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Schwalbe, but Make it Sesame Street: Advocating for Children's Sociological Education on Race and Ethnicity

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PART 1: ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

I was born in a hospital twenty minutes from the border of the United States and Mexico. As my parents fawned over me, a five-pound baby, fair-skinned and with such white blonde hair that they thought I was bald, it is more than likely that at least one other family in the same maternity ward was reflecting on how their child would experience a better life than them because they had received the great fortune of being born an American citizen. Growing up in El Paso, surrounded by Spanglish, Tejanos, and more mixed-race people than you would even be able to discern, I was normal.

I knew from an early age that my family was Mexican. Most weekends, we went to my grandma's house for breakfast, sharing a spread of menudo, bolillo rolls, and doughnuts. I understood what it meant when my mother told me just how lucky I was that God decided to send me down to the family he did. I knew we were very well off compared to the people around me, and that we were lucky to be documented citizens, that my parents had planned my arrival into their lives, and that at least one of them had a college degree. Even though my skin was fair, my facial features were not distinctly "Latin" (whatever that means) and I did not speak much Spanish, in El Paso, and in my family, I was Mexican.

When I was six years old, my family and I moved to Dallas. Notwithstanding the major change of climate (humidity? The horror!), it goes without saying that I went through a major cultural transition. My strongest memory of this shift was going to my new elementary school and meeting my teacher the week before the school year started. I walked into the classroom with my mother and remembered feeling so alien amongst the other children because I had never seen so many blonde-haired, blue-

eyed and fair-skinned people in one room before in my life. I immediately asked my mom why "everyone looks like Goldilocks here". She hurriedly responded that I should not say things like that.

Even from my first-grade perspective, things were very different in Dallas. Suddenly, people could not pronounce my first name and would not even attempt it. It is nearly comical how many people still attempt to call me *Sahnyuh* immediately after I introduce myself as *Sewnyuh*. Just as rapidly, people would assume my mom was not really my mom. I could not comprehend why people would ask her if she was my nanny when we were out in public, or how our neighbors and doctors alike would ask how old she was when she had me, or if her husband was my biological father.

By the time I began middle school, I started believing that my family was different. The cultural backdrop of my life became something I no longer talked about or was proud of. I was tired of people not believing me that I was Mexican, not seeing me a legitimate Latinx person because my skin was not dark enough – because I did not fit into their narrow perception of what Latinx people were. I even had some hurtful conversations with my own father, who is white, about what racial identity I am and should claim. At one point, because of his narrow understanding of race, he told me that he, my mom, my brother and I were white and nothing else. I left that discussion hurt and even more confused about my place in the world.

By the time I was a sophomore in college, I had a few sociology classes under my belt. Slowly but surely, I started realizing that my worried thoughts of not being Mexican enough while simultaneously not being white enough originated from the way race is socially constructed. The more I interacted with my coursework, the more

I understood myself and the world around me, and I began to understand more and more that my family was normal, and that I was normal.

The weight of my racial illegitimacy, slowly but surely, started to taper off. More importantly, I better understood my privilege as someone who both partially is and presents as white, and how I could wield it as a tool to help all people – both of color and not. Coming to these understandings helped me feel secure in myself as I was and led me to find new purpose in life. It was nothing short of liberating.

All of this growth, struggle, and strife led me to wonder: if I had encountered the sociology of race at a younger age, would I have gone through what I did? Would it have been easier for me to feel secure in my identity? Would I have been able to feel legitimate and normal sooner in my life? Would I have ever been ashamed of my family, of my history?

More importantly, this enlightening impacted my daily interactions with the world around me. Once I understood the way the concept of race operated in both America and the world, I was able to make sense of events and interactions, and I was able to make conscious decisions about my behavior to ensure that I was not harming anyone on the basis of race or ethnicity.

All in all, the inspiration of my thesis lies in remembering who I am (and have been all along) and who I was not sure I was. My greatest wish is to be able to prevent the negative experiences I have had for other children, both white and of color. I also aim to help children understand race as a social construction and I believe that this understanding will lead to more people being enabled to make decisions of how they live their lives that reduce the amount of harm people face in terms of their racial background.

Although my own lived experiences are valid and legitimate examples of the harm that the concept of race has on people, I want to make it *very* clear that my life has been incredibly privileged and easy compared to the experiences of people of color who present as non-white. Additionally, I will be looking to the works and perspectives of people of color for my thesis, and I acknowledge that my understanding of these issues is deeply influenced by the privilege I experience for presenting as white.

Introduction

Both American and world history, culture, and life as we know it have been intimately impacted by racism. Although the ways the social construct of race and ethnicity operate have evolved and shifted over time, there is no denying that racism still deeply and violently continues to affect people of all ages across the world. What can we do to reduce the suffering and separation that race inflicts? Truthfully, this question has plagued humanity for as long as racism has, and it goes without saying there is no single and clear solution.

In most discussions of racism and social change, if it feels that we are at a loss for a fix to the problem, it is because we are. We all agree that children are our future, and yet, they are rarely looked to as having any sort of social power outside of the playground. Could children be the key to solving social issues?

Because we know that children both experience and interact with social constructs from infancy, that children create and enforce their own social norms, and that children are capable of being educated on social issues through various educational tools, a synthesis of these concepts follows naturally: that children, once armed with the proper education, are capable creators and enactors of radical social change (Schwalbe 2008;

Kanngiesser, Schmidt, and Rossano 2016; Sommerville, Schmidt, Yun, and Burns 2013; Göckeritz, Schmidt, and Tomasello 2014; Doige 1999; Han 2006; Glenn 2012).

Literature Review

The socialization process and the sociology of social change

With a topic as nebulous and varied as social change, in order to ensure that we have a solid foundation of understanding to spring forth from, we need to look at the basic sociological theory behind the social world and our ability to alter it.

In terms of social norms, Marco F. H. Schmidt has amassed a wide body of research throughout his academic career on the ways children interact with them. To start with the basics, a 2016 study by Schmidt and a few other researchers found that by the age of three, children understand crucial aspects of social norms, and the first institution that children understand is the concept of ownership (Kanngiesser, Schmidt, and Rossano). In 2012, he published a study that found that children as young as three enforce social norms upon both other children and adults, often using "generic normative language" such as "right" and "wrong", with one child even correcting a hand puppet's behavior by saying "It [does not] work like that. You have to do it like this." (Schmidt and Tomasello). In the same year, another study of his found that three-year olds are capable of discerning whether someone is a member of the in-group (the social group the child themself is a part of) or the out-group (the social group the child themself is not a part of), and then enforce norms differently based on group affiliation, showing favoritism to the in-group while simultaneously forgiving norm violations made by out-group members (Schmidt, Rakoczy, and Tomasello 2012). We can see as well from this research that children infer social norms very easily. A 2016 study found that three-year olds assumed

social norms from adults even when these adults had not indicated it was a norm through

their language or behavior – additionally, the children began enforcing these assumed

norms (Schmidt, Butler, Heinz, and Tomasello). The most important revelation from this

study is that children do not learn social norms only because they are explicitly taught

them by adults; children both actively seek out existing social norms and create new ones

on their own (Schmidt, Butler, Heinz, and Tomasello 2016).

It is not just preschool aged children who infer social norms: evidence shows that

five-year-old children both spontaneously create social norms and then communicate

them to other children (Göckeritz, Schmidt, and Tomasello 2014). However, the most

crucial evidence in applying Schwalbe's theory to children is from two studies, one done

in 2013 and the other from 2016. The first study found that by the age of 15 months,

infants can discern unequal treatment from equal treatment, and that these children paid

more attention to the unequal treatment than they did to the equal treatment

(Sommerville, Schmidt, Yun, and Burns 2013). The 2016 study, however, found that as

children grew older, they became more accepting of reasons for unequal treatment, either

merit-based, need-based, or based on rules that had been previously agreed-upon

(Schmidt, Svetlova, Johe, and Tomasello 2016). Particularly worth noting, at age three

children were less likely to accept reasoning for unequal treatment (Schmidt, Svetlova,

Johe, and Tomasello 2016). It was only by age eight that children could tell the difference

between legitimate reasons for unequal treatment and illegitimate reasons for unequal

treatment (Schmidt, Svetlova, Johe, and Tomasello 2016).

This shift in behavior as children grow older is a sign of the process of

socialization at play. When children are still in infancy, they notice inequalities and focus

their attention on them (Sommerville, Schmidt, Yun, and Burns 2013). By the time they

are three, they dislike unequal treatment and find it very difficult to justify, but by age

five they accept these societal justifications of inequality as legitimate and are

comfortable with the unequal treatment (Schmidt, Svetlova, Johe, and Tomasello 2016).

This is direct evidence that children are advocates for fairness and equality, and that an

educational process has to occur for them to perceive societal institutions and social

constructions as a legitimate reality. This educational process is called socialization and

the social institutions of the family, education, government, the economy, and religion

socialize children into their understanding of the social world (Lesane-Brown, Brown,

Tanner-Smith, and Bruce 2010). While all of the institutions socialize children

throughout their development, parental figures and other family members are the most

active sources of children's socialization from when they are in early childhood to

elementary age (from birth to around ten years old) (Lesane-Brown, Brown, Tanner-

Smith, and Bruce 2010). From this body of evidence, we can reasonably conclude that

children are both active purveyors and creators of social norms and social constructions,

indicating that they are just as capable of choosing to observe these constructions or

choosing to change them; and, when made aware of the manufactured nature of social

constructions during their window of socialization, children become capable of creating

social change (Schwalbe 2008).

Michael Schwalbe's *The Sociologically Examined Life* was published in 1998 and

remains relevant today in its continued use as an educational tool in sociology courses

around the nation. In Belmont University's sociology department, Schwalbe is one of the

first texts students are exposed to due to his thorough yet simplistic explanation of basic

sociological concepts that can otherwise be confusing and difficult to understand. Because *The Sociologically Examined Life* covers a fast breadth of sociological concepts and content, we will solely focus on the second chapter, which features the content that is most relevant to my argument.

In Chapter 2 of Schwalbe's book, titled "Inventing the Social World", Schwalbe explains the ways in which each individual member of society makes subconscious decisions every day to either uphold or dismantle the social norms, institutions, and constructions that we are taught to view as reality from the moment we are born (2008). From the basic fundamentals of the field of sociology, the social world is understood as completely and utterly socially-constructed (Schwalbe 2008). Social constructions are concepts and categories that are man-made, not inherent in nature or biology, and are used to organize and define the social world (Schwalbe 2008). There are a vast number of social constructions that operate within the social world, but the most well-known social constructions include race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, and class (Schwalbe 2008). Although social control works to preserve social order by making these social constructions seem natural and biological, social constructions can be observed as they stand or can be disregarded and altered by the actions of individuals in society (Schwalbe 2008). Every member of the social world, once they are made aware of the manufactured nature of social constructs, has the *choice* and *ability* to change them (Schwalbe 2008). Despite the fact that these social constructions exist on a macro level, meaning that they apply to and affect the social world as a whole, they still impact personal the lives of individuals within the social world in different ways (Schwalbe 2008). Because of this connection between individuals and the wider world they exist in and navigate through,

all individuals are social actors and are able to change the macro level of the social world

through their micro, individual choices and actions (Schwalbe 2008).

Schwalbe's reveal of the "man behind the curtain" is very illuminative and serves as a

starting point for getting people to question their subconscious beliefs and assumptions.

Michael Schwalbe's work enables us to gain a better understanding of the arbitrary

existence of these norms, institutions, and constructions, and of how these norms,

institutions, and constructions harm people who are members of certain groups in our

social world (2008).

C. Wright Mills is widely hailed as one of the founders of the study of sociology,

mostly because he is credited with birthing the concept of the sociological imagination in

his 1959 book, (aptly titled) *The Sociological Imagination*. The "sociological

imagination" refers to the act of contextualizing the micro-level social forces in a

person's life within the macro-level social forces applied on them by the social world as a

whole (Mills 1959). This thought framework is the tool that allows for the realization of

social constructs as socially constructed (Mills 1959).

Now that we have a solid understanding of how the social world is set up, how the

social world is changed and/or kept the same, that every individual within the social

world has the ability and choice to change it or not, and that children gain these same

abilities through the process of socialization, we can begin to look at how children have

successfully been educated and empowered in the past.

Proven efficacy of children's education on social issues

The next step of ensuring children can wield their power to create social change is to

teach them about social issues and inequities, and then empower them to consider how

the choices they make and the actions they take can help or harm different groups of people. Children's literature has been effective in teaching children about different social issues and has been shown to foster positive attitudes toward the groups mentioned in the literature (Doige 1999; Han 2006; Glenn 2012). In Australia, implementation of aboriginal children's literature was not only beneficial toward children's attitudes toward aboriginal people and culture, but also benefitted their parental figures' attitudes toward aboriginal people and culture (Doige 1999). Similarly, in the United States, elementary-aged children with a physically disabled classmate did not have a positive and inclusive opinion of children discernably different from themselves (like their differently abled classmate) until teachers implemented education about disabilities that was (1) age appropriate in explaining their classmate's disability and how people become disabled, and (2) explicitly presented disability as something that does not make people "bad" or "less than" (Han 2006). Additionally, it is worth noting that even teachers themselves made strides in their understandings of racial inequalities when exposed to young adult literature featuring characters of color facing racial discrimination, with the purpose of using these educational tools to teach their students about racial issues (Glenn 2012). Although it was young adult literature that was found effective in this case, it is not a massive stretch of the imagination to hypothesize that early childhood and elementary-targeted literature featuring characters of color facing racial discrimination would bring similar benefits to the students and teachers exposed to it.

From a social activist perspective, it is a major issue that the majority of white adults believe children to be non-racially aware, and relatively unscathed by racism (McIntosh 1988). To clarify, the American Sociological Association defines race as "physical

differences that groups and cultures find socially significant" and ethnicity as "shared

culture, such as language, ancestry, practices, and beliefs" (American Sociology

Association). While this belief is likely due to the racial ignorance and privilege of

whiteness, it is contrary to both sociological research and the intimate, lived experiences

of people of color (McIntosh 1988; Library of Congress; Barajas 2016; Cut 2017;

Barshay 2018; Sacks 2019; Trent, Douley, and Dougé 2019).

It is an unfortunate and devastating truth that children of color face the same harms of

racism that adults of color do (Library of Congress; Barajas 2016; Cut 2017; Barshay

2018; Sacks 2019; Trent, Douley, and Dougé 2019). Emmett Till, arguably the most

striking symbol of the toxicity and danger of the American south in the civil rights era,

was 14 years old when he was brutally murdered by two white, adult men for supposedly

flirting with a white woman (Library of Congress). In November 2014, Tamir Rice was

just 12 years old when he was shot and killed by a Cleveland police officer while playing

with a pellet gun in a park (Barajas 2016). A video featuring black parental figures and

their children discussing police brutality went viral in 2017 (Cut 2017). In it, one of the

children, an eight-year old girl, shows what her dad has taught her to do when interacting

with police (Cut 2017). She raises both hands, states her full name, age, and that she does

not have a weapon (Cut 2017). Almost every parental figure featured in this video

mentions that they had already experienced being racially profiled by law enforcement by

the time they were their child's age (Cut 2017).

Since the 2016 campaign, subsequent election, and presidency of Donald Trump, the

Southern Poverty Law Center has documented a significant rise in the use of his rhetoric

in bullying in schools across the nation (Barshay 2018). The majority of these instances

of bullying consist of students chanting "build the wall" or simply "Trump" at Latinx

students, and these instances occurred in schools of all age ranges, from elementary

schools to high schools (Barshay 2018). Multiple children of Mexican heritage

interviewed after the August 2019 shooting at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas mention that

they "[understand] that the gunman came to [their] city because 'he [did not] like

Mexicans and he just thought to get rid of them by shooting them'" (Sacks 2019). A

preteen boy of Hispanic decent expressed his sadness at the fact that "[we are] not wanted

[in America] anymore because of our ethnicity" (Sacks 2019).

All experiences of racial-ethnic discrimination, physically violent or not, are

incredibly damaging for adults, but especially so for children. In August of 2019, the

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) published a policy statement alerting

pediatricians that racism has profound consequences on the health of both children and

adults (Trent, Douley, and Dougé 2019). In this statement, they explain that experiencing

racism and other related forms of discrimination translates as chronic stress (and

accompanying hormone response) to the body, and pre-disposes people to lifelong

chronic disease (Trent, Douley, and Dougé 2019). This, the AAP explains, combined

with lack of access to affordable healthcare, increased interactions with the criminal

justice system, and educational disparities, puts all people of color, but especially

children, at significant risk for developing both chronic bodily illness and mental illness

(Trent, Douley, and Dougé 2019). The statement concludes with this imperative:

"Achieving decisive public policies, optimized clinical service delivery, and community

change with an activated, engaged, and diverse pediatric workforce is critically important

to begin untangling the thread of racism sewn through the fabric of society and affecting

the health of pediatric populations" (Trent, Douley, and Dougé 2019). It should be noted

that there are many more harms that are inflicted by the social constructs of race and

ethnicity that are legitimized through either social scientific research, the lived

experiences of people of color, or both that I have not listed here.

As I mentioned previously, most white adults' assumption that children are non-racial

or pre-racial is not completely incorrect, as this is true to the experiences of some white

children (Lawrence and Tatum, I.I.S.C. 2011). All children come to be aware of the

concepts of race and ethnicity through the process of socialization (Lesane-Brown,

Brown, Tanner-Smith, and Bruce 2010). Children's recognition and understanding of

race and ethnicity develops as they grow, and various academically-sound models of this

growth in consciousness exist (Lawrence and Tatum, I.I.S.C. 2011). These models of

racial identity development focus on the different stages children move through in

learning and processing these constructs and how they play out in the social world

(Lawrence and Tatum, I.I.S.C. 2011). Consistently throughout these models we see that

these processes are different for children of color, white children, and children of

multiple races or ethnicities (Lawrence and Tatum, IISC 2011).

Children begin developing their understandings of race in infancy (Kelly,

Quinn, Slater, Lee, Gibson, Smith, Ge, and Pascalis 2005; Phys.org 2017). When showed

images of human faces of different racial-ethnic backgrounds, newborns showed no

preference for which faces they looked at; however, when three-month-old infants were

shown these same images, they preferred to look at faces of people of their race and

ethnicity, indicating that they were capable of discriminating between the races (Kelly,

Quinn, Slater, Lee, Gibson, Smith, Ge, and Pascalis 2005). Research at the University of

Toronto has shown that infants six to nine months old, when exposed to happy or sad

music and images of people of different-racial ethnic backgrounds, they looked longer at

faces of their own race and ethnicity when paired with happy music and at faces of

different race and ethnicity when paired with sad music than same faces with sad music

and different faces with happy music (Phys.org 2017). An additional study at the

University of Toronto found that infants six to eight months old preferred to learn new

information by taking visual cues and making inferences from people who appeared to be

of their racial-ethnic background as opposed to people who appeared to be not of their

background (Phys.org 2017). It is important to note that these studies are not indicating

that infants already hold racial bias in the way that older children and adults do, in the

sense that they are consciously recognizing someone's race or ethnicity as different and

deciding they are inferior (Phys.org 2017). In fact, these preferences are only occurring as

a result of familiarity, because infants are more likely to prefer and trust what they are

familiar with and are more likely to be continuously exposed to people who appear to be

of their racial-ethnic background, like their parents and other family members (Phys.org

2017). Despite that, these results still hold important implications for how to prevent

racial biases from developing past this point – one of the authors of these studies notes

that the best thing parental figures, families, and caretakers can do in this regard is to

expose infants to people of as many different racial-ethnic backgrounds and appearances

as possible, with the goal of developing positive associations with all races and ethnicities

rather than just the infant's own (Phys.org 2017).

    Rather obviously, all people of color do not go through the same processes, and

the socialization of every child occurs within a different context (Lawrence and Tatum,

IISC 2011). Children of Native American (or Indigenous American) heritage are most

likely to be socialized into what it means to be "native" at a younger age and to a more

intense degree than children of other non-white racial-ethnic backgrounds (Lesane-

Brown, Brown, Tanner-Smith, and Bruce 2010). Even within the same ethnic groups,

there is variation: Mexican mothers socialize their children into understandings of "being

Mexican" at different points in their development and to different degrees depending on

the child's sex and skin color (Derlan, Umaña-Taylor, and Upegraff 2017). On average,

girls are more likely than boys to be taught their heritage early on and with greater

importance, and children with darker skin tones are more likely to be taught their heritage

early on and with greater importance than children with lighter skin tones (Derlan,

Umaña-Taylor, and Upegraff 2017).

One of the biggest sources of socialization that drive children's development

through stages of awareness is their family (Hughes and Johnson 2001). Typically, young

children are socialized into their understandings of race and ethnicity in the same way

their parents were and are taught to share the same perspectives and opinions on race as

their parental figures (Hughes and Johnson 2001). Naturally, this raises issue in regard to

parental figures who teach their children to be racially unaware or outright prejudiced

toward people of certain backgrounds.

When we bring all of these pieces together, we begin to see a possible avenue to

achieving lasting and beneficial social change for people of all groups in society:

teaching children about social inequalities, specifically those surrounding race and

ethnicity, and their ability to change them.

In this thesis, I aim to fill a hole in the existing discussion surrounding how we deal with social issues, specifically issues of race, when it comes to children. While there is ample sociological theory and legitimate research proving that children both experience and affect social constructions like race and ethnicity, this is not evident in both the *way* we teach children about social issues and *what* we teach them about the social world they are a part of. It is crucial to acknowledge and consider that once we recognize that children have these abilities to impact the social world, only then are we able to empower them to make conscious decisions about their actions and beliefs, and how their lives will affect the lives of others on the basis of the constructions of race and ethnicity.

In order to narrow the breadth of the content this thesis will be looking at, I am limiting this study in two key ways. Firstly, I am exclusively looking at how my argument applies to children's education on and the opportunity for social change regarding the social constructions of race and ethnicity. Thusly, this thesis is not fully intersectional. Intersectionality refers to approaching social issues and other related topics with the understanding that people only rarely fit within one social category, and that their lives are often impacted by more than one characteristic they have (Columbia Law News 2017). While I acknowledge the critical importance of intersectionality in sociology and all studies relating to people and the social world, I chose to narrow in on race and ethnicity as much as possible in order to keep the content of my thesis both feasible for myself, and appropriate for the scope of an undergraduate project. I have chosen to narrow my argument and discussion to the social constructions of race and ethnicity because of my personal experiences with the way that these constructs impact

people's lives, especially the lives of children. I believe that that the harm humanity faces from the infliction of these constructs is too great to not use my position of privilege, with the academic resources that I am lucky to have at my disposal, to attempt to bring forth some sort of solution, no matter how small. Secondly, all of the research and educational materials I will reference and advocate for are pertaining to children from early childhood, to elementary age, which, for the purposes of this thesis, is defined as birth to ten years.

We have ample evidence that the social constructs of race and ethnicity cause major harm to people of color of all ages, and we know that children have the ability to help to prevent this harm from happening if they are educated on this issue properly. However, we know that most children are receiving the beginning foundations of this education from their parents, and in some cases, this will cause the re-legitimization of inflicting harm on the basis of race or being ignorant to said harm and the role they play in it. When we put all of these factors together, it becomes clear that we, as a society, have a major problem.

Given my experiences as a person of mixed racial-ethnic background, given the experiences of children of color, and given that education has been proven to empower children both of color and white to alleviate some of the suffering of social inequities and inequalities, I feel that there is a massive disconnect between theory and evidence, and the education of children. The goal of this thesis is to indicate that the abundant body of proof for educating children on the sociological reality of the constructs of race and ethnicity has not been translated into children's educational materials, and to advocate for such reforms to said materials. It is my belief that if children, from early childhood to

elementary age (from birth to ten years old), were exposed to educational materials that effectively teach race and ethnicity as social constructions that they have to power to uphold or reject, they will be enabled to create significant social change, and benefit the social world and the lives of all people within it.

PART 2: EXPOSING THE PROBLEM

To illustrate the disconnect between theory and practice, we are going to look at children's literature and educational curriculum from multiple states surrounding race and ethnicity. These educational materials, as we have seen reflected in research, are proven to be effective in communicating information of this nature to children, however, the key to social change being that they effectively educate children about the social world and their power within it (Doige 1999; Han 2006; Glenn 2012; Schwalbe 2008).

Race and Ethnicity in Children's Education

From the state of Texas's education curriculum requirements (referred to as "Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills", or TEKS), to the state of California's education curriculum requirements (referred to as "California Content Standards"), to the state of New York's education curriculum requirements (referred to as "subject frameworks"), to more progressive curriculum created by Teaching Tolerance, a social justice oriented educational resource for teachers and parents created by the Southern Poverty Law Center, there is a lack of educational materials and standards that advocate for, or outline, how children should be explicitly and meaningfully taught that race is a social construction they have the power to change.

Texas state education standards

In the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for elementary students, the earliest

anything relating to race and ethnicity is mentioned is in third grade social studies: "In

Grade 3, students learn how diverse individuals have changed their communities and

world" (Texas Education Agency 2017). There is an equally empty reference in third

grade English language arts: "The student recognizes and analyzes literary elements

within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse

literary texts" (Texas Educational Agency 2011). Third through fifth grade social studies

must include "the relationship of [the Declaration of Independence's] ideas to the rich

diversity of our people as a nation of immigrants", and although this is a positive

sentiment to mandate coverage of, it gets lumped in with the "American Revolution, the

formulation of the U.S. Constitution, and the abolitionist movement, which led to the

Emancipation Proclamation and the women's suffrage movement" (Texas Education

Agency 2017).

Race and ethnicity are not mentioned in Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

with actual corresponding educational expectations until fourth and fifth grade social

studies:

> (19) Culture. The student understands the contributions of people of various racial,
> ethnic, and religious groups to Texas. The student is expected to:
> (A) identify the similarities and differences among various racial, ethnic, and
> religious groups in Texas;
> (B) identify customs, celebrations, and traditions of various cultural, regional,
> and local groups in Texas such as Cinco de Mayo, Oktoberfest, the Strawberry Festival,
> and Fiesta San Antonio; and
> (C) summarize the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious
> groups in the development of Texas such as Lydia Mendoza, Chelo Silva, and Julius
> Lorenzo Cobb Bledsoe. (Texas Education Agency 2017)

California state education standards

Upon searching through California's Content Standards for social studies, there are five separate standards for education on the native American/indigenous American tribes that existed in the state (California Department of Education). Within the standards for pre-kindergarten to fifth grade, there are one for first graders that seems to mention race and ethnicity, or at least ethnic heritage: "[Students should be able to] compare the beliefs, customs, ceremonies, traditions, and social practices of… varied cultures, drawing from folklore" (California Department of Education). Race and ethnicity are never explicitly mentioned in their standards for elementary schoolers, but they are somewhat implied in one social studies standard, again intended for first grade: "[Students should be able to] recognize the ways in which they are all part of the same community, sharing principles, goals, and traditions despite their varied ancestry; the forms of diversity in their school and community; and the benefits and challenges of a diverse population" (California Department of Education).

New York state education standards

New York features some very promising educational standards that value non-white racial-ethnic cultures, but still falls short. As early as Kindergarten, students are expected to understand their racial-ethnic background and native language and are expected to share their identities with their class (New York State Education Department). Students are additionally taught that they have the right to be protected from racial ethnic discrimination (New York State Education Department). On the whole, from Kindergarten to fifth grade, students in New York state public schools are expected

to learn about the past and present immigrant groups in the state and the value that these

groups have brought to their communities:

> 4.7a Immigrants came to New York State for a variety of reasons. Many immigrants
> arriving in New York City were greeted by the sight of the Statue of Liberty and were
> processed through Ellis Island.
>> ➢ Students will trace the arrival of various immigrant groups to New York State
> in the mid-1800s, 1890s, 1920s, mid-1900s, 1990s, and today; examining why they came
> and where they settled, noting the role of the Irish potato famine.
>> ➢ Students will explore the experiences of immigrants being processed at Ellis
> Island and what challenges immigrants faced.
>> ➢ Students will research an immigrant group in their local community or nearest
> city in terms of where that group settled, what types of jobs they held, and what services
> were available to them, such as ethnic social clubs and fraternal support organizations.
> (New York State Education Department)

In fourth and fifth grade, students are taught about the native groups that lived in

their state, are educated on the history of African American migration to the state, and the

subsequent Harlem Renaissance (New York State Education Department).

Teaching Tolerance curriculum options

Teaching Tolerance is a free resource for educators and parents seeking to educate

children from kindergarten to high school on social issues and social justice (Teaching

Tolerance). Their curriculum follows four main "social justice domains": identity,

diversity, justice, and action, and they feature lesson plans and resources on the topics of

slavery, race and ethnicity, religion, ability, class, immigration, gender and sexual

identity, bullying and bias, and rights and activism (Teaching Tolerance). The main goal

of Teaching Tolerance is to promote healthy self-esteem among students of color and to

promote anti-racist identity among white students Teaching Tolerance). To highlight the

content they make accessible for teachers to teach and children to learn, here are a few

examples of lesson plans for grades kindergarten through third covering race and

ethnicity.

One featured lesson plan on their website concerns effective ways to teach students about Black History Month.

Happy Birthday (Grades K-3)
In establishing Negro History Week (now African American History Month) in the month of February, Carter Woodson paid tribute to Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln -- both born in February and both instrumental in abolishing slavery. Celebrate Black History Month by planning a birthday party for other influential African Americans born in February. Poet Langston Hughes, NAACP cofounder W.E.B. DuBois and baseball great Hank Aaron are just a few of those you might honor. Involve students in planning the celebration. Ideas to consider include:
- Create fitting invitations, for example, ones that picture individuals you are honoring and highlight their accomplishments. Invite parents, staff and community members to celebrate and learn with you.
- Write and present speeches or dramatizations that focus on each person's contributions.
- Guide guests in a virtual tour of African American history. Use the sites listed in _Resources_ to plan your itinerary.
- Give a "present," in the form of something the class can do to further Carter Woodson's cause of racial harmony. (Teaching Tolerance)

Local Heroes (Grades K-3)
Ramon Price of the DuSable Museum talks about restoring the missing pages of American history. Are there any "missing pages" in the history of your own community? Invite local historians, archivists, and civic leaders with ties to or knowledge of the history and contributions of African Americans in your community to speak to your class. Based on what students discover in these presentations, they may want to initiate a school- or community-wide education campaign. For example, students may want to compose a class letter for the local newspaper sharing what they've learned about local African American heroes or create informational posters to display around your school or in local establishments. (Teaching Tolerance)

Another featured lesson plan focuses on teaching kindergarteners to second graders about respecting racial differences through teaching them about hair, featuring recommended books to incorporate into the lesson, and a class activity.

Rationale

Children ages 2 through 4 often begin noticing differences between their hair and the hair of other children. At the same time, they remain fascinated by animals of all sorts. _Who Has Hair?_ encourages educators to combine these developmental curiosities and teach that, while hair can be different, hair is something mammals share in common. This literature-based unit offers natural connections to science, arts and preliminary service learning.

Concepts

Only mammals have hair.
All mammals have hair.
Hair can be different:
- White, orange, and other colors
- Long and short

- Straight and curly

We all keep our hair clean and make it neat.

Companion Literature Selections
Cisneros, S., &Ybanez, T. (1997). *Hairs: Pelitos*. New York: Random House.
Dejoie, P., & Dejie P. (1997). *My hair is beautiful: Because it's mine*. Inglewood, CA: Black Butterfly Children's Books.
hooks, bell. (1999). *Happy to be nappy*. New York, NY: Hyperion Books for Children.
Life, K. & Kroll, V.L. (1995). *Hats off to hair!* Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.
Madrigal, A.F., & de Paola, T. (1999). *Erandi's braids*. New York: Putnam.
Soto, G., Cepeda, J., & Soto, G. (1998). *Big bushy mustache*. New York: Knopf.
Tarpley, N. (1998). *I love my hair!* New York: Little, Brown.
Yarbrough, C., & Byard, C. (1997). *Cornrows*. New York: Putnam.

Extension Activity
"Hats Off to Hair!" Class Performance
This simple performance reinforces what children learned about hair and offers an opportunity to celebrate each child's hair.
Supplies
- Cloth hats, one for each child
- Cloth hats, one for each teacher
- Decoration supplies for hats

In the Art Center, encourage children to decorate their hats.
In the Literacy Center, revisit key questions from the children's Hair Books:
My hair is _____ (long/short), _____ (straight/curly), _____ (color).
Each child (and teacher!) should rehearse his or her line. (Teaching Tolerance)

While these suggested lessons are only a few of many great, social justice oriented educational resources available from Teaching Tolerance, there is still no content within their offerings that explicitly teach children that race is manmade and that they are capable of changing it (Teaching Tolerance). Some Teaching Tolerance materials do define race as a social construction, but they do not explain what that entails, or how to best explain it to children (Teaching Tolerance). Teaching Tolerance still deserves praise and recognition for providing many ways to teach children about privilege, discrimination, empathy, and their ability and responsibility to stand up for people different than them, and to create social change (Teaching Tolerance).

Some states and educational groups are getting closer to teaching Schwalbe on a Sesame Street level and are making very beneficial and important strides along the way; however, no one has aced this assignment yet. Based on social theory and other scientific

evidence, we know that children are capable of understanding this concept, and that understanding this concept fully enables them to create radical social change that will benefit the lives of many – and yet, we are still facing a gap between this and the execution of children's education.

Race and Ethnicity in Children's Literature

Looking at the top 100 children's books on Amazon, out of the 18 that featured human characters, 11 featured only white characters (roughly 61% of the books with human characters), and 7 had a mix of white characters and characters of color (roughly 39% of books with human characters). Not a single book featured only children of color, or a main character of color.

Out of the 100 bestselling books for babies, toddlers, and elementary aged children on Target's website, 21 feature human characters. 17 of these books only featured white characters (roughly 81% of the books with human characters). Four of those books feature children of color and white children (roughly 19% of the books with human characters), and only one out of those had a child of color as the main character (roughly 4.7% of the books with human characters).

It is important for children of color and white children to see both characters that look like and/or are of the same racial-ethnic background as themselves and characters that look like and/or are of a different racial-ethnic background than themselves in the media they are exposed to (Jennie McDonald). When children of color lack representation in children's books, they become further marginalized, and do not get to imagine themselves as doing or being the same things that white children get to imagine themselves as (Jennie McDonald). White children's exposure to children of color in

books affirms to them that children of color are normal, equally capable to white

children, and specific books about racial discrimination or disparity encourage white

children to develop empathy for the problems of others and can be an important stepping

stone in developing an anti-racist identity (Jennie McDonald).

Not only does the majority of children's literature not even show children of

color, but as far as my research has shown, none of them explicitly teach children that

race is socially constructed and that they have the choice and ability to either leave it be

or change it into something better. Despite this lack, however, some children's books are

still beneficial in setting up a foundation for children to better understand this lesson,

including the titles featured below.

All books mentioned include a link to video of the book being read in its citation so that

its content is accessible.

We are Together by Britta Teckentrup features:

- Children of many different racial-ethnic backgrounds together.

- Children of different abilities (such as use of a wheelchair or forearm crutches).

- A focus on unity, community, and social responsibility.

- Ideal for ages 0 – 4.

A is for Activist by Innosanto Nagara features:

- Children and adults of many different racial-ethnic backgrounds together.

- Children and adults of different abilities (such as use of a wheelchair or forearm

  crutches).

- A focus on unity, community, and social responsibility.

- Education on social issues and movements.

- Empowerment of children to create social change.

- Ideal for ages 0 – 5.

Counting on Community by Innosanto Nagara features:

- Children and adults of many different racial-ethnic backgrounds together.

- Children and adults of different abilities (such as use of a wheelchair or forearm

  crutches).

- A focus on unity, community, and social responsibility.

- Ideal for ages 0 – 5.

All are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold, illustrated by Suzanne Kaufman features:

- Children and adults of many different racial-ethnic backgrounds together.

- Children and adults of different abilities (such as use of a wheelchair or forearm

  crutches).

- A focus on acceptance of differences, unity, and community.

- Ideal for ages 2 – 6.

Everything is Connected by Jason Gruhl, illustrated by Ignasi Font features:

- A focus on empathy, unity, community, and social responsibility.

- Ideal for ages 3 – 6.

A Kids Book About Racism by Jelani Memory features:

- A child-friendly, age appropriate explanation of racism from the perspective of a

  person of color.

- A narrator of mixed racial-ethnic background.

- Empowerment of children to create social change.

- Empowerment of children to be anti-racist.

- Ideal for ages 3 – 7.

Race Cars: A Children's Book About White Privilege by Jenny Davenny features:

- A child-friendly, age appropriate explanation of racism.

- A child-friendly, age appropriate explanation of white privilege from the perspective of white and non-white characters.

- Empowerment of children to create social change.

- Empowerment of children to be anti-racist.

- Ideal for ages 5 – 8.

Not My Idea: A Book about Whiteness by Anastasia Higginbotham features:

- A real life, yet age appropriate explanation of racism.

- A real-life, yet age appropriate explanation of white privilege from the perspective of white and non-white characters.

- Empowerment of children to create social change.

- Empowerment of children to be anti-racist.

- Ideal for ages 6 – 10.

These books are absolutely a step in the right direction, and are beneficial for children to be exposed to, however, they still fall short of educating children on the reality of the social world.

To reiterate, the theory and research clearly indicate that the social constructs of race and ethnicity cause major harm to people of color of all ages, and we know that children have the ability to help to prevent this harm from happening if they are educated on this issue properly. Now that the disconnect between the theory and research and the practice of children's education on race and ethnicity has been exposed, we need to move

toward reforming education and accompanying educational materials to better reflect the need for children's comprehensive social education.

PART 3: SUGGESTING SOLUTIONS THAT MATTER

Now that we have acknowledged the disconnect between the theory and evidence surrounding children's ability to understand the social world and create social change, and the practice of their education not teaching children these concepts, I will provide a solution to fill this gap.

To clearly reiterate, here is what this thesis is advocating for:

(1) teach children, from the time that they are born to when they complete elementary school that the world around them is socially constructed, and made by people, not by nature or biology;

(2) teach children that social constructions exist, change, or stay the same because of all of the actions everyone in the social world takes, including them;

(3) teach children race and ethnicity as social constructions, the origins of these concepts, and how they harm all people, both white and non-white;

(4) teach children that they have the power and ability to change how people see and consider race and ethnicity through the actions they take, choices they make, and language they use every day.

Throughout this thesis, abundant evidence has been presented proving that children are capable of comprehending this education, and that there is a critical need for these topics to be taught to children that is not being addressed. The following are some basic recommendations of what this education should entail for both early childhood and

elementary level learning, including possible examples of what ideal educational materials would look like for children in these age ranges.

Basic Recommendations for Early Childhood

Birth to 2 years

- Abundant exposure to books featuring characters of color and ethnicities other than that of the child.

- Abundant exposure to books that discuss human unity, empathy, community, and social responsibility, no matter how generic.

- If the child watches video content (be it a video, television show, or movie), ensure this content features people of color and ethnicities other than the child's ethnicity.

- Infants and toddlers should interact with children and adults of races and ethnicities other than their own, and especially with people with as many different physical appearances and skin colors as possible. This establishes positive associations with people who look differently than the child, as this is the time in brain development when children begin to notice facial differences and begin to positively associate with people who look like them (Kelly, Quinn, Slater, Lee, Gibson, Smith, Ge, and Pascalis 2005; Phys.org 2017).

3 years to 4 years

- Continuation of all of the recommendations for children aged 0 – 2.

- Depending on each individual child's development and ability, as they understand more about themselves, ensure that parental figures are teaching children:

- What their own racial-ethnic background is, as well as the background of their family members and loved ones (and it's better for them to hear it from the loved one themselves, in order to learn appropriate social behavior surrounding asking people about their identity).

- That all people have inherent, equal value.

- That they have a responsibility to care about all people, and that caring for people means caring about things that affect them, even when we ourselves are not affected or at risk of being affected.

- Exposure to age-appropriate books discussing racial equity social movements, including:

  - The American Civil Rights Movement.

  - The Chicano Movement and United Farm Workers Movement.

  - The Internment of Japanese-Americans in World War II.

  - South African Apartheid.

  - The Black Lives Matter movement.

  - Many more movements not listed here that are just as important and beneficial.

- Exposure to age-appropriate books discussing immigration, refugees, and DACA dreamers, both in the context of the United States and in the context of other countries.

Basic Recommendations for the Elementary Years

5 years to 7 years

- Continuation of all of the recommendations for children 3 – 4.

- Parental figures should teach children that every act they take and word they say can either hurt or help people of non-white racial ethnic backgrounds.

- Exposure to age-appropriate books, videos, and other educational materials covering the ways racial-ethnic discrimination has existed in history.

- Exposure to age-appropriate books, videos, and other educational materials covering the ways racial-ethnic discrimination exists in society today.

- Exposure to age-appropriate books, videos, and other educational materials covering activism and youth activists.

8 years to 10 years

- Continuation of all of the recommendations for children 5 – 7.

- Depending on each individual child's development and ability, as they understand more about the social world they live in, ensure that parental figures are teaching children:

  o About the history of the invention of race, and that it is socially-constructed.

  o About white privilege, and with applicable examples that the child sees in their everyday life.

  o If the child is white, that although white people have historically been oppressors, and some still are, the child themselves is not responsible for that system, and can and should use their power and privilege to help people of color.

  o If the child is white, that they should believe and amplify the lived experiences of people of non-white racial-ethnic backgrounds.

- o If the child is of a non-white racial-ethnic background, that although systems may treat them like they are of less value than white people and may make them feel that they are of less value than white people, they are of equal value to white people.

While these basic recommendations are nowhere near perfect or comprehensive, they are still beneficial in helping children develop ideal racial consciousness. For white children, this looks like developing an anti-racist identity: understanding that our society was set up by and for people who look like them at the detriment of people who are not white, but that they do not agree with it; and aim to not be racist themselves, call out instances of racial discrimination when they encounter them, and use their power and privilege to change systems and institutions to be more equitable and beneficial for all people. For children of non-white racial-ethnic backgrounds, this looks like developing a positive sense of self, not internalizing racism, being empowered to speak out about instances of racial discrimination when they encounter them, and not feeling alone in their effort to change institutions and systems to be more equitable and beneficial for all people.

What Would Ideal Educational Materials Look Like?

There is a dire need for educational materials that explain race as a social construct and how children can make choices that do not harm others on this basis – essentially, a dire need for Schwalbe to be more like Sesame Street. Throughout my research, I have not been able to find any educational materials that obviously, (as in non-implied), make these points. That being said, if there were educational material that did make these points, the following provides an idea of what it may look like.

For early childhood, a series of picture books, each making a separate point in the argument and building upon the last. For example, the first book in the series explains in an age-appropriate way that some things we treat like they are real are not actually real, using an example like a traffic light: red meaning stop, yellow meaning slow down, and green meaning go:

"Does the color red mean stop when you see a red ladybug, or a red rose? Does the color yellow mean slow down when you see the banana you are about to eat, or your glass of lemonade? Does the color green mean go when you see fresh grass, or a piece of broccoli? No! A long time ago, some people decided that these colors that they found in nature would mean certain things for people when they were driving a car. Some things we treat like they have been around since dinosaurs walked on the earth actually have not been around that long at all! These things are not part of nature because they were created by people, not found. Sometimes, we treat things that are made up by people like we found them in nature, and like they have been around since the beginning of time."

The next book in the series elaborates on the traffic light analogy, and then introduces race as another thing that is not real, even though all of us act like it is:

"A long time ago, the same thing happened to people. Some people whose outsides looked light decided that people with dark outsides had insides that were different from them, just because their outsides looked different. These light people decided that the people with outsides that did not look like their outsides were bad people and not as good of people as they were. The light people made this difference up, and called it race. The people with dark outsides were never bad people, and they were just as

good of people as the people with light outsides. This difference was not part of nature, because it was made up by people!

Some of these made up things are helpful and good, like traffic lights! The made-up meanings behind the colors in a traffic light help keep us safe, and make sure that everyone knows what they are supposed to be doing when they are driving a car.

But some of these made up things are hurtful and bad, like race. Because most people have believed for a really long time that race comes from nature and was not made up by people, the people with light outsides set up lots of life rules that make life harder for people whose outsides look different than theirs. This is not fair, and it makes it harder for people with non-white outsides to do things everyone likes to do, like having a job, driving a car, and shopping in a store. This means that bad things are happening to people because of something that some people made up a long, long time ago!"

The final book in the series explains that children have the power to change the way made up things exist, both individually and collectively:

"It can make us feel sad or scared when bad things happen to people who do nothing wrong and do not deserve it. We feel this way because we care about all of the people who live in the world with us! But guess what? You can help people who are treated like they are bad or not as good as other people. Yes, you! Do you want to know what you can do?

When people live their lives acting and thinking that this made up thing called race is real, and not made up, it hurts the people whose outsides are not light. So, what you can do is remember that it is not real – it is made up! You can make your choices in what you do and say every day and choose to act like race is made up. When people show

in the words they say and the things they do that people with different outsides than theirs are bad, you can use your words and actions to tell them and show them that their idea is not true and made up! When people show in the words they say and the things they do that people with dark outsides have different insides than people with light outsides, you can use your words and actions to tell them and show them that their idea is hurtful and makes life harder for people whose outsides are not light.

The more you choose to be a helper, and act and talk like race is made-up, the more you help people live a better life! And the more all of us act and talk this way, the better the world becomes for everyone who lives in it, and that is the best thing we can do!"

This example is lacking in a few respects: it does not fully cover the scope of race and ethnicity and presents non-white people as "other" through inadvertently establishing white people as the normative expectation, amongst other issues. This is only a potential example of how a book for children aged 0 – 4 could attempt to get this point across in an easy to understand and affirming way.

For elementary aged children, a literary essay, documentary, or other educational tool that makes the following points in an age appropriate way (similar to the early childhood educational tool):

- The historical invention of race by white people and its ties to colonialism.
- Explanation of how the social world operates, what social constructs are and how they operate, and why race is a social construct.

- The ways racial-ethnic discrimination used to exist throughout various eras of history and around the world, emphasizing its deep and widespread history.

- The ways racial-ethnic discrimination exists in the world today, specifically in American culture, as a result of the concept of race.

  - It is important to make clear that although race is not real, the implications it has on society and people's lives are *very* real.

- How individuals have the power to create change within the social world.

- How everyone, no matter what age, can make society better by

  - (1) Not being racist themselves, and

  - (2) calling out racism when they encounter it and explaining to those involved why it is not right, and

  - (3) believing and honoring the lived experiences of people of non-white racial-ethnic backgrounds.

These recommendations and examples of potential educational tools are formed from the social theory surrounding social change, research on early childhood development of social awareness and racial-ethnic consciousness, and research on the effectiveness of literature in educating children about social issues (Schwalbe 2008; Kanngiesser, Schmidt, and Rossano 2016; Schmidt and Tomasello 2012; Schmidt, Rakoczy, and Tomasello 2012; Schmidt, Butler, Heinz, and Tomasello 2016; Göckeritz, Schmidt, and Tomasello 2014; Sommerville, Schmidt, Yun, and Burns 2013; Schmidt, Svetlova, Johe, and Tomasello 2016; Doige 1999; Han 2006; Glenn 2012; Kelly, Quinn, Slater, Lee, Gibson, Smith, Ge, and Pascalis 2005; Phys.org 2017).

Further Suggested Research

An individual or team of people qualified to do so, such as a sociologist specializing in race and ethnicity, a sociologist specializing in social change, an expert in early childhood education, an expert in child psychology, and/or an expert in the psychology of race need to create multiple, intersectional, comprehensive educational materials for teaching children, from birth to age ten, the sociology of race and ethnicity and how they can create change within the social world. Additionally, I recommend that as these materials are being developed, these same experts should cultivate an annotated bibliography of books, videos, and other educational material that assist in and come close to getting this information across. Creating a lesson plan, program, or other teaching framework that enables parental figures to teach these lessons to their own children at home would be very beneficial and effective, given that parental figures are key in early socialization and there is a potential for schools to object to implementing this education in the classroom (Lesane-Brown, Brown, Tanner-Smith, and Bruce 2010).

Conclusion

Combining all of the evidence presented, it is clear that the abundant body of proof for educating children on the sociological reality of the constructs of race and ethnicity has not been translated into children's educational materials, and that reforms to said materials are of critical importance, because they will help in alleviating the damage that racial-ethnic discrimination has on the individuals, families, and groups within our social world.

My personal experience serves as an example of how society-wide forces and beliefs scale down and affect the lives of the people who live in the social world

(Schwalbe 2008). As has been established, my individual experience with race and ethnicity is not the only time anyone has experienced this. This is not just an individual, micro level phenomenon. Our understandings of race and ethnicity exist on a macro level, meaning that they permeate all of society broadly and as a whole (Schwalbe 2008). As Schwalbe explains, although these different levels exist, social change can begin on an individual level to impact the society as a whole (2008). In the same way that macro level beliefs and opinions move down to impact us on a personal level, the actions of individuals can move up to impact and change the social world (Schwalbe 2008).

Considering all that has been discussed within this thesis, it is clear that if children, from birth to ten years old, were exposed to educational materials that effectively teach race and ethnicity as social constructions that they have to power to uphold or reject, they will be enabled to create significant social change, and benefit the social world and the lives of all people within it.

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