3-1-2001

Reducing Resistance to Diversity through Cognitive Dissonance Instruction: Implications for Teacher Education

Elisabeth L. McFalls
University of South Florida

Deirdre Cobb-Roberts
University of South Florida, cobbrob@usf.edu

Journal of Teacher Education

Reducing Resistance to Diversity through Cognitive Dissonance Instruction : Implications for Teacher Education

Elisabeth L. McFalls and Deirdre Cobb-Roberts

Published by:

$SAGE

http://www.sagepublications.com

On behalf of:

AACTE
TEACHER EDUCATION

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)

Additional services and information for *Journal of Teacher Education* can be found at:

Email Alerts: http://jte.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts

Subscriptions: http://jte.sagepub.com/subscriptions

Reprints: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav

Permissions: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

Citations: http://jte.sagepub.com/content/52/2/164.refs.html

>> Version of Record - Mar 1, 2001

What is This?

REDUCING RESISTANCE TO DIVERSITY THROUGH COGNITIVE DISSONANCE INSTRUCTION
IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Elisabeth L. McFalls
Deirdre Cobb-Roberts
University of South Florida

Before admission to the college of education, students at a large, predominantly White public university in the Southeast are required to complete a state-mandated course on diversity issues. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to diversity and effective ways of addressing it in future classrooms as a result of changing demographics. Often, students experience resistance to diversity issues because their current understandings or beliefs may not coincide with the information presented in class. One psychological theory that can address this phenomenon is called cognitive dissonance. In the study reported here, the principles of cognitive dissonance theory are applied to an instructional strategy used to reduce resistance. The results indicate that incorporating cognitive dissonance theory into instruction on diversity creates an awareness of dissonance (i.e., metadissonance) and has the potential for reducing resistance to diversity issues. Implications for teacher education are addressed.

We must begin to encourage a dialogue [on diversity]; one without acrimony but with civility.
>   —John Hope Franklin, Chair,
>   Advisory Board for the President's
>   Initiative on Race (1999)

Understanding diversity issues has become a fundamental component of teacher education programs in colleges and universities across the United States. By the year 2025, it is predicted that the proportion of students of color will increase to approximately 50% of the student population, and the majority of teachers will continue to be White, middle-class women (Bollin & Finkel, 1995; Singh, 1996). To ensure academic success for all students, teachers need to understand, appreciate, and respect the differences their students bring to the classroom. Furthermore, these classrooms should reflect an atmosphere of unity and diversity, which will lead to social justice, the ultimate goal of multicultural education (Ladson-Billings, 1992).

At a large, predominantly White university in the Southeast, students are required to complete a course on multicultural education before admission to the college of education. This course is intended to increase understanding and appreciation for the ways in which diversity has shaped American culture, social thought, social institutions, and intergroup relations. Race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, language, and exceptionality are categories that include all groups and individuals. Hence, the course takes a broad look at diversity in American life historically and currently and also considers its impact on education. Providing a realistic view of the challenges faced by educators, administrators, and policy makers when addressing the needs of a diverse student population is a primary focus of the course.

Most of the students who attend the course are White women with a working-class or middle-class background. Their average age is

between 19 and 21. There are a few nontraditional students returning to school after raising families, serving in the military, or delaying higher education for other reasons. Most of the students are native to the state where the university is located. Most are from racially and ethnically encapsulated areas. Cultural isolation often leads to stereotypical, racist, and/or prejudiced attitudes toward those outside one's own group, especially when knowledge about others is derived from misleading and stereotyped media representations (Jordan, 1995). However, we have learned that we cannot assume that all students who enroll in the diversity course enter with racist or sexist ideologies. In fact, some students may actually welcome the opportunity to learn more and to discuss inequities in American society (Higginbotham, 1996). Yet, we have also learned that a large proportion of the students begin this class with consciously or unconsciously held ideologies that they attribute to "diverse" groups in society. Typically, students who enter multicultural foundations classes are fairly "apolitical, individualistic, and non-confrontational, and most often they view situations and people from a personal point of view" (Ahlquist, 1991). These characteristics also describe the students within the course we studied.

Often, students in this course are presented with material that challenges and threatens both their personal and social identities. They are asked to listen to and talk about issues that contradict their personal frames of reference. Emotional reactions to discussions of this sort may range from "cognitive dissonance to emotional shock" (Noel, 1995). Many students are concerned that if accepted, the new ideas with which they are confronted may further isolate them intellectually and emotionally from their communities. This concern becomes more pronounced by physical separation from their own communities that results from attending college (Chan & Treacy, 1996). Emotional shock or dissonance is evident in many multicultural foundations courses and was particularly evident in the course described here.

The challenge that teacher educators face when there is resistance to diversity issues is to create alternative methods for introducing ideas that are threatening to students. One purpose of the course we studied was to introduce an instructional strategy that would diminish resistance within the classroom. This strategy is based on cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957), a theoretical construct used to explain how people respond to information that does not coincide with their current understandings or beliefs.

According to cognitive dissonance theory, an individual can experience psychological tension or dissonance when new knowledge or information is incongruent with previously acquired knowledge. Because dissonance between opposing ideas is unpleasant, people are motivated to reduce the dissonance in a way similar to how they would be motivated to reduce a drive such as hunger. For example, a teacher who uses a direct instruction approach to teaching science may experience dissonance after reading an elaborate report disconfirming the effectiveness of this instructional technique. To reduce psychological discomfort, the teacher may (a) change the new cognition to make it consistent with the preexisting cognition (i.e., deny or devalue the research altogether), (b) add new cognitions to bridge the gap between the opposing cognitions (i.e., find additional information that supports the idea that using a direct instruction approach is better than no instruction or other forms of instruction), or (c) change his or her behavior (i.e., stop using a direct instruction approach altogether).

Because students in multicultural education courses are often exposed to information that is inconsistent with their prior beliefs and experiences, they are likely to experience dissonance that may be expressed outwardly in the form of resistance. Such dissonance and the resistance it tends to generate serve to defeat the very purpose of multicultural education courses. One pedagogical implication of this apparent paradox is to embed dissonance-reduction strategies into the multicultural education curriculum. Drawing from the knowledge base of metacognitive processes, it seems reasonable to posit that creating awareness of cognitive dissonance (i.e., metadissonance) before the students

experience dissonance might help reduce resistance, prevent selective processing of discrepant information, encourage critical thinking, and promote a classroom environment conducive to learning. To explore this idea, we compared two sections of a diversity education course. The instructions for both groups were similar; however, supplemental instruction on cognitive dissonance was provided to one section for comparison.

METHOD

One hundred twenty-four undergraduate, potential preservice education majors participated in the experiment. These participants were taken from two sections of an undergraduate course on diversity education. The composition of race and gender was similar for each group. Group 1 (the nonsupplemental instruction section) consisted of 64 participants. Eighty-six percent of the participants were women ($n = 55$), and 14% were men ($n = 9$). Most of the students were of European American origin ($n = 44$), although 17% were from African American backgrounds ($n = 11$), 12% were from Latino American backgrounds ($n = 8$), and fewer than 2% were from other backgrounds such as Asian American, Native American, or interracial ($n = 1$). Group 2 (the supplemental instruction section) consisted of 60 participants. Seventy percent of the participants were women ($n = 42$), and 30% were men ($n = 18$). Again, the students were mainly of European American origin ($n = 40$), although 17% were from African American backgrounds ($n = 10$), 10% were from Latino American backgrounds ($n = 6$), and fewer than 6% were from other backgrounds as mentioned above ($n = 4$).

Students in both sections of the course were required to read an article titled "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" by Peggy McIntosh (1989). This article was chosen because of its potential to create dissonance due to students' lack of awareness of the several hidden White privileges revealed within the article. Students were told that a discussion on this article would occur for the next class session. In Group 1, students were allowed to review the article. Next, they provided a written response

to the following prompt: "Reflect upon/provide a reaction to the article you have just read." A discussion took place following their written responses to the article. After the discussion, participants answered the following questions anonymously: (a) "What is the one important thing you have learned in this session?" (b) "What is one question that you still have?" and (c) "Do you have any additional comments?"

Before reviewing the article on White privilege, Group 2 received a lecture on cognitive dissonance theory. This lecture included an explanation of cognitive dissonance theory, a discussion on the origins of stereotypes, and an exercise that induced cognitive dissonance. After the cognitive dissonance lecture, Group 2 provided a written response to the article about White privilege and to the following question: "Do you see any relationship between cognitive dissonance theory and your reaction to the article?" A written response to this question was collected as well. In each group, participants were told that a research assistant would type their responses before the researchers reviewed them, and they were encouraged to provide honest responses to each question.

Responses to each question were read and classified according to themes or recurring ideas. As a final verification measure, an independent auditor analyzed and replicated the coding established for the data.

THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN RESPONSES

Analysis of responses across the two classes revealed three major themes: (a) awareness, (b) uncertainty, and (c) denial. Each respondent was labeled according to one of these themes. Figure 1 shows the percentage of responses coded according to these themes for both class sections. Group 2 received the additional cognitive dissonance information.

Awareness was indicated by statements suggesting that the participant became more aware of hidden privileges due to the information being presented in class. Sixty-nine percent ($n = 44$) of the participants in Group 1 and 82% ($n = 49$) of the participants in Group 2 wrote responses that were coded according to the
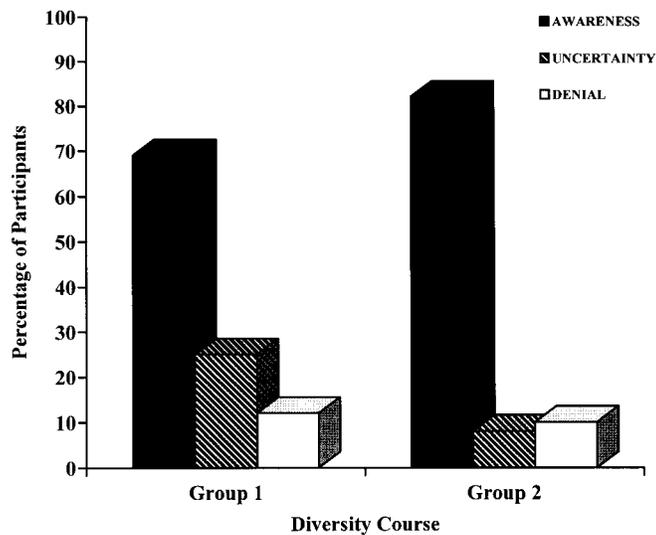
FIGURE 1: Percentage of Participants Coded Under Each Theme Within Each Section of the Diversity Course

awareness theme. The following statements are examples of this theme:

> I was impressed with the article. It opened my eyes to things that I have never thought of before. I was always taught that racism was a form of action. I never realized that there were many silent forms of discrimination that came along with a particular race. I am white and I feel that I have taken for granted the invisible knapsack that I have. When I read the list of things that I take for granted, it made me sick to think that people of other races have to struggle just going though everyday life.

> This article really opened my eyes. I, too, did not see "whiteness" as a race identity until I began to learn about such theories. As a white person, you become socialized to see whiteness as the norm and it takes a lot to overcome that, but I am trying.

> The article opened my eyes. . . . First of all, I always thought about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage. Upon reading this I realize that it puts me at an advantage. I never thought of it like that. We are definitely taught throughout life not to recognize being a white man as a privilege, but it certainly is. People can go through everyday without seeing the daily effects of privilege because they were taught not to see it. It makes you realize that "doors" are not open to everyone.

> After I read this article, it made me think right away of how blind I was to racism. I was brought up [to think] that racism was an act of meanness. After reading that list it opened up my mind to how racism does happen in so many different ways in every day life. I also really liked the beginning of the article

when the author compared racism to men's privileges over women's privileges. How men will do what they can to improve women's privileges, but men won't lessen their privileges. This article alone taught me more about racism and privileges than what I have learned in the last year. I liked this article a lot, and am really glad I read it.

The uncertainty theme included responses that indicated participants were not sure whether they agreed or disagreed with the information presented within the article. As a result, their answers included elements of both. Twenty-five percent ($n = 16$) of the participants in Group 1 and 8% ($n = 5$) of the participants in Group 2 wrote responses that were classified according to the theme of uncertainty. An interesting finding here is the smaller percentage of participants in Group 2 whose responses were classified as uncertain. It is possible that more students in this section were willing to evaluate discrepant information because of their exposure to the cognitive dissonance theory. The following statements are examples of the uncertainty theme:

> The article that we just read was well written but disturbing. I am a young white female, and I have never considered myself to have "white privilege." I think that everyone has to earn their own respect and while it may seem that white people have the upperhand on passed down power just because of their family, I think that people of any color can have

that power. I do agree on the aspect that African Americans seem like they are not handed it, more along the lines that they earn it. I never really thought about all of the things that were said about people of color not getting the same treatment as white but it makes sense if you look back on where it comes from. I hope that some day there is equality and that everyone can feel safe without gaining privileges or disadvantages due to color, sex, or religion.

The article . . . was very forward and opinionated. I felt that as a white female this article made me see things out of a different perspective. I've never seen how white people have more privileges. But then again, I don't feel that white privileges are of how Peggy McIntosh sees them. Yes, men do get more privileges in today's society that are not necessarily earned, however, I feel that other races are becoming more equal.

Reflecting on the article, I feel that Peggy McIntosh had a lot of good points, but I also disagree with a lot of what she said. I feel it is true, that there is a great amount of white privileges. I don't think people realize all of the many opportunities a "typical" white person has. But also, we have a large amount of setbacks. To me the white race sees that it is dominant and tries to make that up to other races.

The article I just read was very disturbing to me because I am a white male and some of those statements made are true to a point. I do see a lot of my race with important events and on t.v., in magazines, etc.; however, I feel that I'm [not] as privileged as the article tends to say. I don't feel like I get more money or a better job or even respect just because of being a white male. I have to work just as hard if not harder to succeed in my life. Nothing is given to me because of what I look like. I feel in my life experience with different races competing against me for something, they have the same opportunity as I do winning or getting whatever it is we are after. I feel that there are some people and companies out there that do show racism.

Denial was used as a label for responses that clearly articulated rejection of the information presented within the article about White privilege. Of the responses, 12% ($n = 8$) of Group 1 participants' and 10% ($n = 6$) of Group 2 participants' were coded with the denial theme. The following responses are examples of the denial theme:

I found the article very much just a venting of a woman who had an epiphany. And I completely disagree with her thoughts. Privileges exist due to hard work and dedication. To me, I am privileged to live in a society where, as far as I know, we do have the same rights. These rights are given to us by the many generations before us that worked hard to change the way things were. I don't like the way the author was talking about the "privileged" and said they should regress to let others succeed. That is ridiculous. If given an even playing field then things will work out fine. I think of some of the things she said about having posters of "my" race. There are posters with people of all races. About "my" skin tone bandages. If she thinks, or even society wants different colored bandages, they will exist. And a lot of them do exist. She should focus on the positives of creating an even playing field instead of the negatives of drawing some people back. . . . No one likes to be labeled, true. But maybe these labels serve a purpose. The author labeled herself as a white woman, a woman of privilege, and she talked about that but she never stated the opinions of these other labels. And do labels of intelligence have [anything] to do [with] race/group privilege. I don't think so. The author really has me fired up by classifying all whites as "privileged." Not everyone is.

The article I just read made me think about myself, as a white female, as an overprivileged individual and I disagree. I found myself getting angry at the reading since it was classifying "me" . . . as a person who was unable to control my circumstances yet was being told that I need to do something about those circumstances.

The article was pretty much bashing all white people because they were at a higher level, whether they worked for it or not, than the "colored" people. I did not like the article. Maybe it is because I am oblivious to all the prejudiceness that occurs. . . . I don't think it is right to fill company quotas with people who are not eligible for the job, but because of their race. . . . Most "colored people" are treated equally. . . . I just don't agree with everything that they claim is hurting, or against them. Don't get me wrong, I am not a racist, but I don't think all minorities suffer from racism. In the article, the author was nit-picking on irrelevant things that made it absurd.

I disagree with many of the points that the author made regarding white privilege. If a white person went into a "colored" neighborhood, he would be given the same reactions as a black person going into a white area. With the increasing use of Affirmative Action act in today, it can be a disadvantage to be white in some circumstances. Many scholarships and jobs are given to blacks, latinos, women, and all applicants are not judged equally because of the color of one's skin or their gender. The article gives a one-sided argument.

Although there were responses in each class that were categorized according to each theme, we decided to take a closer look at responses from students in Group 2 (the group that had heard the cognitive dissonance lecture) because fewer statements in this group were coded according to the themes of uncertainty and denial. We found an additional theme in these responses—cognitive dissonance—evident in statements indicating that the participant was experiencing discomfort, anger, or frustration due to new information that clashed with prior beliefs. This theme was evident in responses to the question, "Do you see any relationship between cognitive dissonance theory and your reaction to the article?" as well as in the written reactions to the McIntosh article. Approximately 75% ($n = 45$) of the participants indicated that they did see a relationship, and 15% ($n = 9$) indicated that they saw no relationship because they agreed with the author and therefore experienced no dissonance in their reactions. Less than 1% saw no connection between the article and cognitive dissonance theory. The following statements are examples of responses indicating cognitive dissonance:

Yes, I do see the relationship between the two. I have never actually sat and thought of all of my "white privileges." Part of this thought makes me outraged and some I agree with. I was raised to believe whites are superior and the only race that really means anything. I do not necessarily feel this way but some of my beliefs reflect this. To see these beliefs as wrong or "privileged" makes me quite uncomfortable to the point of anger and irritability. This article seems to light a fuse that I can only explain by cognitive dissonance.

Yes, there is a relationship. The tendency to relate the article to my own experiences came automatically and I experienced discomfort with the thought of white privilege. At the same time, I looked at male privilege and related to this as well. . . . The article does a good job to provide information and hopefully a change in the way we as people conduct ourselves.

Yes, I'm accepting the ideas presented in the article (after rejecting the first part about male advantage). I agree with what was stated, but embarrassed that I had not really been previously aware of it. . . . It was sort of like it was always there in the back of my head

but I didn't really want to hear it straight out. I only can accept it. I wish I could reject it and say it is all fair and there's no unearned advantage but I really know that's not the case at all.

I truly do believe if we are introduced to a new idea we bring everything we know and believe into it. For example, where I grew up it is a [pre]dominantly white community. When I came here I had to relearn my etiquette towards people. At college we are given so many new ideas that we have to have a central feeling about something. This central feeling is our belief. How we react is because of our belief. . . . The cognitive dissonance theory is that with my new perception (understanding white privilege) I had to understand my own beliefs and allow myself a chance to broaden them.

These examples illustrate that students were applying the concept of cognitive dissonance to explain their reaction to new ideas about White privilege. In the last example above, the participant provides some indication that instructing students on the existence of discomfort within the theoretical framework of cognitive dissonance might be worth pursuing. Furthermore, in responses indicating denial, students often felt compelled to state their own beliefs and/or justify their responses to the article in addition to describing feelings of dissonance (i.e., resentment or anger), thus providing additional support for the explanatory power of cognitive dissonance theory.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Addressing diversity issues is critical to preparing future teachers for the modern classroom. However, instruction on this topic is often quite difficult and may generate resistance (Higginbotham, 1996; Nieto, 1994). In this study, cognitive dissonance theory was used as a mechanism to help students understand their reactions when hearing and/or reading information that is inconsistent with their current beliefs, opinions, or experiences. Furthermore, this theory was used to develop the term *metadissonance*, which suggests that the learner is cognitively aware of experiencing mental discomfort due to dissonance. As a result of this awareness, the learner is less resistant to dis-

crepant information, thus preventing the initial rejection or selective processing of this information and encouraging critical thinking. When students were introduced to the theory and established an understanding of metadissonance before discussing diversity issues, fewer responses were labeled as denial, compared with the responses of students who were not exposed to the theory.

In most cases, changing the learner's opinion toward the desired learning objective requires an open discussion of the topic (Festinger, 1957). Several students from the class that received the cognitive dissonance lecture indicated that the class discussion on the McIntosh article either changed their view or increased their awareness. One participant's initial response to the article reads as follows:

> I believe the writer placed too much emphasis on white privilege. The writer sounded too self-conscious about being white. I understand that white people do get more benefits than the minority groups but I believe that minority groups have just as many opportunities as the white race. Look at all the scholarships for minority students! Sometimes I feel inferior because these awards are not eligible for me because I am Caucasian.

However, following the class discussion on the McIntosh article, this student stated,

> Since we have had this discussion and listening to the instructors talk, I see many unearned advantages of being white. . . . I think the class discussion is beneficial.

Additional comments about the class discussion were overwhelmingly positive:

> I have learned to challenge the status quo belief system. Reading the article unlocked many of the doors to [the] misconceptions [that] I have, but the discussion opened them fully.

> It was an eye opening session, not just because the truths stated in the article, but how other people may handle information and hold onto stereotypes. . . . This was an incredible session!

When students' responses indicated resistance, additional statements were often included to support their opinions and/or dismiss the new information altogether (as indicated above in the participant's initial response,

before the discussion). The addition of new cognitions is one way to reduce the dissonance from discrepant information. However, it is still possible to change the opinion of the learner through open discussion. Presenting only one perspective will further strengthen the initial opinion of the listener. Multiple views are more effective in changing opinions (Olson & Zanna, 1983). The class discussion can facilitate the presentation of several perspectives. Additional support for the importance of discussion can be found in the constructivist theory, which emphasizes that learning takes place through social interaction and the learner takes an active role in the construction of personal knowledge (Piaget, 1952; Vygotsky, 1978). Piaget, whose research provided the foundation for the constructivist theory, suggested that experiencing and reducing dissonance are the driving forces behind learning.

Although presenting cognitive dissonance theory and creating an awareness of metadissonance appeared to be beneficial during instruction, some students remained in complete disagreement with the information presented in the McIntosh article. Sometimes, the motivation to reduce dissonance also depends on the magnitude of dissonance, which is determined by the importance of the cognition to the individual. If the information is not important or devalued, then the motivation to reduce dissonance is minimal. In these cases, the key to changing the opinion of the learner is to increase the importance of this information to the learner, which can be a challenging but not an insurmountable task for any teacher. However, the ultimate decision to accept or reject information is the learner's responsibility.

Because students' levels of resistance were not assessed prior to the reading assignment, the actual amount of reduction of resistance is unknown. Future research needs not only to explore ways to increase the importance of diversity issues to highly resistant or indifferent learners but also to measure students' levels of resistance prior to and following the cognitive dissonance instruction. Based on the assumptions of cognitive dissonance theory, higher

resistance to discrepant information increases the chances that the learner's initial belief regarding diversity issues will remain constant, whereas lower resistance may be resolved with the learner's belief regarding diversity issues centering on the desired learning outcome.

The utility of cognitive dissonance instructional techniques can be extended to other forms of instruction—beyond teaching—related to diversity issues. For example, math educators are currently challenging teachers to avoid teaching by telling and instead use other techniques that encourage a more constructivist approach to learning (Chazan & Ball, 1999). One such strategy is "teaching by listening" (Davis, 1997). In this technique, the manner of listening by the teacher goes beyond listening for the correct response to a question but listening to how the learner is making sense of the information. The class discussion is an essential component because it involves the construction of knowledge through the interaction between the student, the teacher, and other students. The teacher appears not to say much but teaches through listening instead. When students entrenched in a teaching as telling mindset are exposed to a teaching as listening technique, they may experience dissonance. Using the cognitive dissonance instructional technique prior to instruction might create an awareness of this dissonance.

Although it is conceivable that the cognitive dissonance instructional technique might be applied in other instructional settings, our study suggests that it may be especially beneficial during instruction about diversity issues. Instructional techniques derived from cognitive dissonance theory enabled the instructors to increase students' awareness of internal discomfort due to discrepant information (i.e., metadissonance), which may have lowered levels of resistance and allowed for deeper processing of the new information. We agree with John Hope Franklin's (1999) statement, "We must begin to encourage a dialogue [on diversity]; one without acrimony but with civility." Teacher educators have the opportunity to serve as catalysts for promoting positive dialogues about diversity. Using techniques derived from cognitive dissonance theory and especially the notion of metadissonance in instruction about diversity may be a practical approach to reducing resistance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REFERENCES

Ahlquist, R. (1991). Position and imposition: Power relations in a multicultural foundation class. *Journal of Negro Education*, *60*(2), 158-168.

Bollin, G. G., & Finkel, J. (1995). White racial identity as a barrier to understanding diversity: A study of preservice teachers. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *28*(1), 25-30.

Chan, C. S., & Treacy, M. J. (1996). Resistance in multicultural courses. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *40*, 212-221.

Chazan, D., & Ball, D. (1999). Beyond being told not to tell. *For the Learning of Mathematics*, *19*(2), 2-10.

Davis, B. (1997). Listening for differences: An evolving conception of mathematics teaching. *Mathematical Communication*, *28*(3), 355-376.

Festinger, L. A. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Franklin, J. H. (Speaker). (1999). *A half-century of presidential race initiatives: Some reflections* [Videocassette recording]. Tampa: The University of South Florida Institute on Black Life.

Higginbotham, E. (1996). Getting all students to listen: Analyzing and coping with student resistance. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *40*, 203-211.

Jordan, M.L.J. (1995). Reflections on the challenges, possibilities, and perplexities of preparing preservice teachers for culturally diverse classrooms. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *46*(5), 369-374.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1992). The multicultural mission: Unity and diversity. *Social Education*, *56*(5), 308-311.

McIntosh, P. (1989). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Peace and Freedom*, *49*(4), 10-12.

Nieto, S. (1994). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education*. New York: Longman.

Noel, J. R. (1995). Multicultural teacher education: From awareness through emotions to action. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *46*(4), 267-273.

Olson, J. M., & Zanna, M. P. (1983). Validating objective versus subjective judgments: Interest in social comparison and consistency information. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *9*, 427-436.

Piaget, J. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. New York: Basic Books.

Singh, N. N. (1996). Cultural diversity in the 21st century: Beyond e pluribus unum. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 5(2), 121-136.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Elisabeth L. McFalls is an assistant professor in educational psychology. Her area of specialization involves examining cognitive processes relevant to reading, memory, and social cognition.

Deirdre Cobb-Roberts is an assistant professor in social foundations. Her areas of specialization include the history of American higher education and multicultural education.