the expense, no less, of Mr. Smith, the transgender future teacher enrolled in the local university's teacher preparation program.

In this third case, it is notable that Mr. Barnes, the school district leader, consistently points to wanting to learn and have teachers learn to better extend respect to other human beings. However, Mr. Smith, as one of those other human beings entitled to respect, according to Mr. Barnes' definition, is largely erased from the teacher education-school district culturally responsive collaboration. He is not named again; rather, the upset he caused to White educators and leaders is the focus.

By not talking about Mr. Smith and insisting on a colorblind general respect, Mr. Barnes enacts a bad faith aim to inclusiveness, authorized by respect and thus Niceness, to ultimately disrespect Mr. Smith by erasing him and his humanity. The colorblind neutrality of his references to state core curriculum and dignity all privilege the historical emphasis on Whiteness and the feelings and interests of White people individually and collectively. The status quo is ensured through the enactment of bad faith supported by Niceness operationalized in the interplay among stakeholders in teacher education and the school district. The norms of Niceness steer teacher educators away from further conversation about topics like transgender future teachers and toward those emotionally comfortable for cisgender, heterosexual people who most closely reflect U.S. society's normative mainstream norms.

5. Interrupting the Bad Faith and Niceness of U.S. Teacher Education

Drawing on the three above case studies, my aim in this essay is to explore the interplay of bad faith and Niceness in U.S. teacher education's historical failure of culturally responsive pedagogy. Using the tenets of CRT, I consider ways in which bad faith and Nice-

ness are operationalized by well-intentioned school leaders (e.g., administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders) to perpetuate the historical privileging of Whiteness and thus the ongoing failures of U.S. teacher preparation programs to prepare teachers to effectively teach learners of diverse backgrounds. My intent is to identify and examine examples of bad faith and Niceness in U.S. teacher education to better understand how school leaders and other stakeholders contribute to and maintain the tenaciousness of the White world of teaching and teacher education with an aim to identify points and ways to interrupt its machinations [6].

First, the bad faith–Niceness connections that undergird the historical failures of U.S. teacher education are better understood by recognizing that systemic oppression and White racial domination are an endemic part of American society, and educational leaders including teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders who make decisions in public schooling contribute to its maintenance and perpetuation; Whiteness permeates teaching and learning throughout K–12 and teacher education including the single diversity courses offered in most teacher preparation programs, not by accident, but through the direct participation and decision-making and interactions of school leaders at every level of U.S. public schooling.

The permanence and permeance of Whiteness play out in a variety of ways, as highlighted in each of the three case studies presented above when viewed with an eye as to how school leaders and stakeholders contribute to its protection and maintenance through their interactions, decisions, and actions, unintentionally or otherwise. By definition, social diversity courses in teacher education underscore the lack of culturally responsive pedagogy and the existing Whiteness in teacher education [24,25,31]. The persistence of social diversity courses on the margins of teacher preparation is not coincidental, but the rational outcome of decisions, policies, actions, and interactions made by school leaders in the classroom and at every level of U.S. public schooling.

To identify, then interrupt and redirect the ways that the logic and machinations of bad faith and Niceness support the historical failures of U.S. teacher education for culturally responsive curriculum requires school leaders to acquire and refine an ability to expose how the systemic privileging of Whiteness in teacher preparation programs functions to deny and thus protect the existing hierarchies and structures of race and racism. It likewise requires school leaders to consistently apply an ability to expose the persistent racial practice of the stakeholders' patterns of interactions in refusing to consider the everyday realities of race and racism when presented with evidence and narratives expressing racialized experiences.

The question of White racial refusals and the bad faith–Niceness connection in teacher education can be significantly challenged by school leaders working to structure opportunities for future teachers and their professors to acquire more knowledge about content from courses in Ethnic Studies, for example, and/or Women's Studies as well as courses in sociology, which center the analysis of cultural norms, knowledge, and practices that challenge the hegemony of Whiteness in U.S. society. These programs and courses focus on challenging the hegemony of White supremacy, and came into existence for the purpose of remedying the historical over-privileging of Whiteness [23].

In turn, to recognize racism's pervasiveness requires school leaders in higher education, local school districts, and elsewhere, that is to say, those who function as gatekeepers and protectors of White dominance in teacher education and other important social venues, to be intentional and courageous in assessing their own practices, attitudes, decisions, and other interactions complicit in upholding systemic racism; individuals and groups must be courageous in naming the contours of racism and their role in maintaining White racial domination—actions many are unwilling to do, and if they are willing, they do not know how to proceed toward more inclusive, equitable ways of being. Instead, these leaders and other stakeholders often believe, sincerely to be sure, that they aren't acting in racist ways or contributing to White racial domination because, for example, they use an affirming self-assessment to guide their interactions with others while simultaneously

aligning themselves and their actions with and toward the interests and furthering of the historical privileging of Whiteness [2,12].

Second, the connections between and machinations of bad faith and Niceness enacted by school leaders can be exposed in U.S. teacher education by understanding that there is no such thing as colorblindness or neutrality; indeed, colorblindness is not an appropriate ideal for social justice, especially in light of the extensive array of anti-CRT bills, the anti-1619 book project as well as the widespread banning of books particularly related to race and sexuality. The bad faith of these types of book bans, for example, demonstrate that stakeholders and proponents of such understand that colorblindness and neutrality are myths.

According to Bergerson [2], individuals and groups who identify as White tend to view themselves as morally good while attributing negative stereotypes to racially minoritized peoples and ascribing the resistance of minoritized peoples to “reverse racism”. This bad faith interplay of goodness as Niceness can be seen in any social foundations of education multicultural courses across U.S. teacher education [14]. Teacher education candidates and school leaders still regularly query, “Can’t we just teach? I don’t see the color of my students.” [24]. Little do these future teachers and teacher educators know that only in a racist society would it be a good thing not to see what you do see. Furthermore, when school leaders and others who consider themselves to be progressive or liberal fail to understand how they can and regularly do embody White supremacist values despite their good intentions through this bad faith lack of awareness or Niceness, they support the racist domination they wish to eradicate [1,2,20].

Third, the question of bad faith and Niceness can be exposed in U.S. teacher education when school leaders take seriously the historical reality that merit is problematic in the United States. To see the problematic nature of merit, look to who is in leadership and serves as faculty across teacher education programs and in classrooms in every venue of U.S. public schooling. Now, some may read this and make the argument that on their campus, this is not the case—their programs are led by individuals from minoritized communities. Indeed, while there are exceptions, by and large, leadership and teaching and learning in teacher education remains a White world [24]. It is profoundly insufficient to say that anyone who works hard can achieve success. Merit operates under the burden of racism authorized by bad faith and insulated by Niceness; racism thus limits the applicability of merit to minoritized individuals and groups.

Fourth, the bad faith–Niceness connection in U.S. teacher education is exposed and better understood when school leaders consider the role that experiential knowledge plays in the narratives of minoritized peoples. When leaders in teacher preparation programs are unwilling to recognize the knowledge of students and faculty drawn from minoritized perspectives and communities as legitimate and critical to the way they navigate in a society grounded in racial subordination, they deny the humanity of those they claim in bad faith to want to respect and include, given their morally good, nice intentions.

This posturing toward inclusivity in participation is defined as *appeals to authenticity* [20]. In this model of authenticity, when White faculty and leaders in higher education and all levels of schooling cite their own experiences to counter, contradict, or silence the voices of those minoritized as Not White, these individuals operationalize bad faith and insulate their bad faith claims from response using the norms of Niceness. This use of White narratives and experiences to silence minoritized Others serves to undermine the experiences and insights of minoritized peoples and define their perspectives as less valid and less useful, that is to say, not nice or respectful.

Finally, the question of bad faith and Niceness in U.S. teacher education can be better understood by school leaders and stakeholders considering the property value of Whiteness. Whiteness was invented and continues to be perpetuated to serve as the normative standards against which racialized Others are measured. Whiteness functions to position those racially marked by the gatekeepers and stakeholders of Whiteness as racialized Others as less privileged, less powerful, and less legitimate, and therefore not

nice and not respectable and not to be considered a legitimate contributor to any dialogue or endeavor. Until the racial power of Whiteness enacted by school leaders and stakeholders through bad faith and protected by Niceness is not only recognized, but also explicitly addressed in U.S. teacher education programs by leadership, it is highly unlikely that culturally responsive pedagogy and the democratic intentions of educational equity and justice will be realized in the classrooms of public schools.

Indeed, with contemporary U.S. society's White mainstream's more recent prohibitions against naming race when teaching about the 1921 Tulsa, Oklahoma Race Riot, the so called "don't say gay", and anti-critical race theory legislation as well as the contemporary call to look for the "silver lining" of chattel slavery, for instance, bad faith is protected by the Niceness of school leaders in a seemingly unbounded way with its tightly insulated protection of Whiteness enacted and sustained. The need for school leaders to call out and work against bad faith and its protection mechanism of Niceness in U.S. teacher preparation programs, schools, and schooling thus not only persists, but remains urgent given the persistent historical failures of U.S. teacher education to prepare teachers for culturally responsive pedagogy.

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