Pinning for Profit? Examining Elementary Preservice Teachers' Critical Analysis of Online Social Studies Resources About Black History

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Elementary pre- and in-service educators increasingly rely on online instructional resources to supplement their curriculum. As social studies instruction has received progressively less attention in elementary classrooms, prospective teachers have fewer opportunities to observe powerful and purposeful elementary social studies pedagogy. To develop critical analysis of instructional resources found on for-profit marketplaces like Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers, students in a Midwestern teacher preparation program completed an assignment that required them to analyze online resources with a critical media literacy tool. In this qualitative study the authors conducted a content analysis of 10 of these assignments, all related to Martin Luther King, Jr., Black History Month, and the Civil Rights Movement. Through cycles of coding, the authors identified resources with problematic historical narratives, student assumptions about creator expertise and resource credibility, and the challenges of relying on a checklist for critical analysis. While the critical media literacy tool was helpful in directing preservice teachers' attention toward meaningful social studies content, it was insufficient as assigned. The authors found that the tool failed to deeply contextualize racial platform capitalism and the need for critical race media literacy in assessing lessons about Black history.

Since the passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act* in 2002 and the subsequent *Every Student Succeeds Act* of 2015, social studies instruction has become increasingly marginalized in elementary school curriculum (Heafner & Fitchett, 2012). As elementary educators across the United States dedicate less and less time to social studies instruction (Fitchett et al., 2014), preservice teachers have fewer opportunities to observe the teaching of social studies prior to leading classrooms of their own (Hawkman et al., 2015).

In the absence of clear examples of exemplary social studies pedagogy, elementary preservice and early career teachers may rely on online resources to develop social studies curriculum. This qualitative study examines how elementary preservice teachers used a course assignment called Pinning With Pause (Gallagher et al., 2019) to analyze online resources found through the social media networking site Pinterest and online marketplace Teachers Pay Teachers.

According to a national survey of teachers, Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers were the second and third most popular websites consulted for instructional resources, behind Google and ahead of state department of education websites (Opfler et al., 2016). Pinterest, founded in 2010, is a "visual discovery engine" (Pinterest, 2020, n.p.) with over 300 million users per month that began as a tool to help people collect and organize online content. Users "can upload, save, and manage media known as *pins* in collections referred to as *boards*. Users can follow other users and/or boards, and new content from those users and/or boards appears in a newsfeed," which can develop affinity spaces (Carpenter et al., 2018, p. 2223).

Hunter and Hall (2018) found that education-related items were the second most highly searched resource on Pinterest, thus Pinterest has quickly become an affinity space for a range of educators. Teachers Pay Teachers is a virtual marketplace for what Shelton and Archambault (2018) called online teacherpreneurs. While other online education marketplaces exist, Teachers Pay Teachers is the most popular and established, with over 5 million users and 1 billion resources downloaded in 2019 (Teachers Pay Teachers, 2020). Resources available on Teachers Pay Teachers range from themed instructional units and printable worksheets to labels for classroom libraries and reader's theater scripts. Teachers Pay Teachers sellers widely recognize that the primary marketing tool is Pinterest (Pittard, 2016).

Teachers' reliance on online instructional resources such as Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers is relatively new and sometimes directly related to school district curricular decisions. For example, Pittard (2016) found that after a district's implementation of the *Common Core State Standards* (CCSS, 2020), the district stopped providing curricular materials like textbooks in alignment with the new standards. First published in 2010, the CCSS have been adopted in 41 states, likely facilitating the emergence of online educational marketplaces where lessons can be shared and marketed across state lines (Greene, 2016).

As traditional printed textbooks become increasingly obsolete, the increased use of and reliance on online resources has led researchers to study the processes educators use to select and teach instructional materials found online. This study contributes to the small but growing body of scholarship around the use of Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers by preservice teachers as it examined how early childhood and elementary preservice teachers analyzed social studies lessons found on these online platforms.

Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers as Instructional Resources

A national survey conducted by Opfler et al. (2016) found that 86% of elementary math and English language arts teachers consulted Pinterest for online resources and 87% turned to Teachers Pay Teachers. Consequently, teacher educators are increasingly interested in how preservice users engage with social media and online instructional resources (Brannon, 2019; Grote-Garcia & Vasinda, 2014; Hu et al., 2018; Schroeder et al., 2019). Recent studies of teachers' use of Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers have examined the websites as online communities of practice (Shelton & Archambault, 2018) and socialized knowledge communities (Hu et al., 2018). Brannon (2019) and Schroeder et al. (2019) surveyed preservice teachers to determine how they engaged with Pinterest. Shelton and Archambault (2019) surveyed content creators on Teachers Pay Teachers. While most of these studies are not limited to specific content areas, some attention has been paid to resources for literacy (Grote-Garcia & Vasinda, 2014) and mathematics educators (Hertel & Wessman-Enzinger, 2017; Hu et al., 2018).

Several studies revealed major downsides to the use of online resources, namely inaccurate content (Grote-Garcia & Vasinda, 2014; Hertel & Wessman-Enzinger, 2017) and an overemphasis on "cute" ideas that lack substance (Gallagher et al., 2019; Grote-Garcia & Vasinda, 2014; Huber & Bates, 2016; Miller, 2015). Over 20% of the elementary preservice teachers surveyed in Schroeder et al.'s (2019) study described using Pinterest to find "cute and fun" (p. 13) materials, far more than their secondary preservice peers.

In Sawyer and Myers' (2018) study of early childhood and elementary preservice teachers, one prospective teacher reported using Pinterest as a search engine, validating resources based on the number of "pins" demonstrating their popularity. The more popular the resource was, the preservice teacher explained, the more likely she was to use it. However, as popularity does not necessarily determine quality or developmentally appropriate practices, pre- and in-service educators are urged to take time to critically evaluate the content they encounter on these sites (Carpenter et al., 2018; Gallagher et al., 2019; Grote-Garcia & Vasinda, 2014; Huber & Bates, 2016; Shelton & Archambeault, 2019; VanOverbeke & Stefanick, 2016).

Curricular Challenges in Elementary Social Studies

Long before Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers existed, elementary social studies was critiqued for an overreliance on the teaching of "heroes and holidays" (Banks, 2001) through a superficial multicultural education approach rather than in-depth attention to the major disciplines of social studies, including civics, history, geography, and economics. In an effort to disrupt whitewashed curriculum through the addition of multicultural perspectives, many educators began to introduce "Brown holidays and heroes" (Nieto, 1995) through arts and crafts that supplemented the otherwise Eurocentric social studies curriculum. Such approaches present cultures as artifacts and tend to separate people from their experience, thereby decontextualizing cultures, as they are devoid of the larger history that surrounds them (Nieto, 1995; Sensoy et al., 2015).

Black History Month and other months designated to celebrate historically marginalized groups are often the only time that these populations are included in social studies in any substantial way, yet the manner of inclusion typically remains superficial and decontextualized (King & Brown, 2014). For example, many individuals recall participating in Thanksgiving pageants at school, in which students dressed as Pilgrims and stereotypical Indians. On Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, students might watch a video clip of Dr. King's speech on Washington and color his image without attending to more substantive learning about Dr. King's frustration with the white moderate and consideration of how this man, beloved today, was actually grossly unpopular at the time of his murder (Theoharis, 2018; Wills, 2005).

The National Council for the Social Studies' (NCSS; 2017) position statement, *Powerful, Purposeful Pedagogy in Elementary School Social Studies*, argued that "elementary social studies curriculum should be more than a collection of enjoyable experiences…. Exclusive focus on food, fun, festivals, flags, and films is not an effective framework for social studies teaching and learning" (n.p.). Instead, the statement argued for elementary social studies education that is meaningful, interactive, challenging, values-based, and active. While some elementary educators are intentional about including marginalized histories and broader perspectives in social studies curriculum (Adams & Busey, 2017; An, 2020; Falkner & Clark, 2017; Rodríguez, 2015, 2017a, 2018; Sabzalian, 2019; Shatara & Sonu, 2020), such critical approaches are not yet the norm.

Recently, social studies teacher educators have centered the development of critical orientations in their social studies methods courses (Buchanan & Hilburn, 2016; Buchanan et al., 2020; Colley, 2017; Hawkman, 2020; Rodríguez, 2017b; Rodriguez & Magill, 2016; Rodríguez & Salinas, 2019; Vickery & Salinas, 2019), but the classroom impact of such practices has yet to become widespread or widely studied.

While online resources like the Zinn Education Project, Teaching Tolerance, and Rethinking Schools offer social studies educators a wealth of antiracist and anticolonial curricular options, these materials are predominantly for secondary educators. Elementary online resources tend to be discipline specific and heavily reliant on language arts integration with far less emphasis on antiracist orientations. Therefore, elementary

preservice teachers must either depend on multiple online resources in order to attend to the various disciplines of social studies, or consult websites and marketplaces that serve as a "one-stop shop" for all things educational. The former resources are typically created by organizations with dedicated missions for educational outreach, and the latter tend to be for-profit platforms.

Pinning With Pause

Concerned with the abundance of cute elementary materials that masked or reproduced problematic ideas and inaccurate content, Gallagher et al. (2019) drew from critical media literacy to develop a tool to analyze social studies lessons found on sites like Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers. Critical media literacy is an approach that considers "how media construct meanings, influence and educate audiences, and impose their messages and values" (Kellner & Share, 2005, p. 372) through the cultivation of analytical skills and explicit recognition of dominant values.

The checklist created by Gallagher et al. (2019) lists a total of 12 questions focused on three areas: (a) purpose, in line with an inquiry question, standard, or learning objective; (b) reliability, which gauges accuracy of content and authentic representation; and (c) judgement, related to the perspective of the lesson to ensure that lessons are culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and avoid reifying norms that may harm students with marginalized identities. Gallagher et al. (2019) dubbed the use of this checklist as "Pinning With Pause," as it asks future and current educators to "consider multiple questions about the inherent social messages within the activity, resource, or idea before they choose whether or how to use it in a classroom" (pp. 217-218).

Once the checklist is completed, the number of yes/no responses to the four questions in each section are totaled and referenced in a rubric at the bottom; if one or fewer questions in each section was affirmative, the lesson should be discarded. If two to three questions in each section are answered affirmatively, the source meets some of the criteria but likely requires modification or supplemental materials. If all four questions in each section are affirmative, then the user is encouraged to pin the lesson for future use. Gallagher et al. (2019) considered the Pinning With Pause checklist to be a tool that "may help educators reflect on all of the potential drawbacks and dangers of viral curriculum" (pp. 223) so that they may be critical in their consumption and application of resources from online curriculum sharing sites.

Theoretical Framework

Our analysis proceeded from the premise that new forms of media "change the structure of discourse" (Postman, 1985/2003, p. 27), as Krutka et al. (2020) proposed in their editorial. Teacher preparation invites future educators into curricular conversations by challenging them to think about what to teach, to whom, and when, in order to foster democratic citizenship (Pinar, 2012). Digital for-profit platforms like Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers attempt to join this conversation by directing individual educator's attention to their resources.

A simple web-based search for instructional materials reinforces the centrality of for-profit platforms. For-profit search engines, which rely on advertising and are susceptible to search engine optimization of websites, return platforms like Teachers Pay Teachers and Pinterest early in their results.

For-profit platforms create echo chambers in course planning, reproducing resources through their visibility and training individual's attention to popular options (Krutka et al., 2020). Whether individuals discover a resource through social media or through search engine use, they are most likely to be directed toward resources with high levels of engagement (views, downloads, and retweets; Noble, 2018). In this way, the search engines and social media sharing that direct pre- and in-service educators to Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers have a potentially disciplinary effect on curriculum-making, especially for novice and preservice teachers who may not have the content knowledge, pedagogical expertise, or critical media literacy required to evaluate instructional activities on social studies topics like racism, white supremacy, and social change.

When instructors use social sharing and search engines to discover instructional resources, the algorithms that inform the operation of social media platforms and online marketplaces discipline the curricular conversation by ordering and ranking results, either on a search engine results page or by connecting the user to other highly visible users through social media platforms. To paraphrase the editors' charge, how can teacher candidates participate in the digital media ecology of social studies education resources without the tools to critically interrogate the resources to which search engines and social media platforms direct them?

In this study, we focus on the critical media literacy checklists of preservice teachers who selected instructional activities focused on race, racism, and civil rights history. In *Race After Technology* (2019), Ruha Benjamin coined the term antiBlack box to identify the constellation of race-neutral technologies like algorithms and digital platforms, which capitalize upon and operate with the context of race-neutral laws and policies that promote white supremacy. If, as we suspect and other scholars have charged, algorithms constrain individual decision-making and discipline individual behavior for profit, how might algorithms present individual preservice teachers with resources for teaching about racism?

The technologies at the core of this study, Teachers Pay Teachers and Pinterest, are for-profit platforms aimed at maximizing attention and engagement of users. They exist not to foster curricular conversation, but to commercialize it. These platforms as curricular tools emerge at the intersection of two prevailing forces in the broader political economy of curriculum making: racial capitalism (Melamed, 2015; Robinson, 1983) and platform capitalism (Srnicek, 2017).

Racial capitalism, as first introduced by Robinson (1983), demonstrates that racial exploitation and capital accumulation are mutually constitutive. Individuals and communities who are "racially minoritized

and economically deprived" (Laster Pirtle, 2020, p. 1) endure racist systems that devalue their contributions and harm their lives.

Platform capitalism refers to the emerging logic of labor and knowledge circulation through digital networks – a "sharing economy" of social media, online marketplaces, and crowdsourcing and crowdfunding (Langley & Leyshon, 2017, p. 11). The platform is a "distinct mode of socio-technical intermediary and business arrangement that is incorporated into wider processes of capitalization" (p. 11). Platform capitalism extracts value through circulation of ideas and the associated data traces that illustrate how ideas move through networked communities (see also Srnicek, 2017).

Per Benjamin (2019), the platform is a collection of race-neutral technologies within the context of racialized capitalism that impacts curricular conversation by nudging users toward the most visible and most circulated instructional activities. Quality assessments are replaced by virality. Platforms encode anti-Blackness in their algorithms because racial platform capitalism encourages the circulation of ideas and resources that support the social ideology of white supremacy, which upholds racial capitalism. We would expect that activities critical of white supremacy will not circulate, and activities that center race-neutral approaches to race and racism will gain traction (and capital).

Within the context of racial platform capitalism, which is pervasive and opaque to individual users, but informs all the structural aspects of online interactions, preservice teachers apply their nascent critical media literacies. In this study, our focus was on how racial platform capitalism may encourage students toward race-neutral instructional materials when they seek online resources about Dr. King and Civil Rights.

Our analysis of individual students' reflections was guided by the critical media literacies that Gallagher et al. (2019) applied in developing their framework (e.g., Kellner & Share, 2007). Specifically, we were interested in how students attributed a purpose, made a reliability assessment, and judged the perspective of the materials they accessed through for-profit online platforms.

As such, the following research questions guided our quest to understand how the anti-Black box technologies of Teachers Pay Teachers and Pinterest shaped instructional planning in the context of racial capitalism during the period of the study:

1. What kinds of activities focused on race and racism do preservice teachers discover through for-profit web platforms?
2. How do preservice teachers evaluate these activities for use using the Pinning With Purpose checklist? What factors inform their evaluation? What silences and absences can we identify in their evaluation?

Method of Study

Researcher Positionality

Noreen is an Asian American social studies teacher educator who works at a historically and predominantly white institution. She is a critical race scholar and a former bilingual elementary teacher, and one of few faculty members of color in her teacher education program. Michael is a white higher education scholar who works at a historically and predominantly white institution. His research focuses on the use of educational technology in undergraduate education and the potential impact of for-profit tools on instructors' and students' autonomy. Amanda is a Black biracial social studies teacher educator who works at a minority enrolling' university. She is a former middle school social studies teacher and critical race scholar who researches how to teach social studies from an intersectional perspective (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991).

Context

This qualitative study was a critical content analysis of the Pinning With Pause assignments produced by preservice teachers in a large, public early childhood and elementary education teacher preparation program in the Midwestern US over the course of the 2019-2020 academic year. The assignment was required in their social studies methods course taught by Noreen and was due 2 months into the semester.

Prior to the assignment, Noreen explored the exclusionary master narrative of US history in class and encouraged prospective educators to teach multiple perspectives with an emphasis on diverse learners. The session in which the assignment was introduced occurred during the 4th week of the semester and focused on the importance of inquiry and backwards design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) in ensuring social studies instruction focused on addressing young students' curiosities and meeting explicit learning objectives.

In all three methods classes involved, this session began with an in-depth group discussion around the problematic and stereotypical ways that Cinco de Mayo is taught. Preservice teachers shared their own, largely limited, background knowledge about the holiday, then learned about the history of the event and why it became far more popular in the United States than across Mexico.

After considering which aspects of the holiday might be most important to teach children, Noreen conducted a Pinterest search for "Cinco de Mayo elementary activities," and the preservice teachers made observations about the resulting pins. In each methods class, preservice teachers readily identified inaccurate, irrelevant, and stereotypical content in the pins they saw. The next portion of the class session focused on the use of backwards design as a way to ensure the relevance of lesson activities to instructional goals, followed by an explanation of the Pinning With Pause assignment.

The Pinning With Pause assignment consisted of three parts. First, preservice teachers selected a social studies topic. The topic could emerge

from an observation in a field placement classroom or could be self-selected based on personal interest. Then preservice teachers were asked to visit Pinterest or Teachers Pay Teachers and search for the topic, selecting two lessons that looked promising for classroom use.

Second, preservice teachers were asked to read Gallagher et al.'s (2019) article, which detailed how to use the Pinning With Pause checklist through two primary and intermediate elementary examples. After reading, preservice teachers used the checklists to assess the selected lessons; taking notes on the checklists was encouraged, but not required.

Third, preservice teachers read an excerpt from Bauml's (2016) article *"Is It Cute or Does It Count?"* that warned against "fun pedagogy" (DiCamillo, 2016, p. 189) before writing a one- to two-page reflection about their Pinning With Pause analysis. In the reflection, preservice teachers were asked to attend to the following questions: Would you teach either lesson in your future classroom? How might you modify them to make them more *meaningful, integrative, values-based, challenging,* and *active*? (referring to the NCSS, 2017, *Powerful, Purposeful Pedagogy* statement). If you would not teach either activity/lesson, spend a few minutes Googling the topic more broadly. Did you find anything with greater meaning through this search?

Data Collection

Fifty-eight Pinning With Pause assignments were submitted during the 2019-2020 academic year from two early childhood education social studies methods class sections and one elementary social studies methods course, all taught by Noreen. We organized the assignments into a spreadsheet by methods section, semester, and topic, with sources and selected resource links listed when provided.

For this analysis, we focused on 10 assignments covering topics related to Black History Month or the Civil Rights Movement, namely around Dr. King (see appendix). These topics, along with Thanksgiving, were selected by more preservice teachers than any other topic for this project. All 10 preservice teachers in this study were white identifying.

The week before the Pinning With Pause assignment was explained to the class, Noreen spent nearly an hour of class time examining how Dr. King is popularly taught in ways that understate his primary focus on racial justice and instead emphasize notions of color-evasiveness (Annamma et al., 2017), friendship, and kindness. This session centered on ways that civics and citizenship are taught and highlighted several cute activities completed by Noreen's young children at school. Each was a worksheet that consisted of coloring or simplistic notions of friendship and represented the type of early childhood content one might find on Pinterest.

Two classroom artifacts representing typical upper elementary content were also provided: a page from *Studies Weekly,* a consumable social studies curriculum that has replaced textbooks in many elementary

classrooms across the US, and a reading passage from an online source that included comprehension questions in a standardized testing format.

During this class session, Noreen demonstrated how her children's work samples promoted sanitized and whitewashed narratives of Dr. King's legacy, then closely reviewed and discussed the speech Dr. King gave at the March on Washington in 1963, with particular attention to the theme of racial injustice experienced by Black Americans. The latter discussion was designed to illustrate how an emphasis on the "I have a dream" line popularized in elementary classrooms mischaracterizes Dr. King's goals.

Afterwards, the class watched an excerpt from Dr. King's lesser known 1967 speech about the three evils of society, followed by a discussion about why "the radical King" (King, 2015) is not taught in schools. This portion of class ended with an Equal Justice Initiative video clip about contemporary lynching in the United States (Video 1, https://youtu.be/ 3BWTh4p6QEk) and the following Dr. King (1992) quote from his famed *Letter From Birmingham Jail*:

> I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Counciler or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to 'order' than to justice...

The language and ideas around justice-oriented citizenship featured in this lecture were clearly referenced in some Pinning With Pause assignments related to Dr. King, but not in all of them.

Since each preservice teacher was required to select two instructional resources in their Pinning With Pause assignment, the 10 assignments studied here analyzed a total of 20 learning activities. As preservice teachers were allowed to self-select the activities, some opted to focus on particular learning levels (e.g., preschool or fourth grade) based on their teaching interests, while others searched for topics broadly that were designed for use in a range of elementary grades. Therefore, the 20 activities analyzed in this study ranged from preschool to upper elementary. Because searches on Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers were conducted with keywords, they were not necessarily tagged or identified explicitly as social studies lessons.

Data Analysis

To analyze students' reflections and the content of the Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers materials, we engaged in critical content analysis, where researchers make inferences from texts to the contexts of their use (Krippendorff, 2004), to understand how elementary preservice teachers selected, analyzed, and reflected upon lessons found online related to social studies topics of their choice. Content analysis "takes texts and analyses, reduces and interrogates them into summary form through the use of both pre-existing categories and emergent themes in order to generate or test a theory" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 475).

Critical content analysis conducts such work with a "focus on locating power in social practices by understanding, uncovering, and transforming conditions of inequality" (Beach et al., 2009, p. 129). In this study of methods course assignments related to Dr. King, Black History Month, and the Civil Rights Movement, we observed the ways preservice teachers analyzed instructional resources designed to engage young learners in conversations about race and racism as well as the instructional resources and their sources themselves.

We developed a priori first cycle codes (Saldaña, 2015) based on the two parts of the assignment that preservice teachers were asked to complete: Analysis of the two lessons found on Pinterest or Teachers Pay Teachers using the Pinning With Pause checklist and the written reflection composed after completion of the checklists. Our first cycle codes included descriptions of lesson types and information related to the content creator's expertise on the subject and teaching experience.

Once we identified first cycle codes, observations and data points were organized into a table that each author completed independently. We shared observations to determine additional codes, discussed patterns and emergent themes related to the preservice teachers' analyses (Saldaña, 2015), then considered these observations in relation to teacher education and online educational platforms, leading to the findings that follow.

Findings

Our critical content analysis of the 10 preservice teacher Pinning With Pause assignments focused on Dr. King, Black History Month, and Civil Rights revealed four primary themes. First, the critical analysis that the assignment was designed to encourage was limited. Second, the preservice teachers' lack of content knowledge was evident through their general acceptance of the problematic historical narratives and instructional approaches included in the activities selected. Third, the preservice teachers largely failed to interrogate the expertise of the activities' creators, presuming that the mere existence of a Teachers Pay Teachers store or teaching blog meant the proposed learning activities were appropriate and high quality. Finally, we discovered multiple limitations associated with the use of a checklist to gauge accuracy, authentic representations, and relevance.

Limited Critical Analysis

In the preservice teachers' written reflections, little attention was paid to the specific content described in the lessons. In fact, 14 of the 20 instructional resources selected for the assignment were not clearly designated as social studies nor contained substantive social studies content. Instead, the majority of activities were focused on literacy or social-emotional concepts such as friendship or bullying: Of the 20 activities examined by the 10 preservice teachers, nine were explicitly literacy based (in the resource description or in the subjects listed on Teachers Pay Teachers) and six centered on social-emotional learning.

Within these categories, the level of rigor varied greatly. For example, one instructional worksheet found via Pinterest consisted of equal parts clip art and a box for student writing, simply stating, "Dr. King had a dream that everyone could be friends. This is how I can be a friend." The worksheet alone provided no information about Dr. King nor additional context. Given the simplistic nature of this worksheet, the preservice teacher who analyzed it noted that the worksheet "does not mention anything about the oppression (black people) faced," and determined the lesson unworthy of classroom use.

This activity was one of 16 that contained no clear social studies content whatsoever. Only three prospective educators noted how such activities might result in children ultimately learning little about the purported topic of study and, therefore, failing to master social studies learning objectives. Another preservice teacher selected a "Civil Rights Interactive Notebook" on Teachers Pay Teachers, a set of graphic organizers with a few short informational passages. However, in her written reflection, her only critique of this instructional resource was that there was limited attention to Dr. King. She took no issue with any other content included in the notebook set nor the heavy emphasis on literacy.

In contrast, some learning activities were far more in-depth. Two activities related to the Civil Rights Movement and Black History Month were not standalone worksheets but instructional units composed of multiple lessons that would take place over the course of several days, including read alouds and class discussions, and in some cases, student research. Half of the units encountered on Pinterest were linked to individual teacher blogs, where they were contextualized in detail; however, the teacher descriptions emphasized the efficacy of the lessons with little attention to details about student differentiation or struggles with implementation. Such pedagogical details would be particularly helpful for novice and prospective teachers.

While the preservice teachers who focused on lessons found on teacher blogs often proposed modifications in their written reflections, they provided little critique regarding the sugarcoated ways in which the blogs presented student learning in an infomercial fashion. According to the blogs, students loved these lessons, which teacher bloggers fondly described teaching every year.

Clip art was present in eight of the 14 learning activities with provided links or screenshots. Clip art featuring Dr. King had little resemblance to the actual man, (https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Martin-Luther-King-Jr-Early-Reader-Kindergarten-and-First-Grade-MLK-Day-1623571), due in large part to the white space that comprises his skin (https://www.pinterest.com/pin/556757572682195374). Why content creators sought to use clip art in lieu of primary sources and photographs is unclear.

Other Black history month lessons featuring a variety of African Americans had the same issue. The clip art was created in a way that invited children to color in Black Americans' skin, and some of the examples featured online showed students using a variety of shades of brown (from light to dark) as well as different colors (blue, purple, green;

see   http://www.jennyknappenberger.com/black-history-month-activity/) for skin color. An important part of Dr. King and other Black Americans' lived experience was their skin color, which was a source of pride but also a reason they were discriminated against and treated as second-class citizens. Only one preservice teacher critiqued the use of clip art (rather than photographs) of Dr. King and children in the materials analyzed.

Problematic Narratives About Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Social studies scholars have long noted the problematic ways in which Dr. King is taught to students, as a messianic hero responsible for ending segregation and bringing the nation together through his powerful words (Busey & Walker, 2017; Kohl, 1994; Wills, 2005; Woodson, 2016). Seven of the nine instructional resources the preservice teachers selected about Dr. King upheld these sanitized renditions.

Six of the 10 preservice teachers recognized the need to elaborate on the limited content provided. One early childhood preservice teacher said, "I would include more information about why the protests, marches, and speeches MLK led and gave were so influential." Similarly, an elementary preservice teacher suggested, "It is important for the teacher to choose readings that explain more than just Dr. King's 'I Have a Dream' speech. There is so much more to his life and work than just that." Another prospective teacher emphasized that she would be intentional about discussing "the oppression that people of color face and how Martin Luther King, Jr. fought for equality, justice, and change."

However, three future educators failed to question the narratives that prepackaged lessons present about Black Americans and race in general. For example, one lesson featured a lengthy biographical passage about Dr. King's life as well as questions for students to answer (https://www.talesfromoutsidetheclassroom.com/2015/01/honoring-dr-martin-luther-king-jr.html). The text incorrectly portrayed segregation and racism as occurring only in the southern United States: "In the South, African Americans were called "colored" and did not have the same rights as white Americans…. The Jim Crow laws in the South enforced racial segregation or the separation of people due to their race."

While segregation did exist in the South, segregation also occurred in the North. Locating segregation and racism solely in the southern United States wholly ignores the rampant racism that was present in all parts of the country (Theoharis, 2018). The reading passage also reinforced a messianic image of Dr. King (Woodson, 2016) as an individualistic, charismatic, imperfect, and pious figure who single-handedly defeated what one preservice teacher referred to as "the beast of racism" and achieved equality for Black Americans. The problem with this narrative is that it turns a flesh-and-blood individual such as Dr. King into a mythical figure whom students may believe they would never be able to emulate (Loewen, 2008).

While the biographical passage mentioned other Black American civil rights activists such as Claudette Colvin and E.D. Nixon, the text failed to

describe how the Civil Rights Movement was successful because of collective organizing: people from all backgrounds, races, ages, and religious backgrounds came together to fight for human rights. This collective, communal struggle is erased in the narrative, leading students to believe that change only happened due to a single charismatic male minister.

Additionally, the questions for the reading passage do little to help students understand the significance of Dr. King's work or the movement for civil and human rights. Students are tasked with answering questions such as "Why did President Kennedy not want to go on with the March on Washington even though he supported the movement?", "What three traits would you use to describe Martin Luther King, Jr.?", and "What was Martin Luther King's most important moment?" These questions fail to engage students in critical thinking or ask them to consider the significance of Dr. King or the agency he exhibited during the movement.

Assumption of Creator Expertise

Of the 20 activities selected by the preservice teachers in this study, two were selected more than once. Three preservice teachers chose "MLK Jr. Activity: Equality   Lesson   for   little   Learners" (https://onesharpbunch.com/2015/01/mlk-jr-freebie.html)   through Pinterest, which originated from the teacher blog One Sharp Bunch. Two preservice teachers analyzed an "African American History Quilt Collaboration   Poster"   (http://www.jennyknappenberger.com/black-history-month-activity/) from the teacher blog Art With Jenny K, self-described as "art-infused resources for every classroom." Another preservice teacher selected a different collaborative poster from Art With Jenny K. Therefore, six of the 20 lessons in this study came from the same two sources, which offered the research team an opportunity to consider how the preservice teachers took into account the expertise of these two content creators. In this section we also discuss how preservice teachers determined expertise and reliability based on the use of published trade books and creator popularity.

Teaching Equality With Eggs

One Sharp Bunch is the public teacher blog of Ashley Sharp. Her Teachers Pay Teachers shop is linked prominently at the top of her blog, and the shop profile details Sharp's 12 years as a kindergarten teacher who holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in administrative science. Sharp has a perfect 5.0 star rating on Teachers Pay Teachers, the result of 23,184 votes at the time of this writing, with 10,377 members following her shop. The 154 products in her shop are colorful and prominently feature clip art and lively combinations of bold and cursive fonts.

The "Equality" lesson featured on her blog included a free printable. The blog post includes two examples of completed student response sheets (the free printable), in which students draw and record one-word observations comparing the outside and inside of a brown egg and a white egg. Last, students' fill-in-the-blank for the sentence, "Martin Luther King Jr.

wanted everyone to be treated ____." On her blog, Sharp uses this egg discussion and activity prior to reading a picture book biography about Dr. King and discussing the word "equality."

From a pedagogical perspective, asking kindergarten students (who may still be developing letter-sound associations and phonemic awareness) to use and spell a word they have yet to discuss and define and to describe a person who they have yet to learn about is poor practice that disregards writing development and comprehension. The limited nature of the fill-in-the-blank activity emphasizes writing form and rote repetition. Kindergarten students would unlikely be able to spell the nonphonetic words "different," "same," and "equally" perfectly as depicted in the photos on Sharp's blog. Instead, the students copied the spelling from a source provided by the teacher, particularly since Sharp's blog description details that students have yet to learn about Dr. King and define the word equality before engaging in the egg activity.

Moreover, comparing two differently colored eggs as an approach to explaining race is deeply ill conceived. Eggshell coloring is the byproduct of different material conditions: factory farming tends to produce bleached white eggs with different internal consistencies, while brown and tan eggs result from more varied diets and free-range farming practices (Olin Unferth, 2020). The exercise is both needlessly simplistic and biologically misleading.

Sharp frames the egg demonstration as a way to convey the important message that it "doesn't matter what we look like on the outside. It's what's on the inside that counts" (Sharp, 2015, n.p.), a fundamentally flawed color-evasive understanding of race and racism epitomized by the educational platitude, "I don't see color, I see kids." One preservice teacher used the Pinning With Pause checklist to interrogate the authenticity and perspective of the activity, stating bluntly, "People are not the same as eggs." While this preservice teacher noted that the creator of the egg activity was a kindergarten teacher, she did not consider the activity worthy of instruction.

However, the other two preservice teachers who analyzed the egg lesson were much more enthusiastic about the activity's potential. One echoed Sharp's words and said, "I think it could be a really great lesson to teach students about the importance of race and how even though the eggs may look very different on the outside, they are practically the exact same on the inside." Another preservice teacher proposed some modifications to the teaching and learning that would occur after the egg activity in order to make the egg observations more meaningful, but did not question or critique the false equivalence between egg color and racial classification of people. Neither of these two preservice teachers noted the credentials or expertise of the creator, nor did they describe how ethnoracially diverse children might respond to the activity in their checklist notes.

Supplementing History With Art

Art with Jenny K is the teaching blog of Jenny Knappenberger, an experienced elementary art educator who taught briefly at a middle school

and holds a bachelor's degree in art. Like Sharp, Knappenberger's Teachers Pay Teachers shop is linked at the top of her blog and holds a 5.0 star rating with 87,186 votes; as of this writing, the shop has 26,808 followers. Knappenberger's shop contains 428 products, most of which are art-focused but often integrate other content areas like math and history and feature vibrant examples of the completed products.

The quilt collaboration poster created by Knappenberger recounts the significance of quilts in the Underground Railroad and features "30 influential African Americans" (Knappenberger, 2019). Tessellation template options include prepared biographical text (the use of which would limit student engagement to reading and coloring) or a small section with blank lines for students to compose a brief biographical summary.

Together, the individual biographies tessellate to form a quilt-like pattern. The collaboration poster is solely a coloring task, in which students would color a small portion of the larger image then put the pieces together to form a complete portrait of Dr. King. Knappenberger describes the product as an art activity intended to complement or supplement a larger instructional unit.

Like Sharp, Knappenberger's blog details how the tessellation quilt could be used in a classroom. She lists the 30 people featured without explaining how or why they were selected. About half of the list is comprised of popular Black historical figures, like Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Sojourner Truth, and George Washington Carver, while several are more contemporary figures like Katherine Johnson, Serena Williams, John Lewis, and Michael Jordan. While Knappenberger notes the stitch font used on the tessellations to maintain the quilt theme, she neglects to mention the sources used for the biographies provided.

Furthermore, the biographies provided are extremely brief, only one to three sentences in length, noting birth and death dates and one fun fact. The blog ends with photos of finished student products with quotes from four educators proclaiming their admiration for Knappenberger's product. Each of these educators is named; however, in Knappenberger's history of quilts in the African American community at the beginning of the blog post, the one Black woman referenced is left unnamed. While the activity purports to spotlight African Americans, accurate sourcing and references regarding Black voices and histories is not included in Knappenberger's product.

Two preservice teachers noted that Knappenberger was an experienced art teacher but acknowledged that she was not necessarily an expert on Dr. King or fluent in social studies teaching. One preservice teacher found the tessellation quilt lacking in critical thinking: "I think coloring the images and making the quilt is more time consuming than the students' research." The other preservice teacher who chose the tessellation quilt questioned the accuracy and scope of the biographical summaries provided and suggested adding more resources for students to research in order "to compare their sources and read credible, reliable information."

The preservice teacher who selected the collaboration poster recognized that the poster was solely an art extension that required significant modification for social studies instruction. For these three preservice teachers, the activities' clear emphasis on art led them to critique the social studies content and application more stringently.

Relying on Publication and Popularity for Credibility

One preservice teacher found a Teachers Pay Teachers resource designed to support a read aloud of the picture book *Martin's Big Words* (Rappaport, 2007) with discussion prompts and graphic organizers. In the reliability assessment portion of the Pinning With Pause checklist, the preservice teacher noted, "Author of book is reliable and has written many books celebrating multiculturalism," and, "The book seems to have authentic representations of people and communities." In this preservice teacher's opinion, because the book's author had multiple published works with diverse celebratory themes, the author could be trusted as a legitimate source of information, and consequently, the instructional resource tied to the book could be used without critique or concern.

This perspective reflects the notion that if a resource is popular, it must be good; hence, the popular reliance on best-seller lists in education and beyond. Such perspectives, much like the color-evasiveness found in the egg activity, lack a critical lens that considers the significance of identity for both author and audience. More importantly, the assumption that a well-published author will compose a factual and reliable text belies decades of children's literature research that demonstrates the pervasive whitewashing and insistence on happy endings in books created for young audiences by predominantly white authors (Bhroin & Kennon, 2012; Clark, 2005; Rodríguez, 2018; Rodríguez & Vickery, in press).

The same preservice teacher based the reliability of the Teachers Pay Teachers creator on popularity as well, attesting that the creator "has nearly 40,000 followers" on her Pinning With Pause checklist. While no other preservice teachers in our study specifically referenced the number of followers listed for the activities and products they selected, a preservice teacher in Sawyer and Myers' (2018) study also considered a high number of pins on Pinterest to be indicative of high-quality resources.

When future and current educators use sites like Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers, there is "a tacit acknowledgment that the site contains within it legitimate sources of information, particularly around hands-on, engaging activities" (Schroeder et al., 2019, p. 13). Despite the critical framing around the Pinning With Pause assignment, at least one of the preservice teachers found publication and popularity to be criteria that were indicative of quality.

Constraints of Relying on a Checklist

The Pinning With Pause checklist was designed as "a filter tool to support critical consumption on curriculum sharing sites" (Gallagher et al., 2019, p. 218). Gallagher et al. (2019) described the checklist as a tool to ask how a particular educational resource "counts toward goals of equity-oriented

social education" (p. 218). In our Pinning With Pause assignment, the preservice teachers were urged to use the tool as such; however, through their responses, we identified several limitations when a checklist was used to assess notions of purpose, reliability, and perspective, particularly in relationship to a group of undetermined students. Most of the preservice teachers selected resource topics based on interest rather than with a particular group of learners in mind as in-service teachers might.

The first section of the Pinning With Pause checklist is "Attributing a Purpose" (Gallagher et al., 2019). Questions in this section consider the resource's relevance to a broader inquiry, standard, or learning objective. For the preservice teachers in this study, broader inquiries and state standards were not considered, and their responses centered wholly on learning objectives simplified to learning about a general topic. The topics of relevance were Dr. King, Black History, and the Civil Rights Movement. As these were the search terms utilized, for 16 of the 20 resources analyzed preservice teachers answered "yes" or "maybe" to the first question, "Does the activity, resource, or idea support my inquiry question, standards, or learning objectives?" The next two questions in the section are related to challenging content, critical thinking, and the development of global, democratic citizens. For 17 of the 20 instructional resources, the preservice teachers responded "maybe" or "no" to these questions. Ultimately, without a classroom context or larger learning purpose to consider, the preservice teachers could not answer these questions in meaningful ways.

The second section of the Pinning With Pause checklist centers on notions of reliability, focusing on accuracy of content, author expertise, authentic representations, and current information. In this section, preservice teachers selected "yes" and "maybe" in 75% of their responses about content accuracy and creator reliability. Their notes on the checklist revealed little exploration into the expertise or qualification of the content creators, despite the fact that the research team was able to find detailed biographical information for the creators of 14 resources.

Five of the preservice teachers did not acknowledge the expertise or reliability of content creators anywhere in their checklists or written reflections. The preservice teachers who selected art activities by Knappenberger were the most critical about the creator's expertise as related to social studies. Similarly, regarding a preschool lesson on inventor Garrett Morgan, a preservice teacher noted, "The author is a licensed preschool teacher, but I do not know the extent of their social studies content knowledge/training."

These comments reveal the preservice teachers' understanding of the limited social studies content knowledge that is common among elementary educators (Bolick et al., 2010). Nonetheless, five of the 10 participants in the study neglected to attend to the notion of expertise. The last question in this section, "Is the content current with up-to-date information?" elicited mostly affirmative responses (13 out of 20 responding "yes" and four responding "maybe"). Only one preservice teacher mentioned that they would need to verify this assertion by consulting when the content was created. Another preservice teacher considered the tessellation quilt activity up to date because "recent people, such as Barack Obama are represented in this lesson." As in the

Knappenberger quilt example, sourcing and references were not deemed important for inclusion or consideration.

The third section of the Pinning With Pause checklist considers the perspective of the content. The first two questions ask about perspective specifically in relationship to the user's students. As the preservice teachers were not leading their own classrooms (although some completed this project while in field placement, which may have served as a point of reference), several noted that this question was not applicable or added comments that made assumptions about classroom demographics in the future.

We noticed mostly affirmative (55%) and "maybe" (25%) responses to the final question, "Am I sure that this activity, resource, or idea will not harm students – especially those with marginalized identities and/or backgrounds?" Seven preservice teachers added detailed comments to this portion of the checklist. One noted, "For students of color, they may be offended with the lack of representation mentioned in this activity." As the preservice teachers selected "no" and "maybe" responses to this question for seven of the selected resources, we wondered why the designation of an educational activity as potentially or certainly harmful to students might not deem it immediately unusable, regardless of the other ratings on the checklist.

Furthermore, after analyzing the 10 assignments focused on Dr. King and Black history, we noted that all content creators with available biographical information presented as white. Given that the resources of focus centered Black histories, experiences, and individuals as told by white educators who may not have substantial historical knowledge, and that these resources were then analyzed by prospective white educators who largely had minimal historical knowledge based on the conversations shared in the methods classes, we have concerns about the limited perspectives in both content creation and utilization. If the preservice teachers, themselves, have minimal understanding of the cultures, contexts, or histories of Communities of Color, questions related to content reflecting those who are not typically included in the curriculum may not be answerable.

In particular, the question "Does the content give my students windows into new cultures or contexts?" does not consider the framing or author of the content in terms of accuracy/inaccuracy or representation/ misrepresentation. Users of the checklist might be inclined to assume best intentions rather than actively look for #OwnVoices (Yorio, 2018) and consult research that reveals racist tropes and stereotyping in popular children's literature (see Reese, 2020).

Consequently, while the checklist indeed served as a helpful tool to develop critical analysis of online resources, its applicability for preservice teachers was limited, as they had no broader curricular objective nor learning context for reference. Moreover, the checklist requires further attention to notions of author and audience, as elementary educators (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017) and elementary Teachers Pay Teachers creators (Shelton & Archambault, 2019) are overwhelmingly white females. An analysis of elementary resources available online must

necessarily attend to issues of race and racism, particularly but not exclusively in regard to lessons that center Communities of Color and other topics beyond the teachers' and creators' realm of experience and expertise.

Additionally, a teacher's years of classroom experience and education level does not necessarily demonstrate an understanding of equity, social justice, or how to uplift marginalized students and their communities. An analysis that considers the creator's educational philosophy regarding these issues might improve the potential user's understanding of the resource creator and how a certain product might fit into a larger pedagogical approach centered on equity and justice.

Discussion

Our analysis of the 10 preservice Pinning With Pause assignments revealed that when preservice teachers are challenged to use Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers they generally defaulted to popular, highly visible resources and made evaluations about credibility, reliability, and utility based on the metrics that for-profit platforms are designed to reinforce. Preservice teachers' developing critical media literacies, even when guided by a checklist activity, are not sufficient to uncover the pervasive and coercive ways that racial platform capitalism shapes the behavior of individuals. While some preservice teachers critically interrogated the resources they found, the platforms themselves are not curation tools.

The Pinning With Pause checklist makes a considerable effort to engage pre- and in-service teachers in the process of critical interrogation of instructional activities that circulate through for-profit platforms. The checklist provides a set of decision-making rules for instructors and offers use criteria, encouraging teachers to reflect on the potential opportunities and consequences that extend from using instructional activities discovered through social media and algorithmic exploration. Nevertheless, the decisions that pre- and in-service educators make about which activities to use are constrained by the resources that are delivered to them by the platform.

If educators are participating in social media, that participation trains their attention to the resources delivered to them by platform technologies. However, platform technologies are not transparent in how they deliver, order, or rank information. The algorithmic sorting work – the foregrounding of curricular materials – happens within the anti-Black box, which is opaque to educators but framed as fundamentally neutral. The constraints placed on educators' attention by digital platforms are not well understood, and the critical perspectives that pre- and in-service teachers might bring to their evaluation of instructional activities deserves further attention.

Digital for-profit platforms are not neutral sites for curricular discourse. We observed throughout the preservice teacher reflections that both Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers direct users to resources that reproduce the color-evasive ideologies of racial capitalism. This direction is achieved through a focus on popularity metrics (sourcing the wisdom of

crowds to find content creators) and through the decontextualization that occurs within web browsing. Within the context of no context, educators are left with their individual decision-making criteria to evaluate resources.

Both color-evasive ideologies and decontextualization are fundamental mechanisms in how racial platform capitalism functions. Content and context are divorced from each other, allowing color-evasive ideologies to dominate. The acknowledgement of political contexts (and political contests), as well as systems of racial domination, runs counter to the function of platform capitalism, which is to ensure frictionless circulation of content for commercialization. As Zuboff (2019) argued, the rise of platform marketplaces occurs alongside "a well-documented pattern that favors substituting machines and their algorithms for human contributors in a wide range of jobs" (p. 181). However, the platforms we explored in this study fail to take into account the objectives or aims of social studies education, to such an extent that the activities students found were rarely identified as social studies.

As our findings illustrate, activities that are popular and visible evade difficult conversations about racism, inequality, and American social life. This flaw is part of the platform design. Racial platform capitalism functions in such a way to make the adoption of these activities easy. One need not make quality or validity evaluations about the activities delivered through platforms like Teachers Pay Teachers and Pinterest as the algorithm (either through the visibility of activities in search engines or their population of online social sharing networks) has done that work for you. Such an approach to the use of social media and online marketplaces ignores the ways in which algorithms (and the tools they support) encode harm (Noble, 2018).

Quality and validity evaluations take considerable time and energy. Novice teachers or individuals working outside of their domain of expertise may inevitably rely on available heuristics for assessment – either the Pinning With Pause checklist, the ranking of search engine results, or the visibility of a content creator's blog in their online social networks. Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers have no mechanism for users to provide feedback or to offer modifications or translations of work they have accessed. Given the vagaries of copyright on for-profit sites, it is unclear, for example, if an instructor could share adapted versions of for-sale lessons. Unlike other forms of crowdsourced knowledge development like recipe websites or interactive forums, educators cannot offer commentary or insight into their application of a lesson.

While we might attribute the lack of contextual information to the platform (certainly a function of the design of Pinterest), even when content creators have the opportunity to share information about themselves, their students, or the translation of the material to the classroom, they elide discussion of challenges or missteps. The blogs that teacherpreneurs use to share their resources are marketing materials, and marketing rarely accommodates the messiness and challenges of teaching.

Similarly, the work that went into the production of these materials is opaque, because to acknowledge that this work is the byproduct of labor

would be to potentially underline the exploitative nature of these platforms. Both the teacher/consumer and the teacher/content creator are engaged in a value exchange mediated by the platform. To call attention to the work done to produce content would also call attention to the credibility of the content producer. "How did you make this?" raises a related question of, "What qualifies *you* to make this?"

One potential means to remediate the inconsistency of critical perspectives found in this study is the development of critical race media literacy to foster racial consciousness (Yosso, 2002). According to Hawkman and Van Horn (2019), critical race media literacy "calls students to recognize the problematic ways people of color are represented in various media outlets while questioning the intentions behind such representations and working toward creating more-just representations in the media" (p. 119). Furthermore, critical race media literacy emphasizes attention to authorship and audience in ways that critically interrogate point of view and perspective (Hawkman & Shear, 2017; Rodríguez & Vickery, in press). When assessing the quality and authenticity of lessons centered on historically marginalized groups, such a critical race lens is essential (Pimentel & Busey, 2018) but was notably absent from the Pinning With Pause assignment and its framing within the social studies methods course.

Implications and Future Directions

Most immediately, Noreen will revise the Pinning With Pause assignment in a number of ways to address the findings outlined here, beginning in the fall 2020 semester. While her social studies methods course positions all teaching as political rather than neutral (as all curricula promotes particular perspectives and narratives while simultaneously creating what Trouillot, 1995, called "a particular bundle of silences." p. 27), the course does not currently emphasize how capitalist online platforms are also *not* neutral. First and foremost, a conversation around the problematics of for-profit platforms and the unique relationship between Teachers Pay Teachers and Pinterest (in particular, Pinterest as a marketing tool for Teachers Pay Teachers) must be explored early in the course.

Second, preservice teachers should be supported in expanding their critique of lessons to consider both author and audience. Essential to this effort is a strong foundation in the content of the selected topic. Thus, rather than allowing preservice teachers to choose any topic of interest, preservice teachers should be encouraged to search for lessons about which they have in-depth prior knowledge or must be obligated to learn about the topic content prior to the selection of instructional resources online (e.g., the origins and purpose of Black History Month). When preservice teachers deeply understand a given learning objective, they can better assess the utility of specific resources in achieving that objective.

Third, preservice teachers must contextualize the instructional resources, both in terms of a broader learning goal or instructional unit and a diverse student audience, particularly one that might consist of children for whom the instructional content is both familiar and unfamiliar. With this orientation, an analytic tool like the Pinning With Pause checklist would allow for a more stringent and purposeful critique.

Finally, this assignment is done in the first third of the semester, prior to in-depth attention to disciplinary learning and explicit discussions of race/racism. It would thus be helpful to return to preservice teachers' analyses at the end of the course to consider how their perspectives may have changed as their understanding of powerful and purposeful elementary social studies pedagogy has deepened. Additionally, allowing time and space for a group conversation might reveal contrasting analyses of similar or identical lessons, as was explored in the findings here. This step may lead to an even richer set of understandings that would emerge through an authentic sharing of multiple perspectives that would be generated by the preservice teachers themselves.

Another necessary intervention suggested by our findings is the development of nonprofit platforms and networked communities of practice that capitalize on the affordances of social sharing technologies to promote curriculum development and sharing in elementary social studies education. The Pinning With Pause checklist encourages educators to reflect on their engagement with the materials they discover, but the nature of racial platform capitalism is that individuals are directed to for-profit resources. To create space for a curricular conversation that is driven by the goals of equity and anti-racism, social studies educators need a counterspace where they can freely share curricular resources and engage in reflective dialogue about how those resources might be transformed for different classrooms and different learners.

An amendment to the Pinning With Pause checklist might encourage users to have conversations with other teachers in their networks about the instructional activity. True curricular conversation would decenter the for-profit platforms that mediate the relationships of teacherpreneurs and content consumers, recentering attention to the ideas, values, and needs of a community of instructors.

For-profit platforms rely upon network externalities, where the more users who engage with the platform, the more valuable engagement becomes. Critical conversation, however, requires the opposite – what Tufecki (2017) called network internalities – where communities of practice and protest become stronger through working together and navigating struggle and conflict. The more a network works through challenges, the stronger the internal structure of that network becomes; the more reliable the relationships, the more efficient at information sharing, the more durable and resilient. Platforms like sharemylesson.com provide the nonprofit space, but a network around these open platforms does not yet exist and is critically needed.

Imaginations are constrained by for-profit platforms through their emphasis on virality and visibility. Educators' imaginations could be liberated through the use of networking technologies and strong networked communities to foster curricular conversation about challenging topics. The ongoing discussion over the use of the 1619 Project from *The New York Times* demonstrates one way in which, by reconciling with difficult topics and imagining how teachers might engage students in this content, they could construct a community of practice online that supports curriculum for elementary social studies education while also developing critical race media literacy.

Fostering network internalities among social studies educators online would also create space for voices and perspectives that are crucial for cultivating democratic citizenship but will never be featured on for-profit platforms that manage their functions through an anti-Black box. However, educators lack a network that has coalesced around a nonprofit platform to share their ideas, instead relying on the communicative power of for-profit venues like Pinterest, Teachers Pay Teachers, and the *New York Times*. A commons is needed where instructors can pin with pause and engage in dialog, instead of pinning for profit.

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Appendix
Instructional Resource Links Provided by Preservice Teachers

Instructional Resource Topic	Links
Martin Luther King, Jr.	• https://www.teacherkarma.com/2015/01/mlk-freebie-what-would-you-do-martin-luther-king-jr.html • https://www.talesfromoutsidetheclassroom.com/2015/01/honoring-dr-martin-luther-king-jr.html • https://www.pinterest.com/pin/556757572682195374/ • https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Just-or-Unjust-a-Civics-Sorting-Activity-190743 • https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Martins-Big-Words-3563067?utm_source=Pinterest&utm_campaign=Martin%27s%20Big%20Words • https://onesharpbunch.com/2015/01/mlk-jr-freebie.html • https://www.kidsparkz.com/martin-luther-king.html • https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Dr-Martin-Luther-King-Jr-Collaborative-Poster-Black-History-Month-Activity-1047984
Civil Rights Movement	• https://www.pinterest.com/pin/410460953539475549/feedback/?invite_code=2ec4ce8069884595972c708a56a99303&sender_id=250935147895985889
Black History Month	• https://teachingmadepractical.com/black-history-month-research-project/ • http://www.jennyknappenberger.com/black-history-month-activity/ • https://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2019/02/black-history-month-preschool-lesson-plan.html