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The Hate You Give In Mississippi

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The Hate You Give in Mississippi Project Summary

Overview:

My name is Shimikqua Ellis. I am in my 4th year of the English Education PhD program at the University of Mississippi. I work as a Graduate Assistant in the School of Education and was advanced to Doctoral Candidacy after I passed comps in December 2019. For my dissertation, I will explore Mississippi educators' perceptions of using Young Adult Literature to promote social justice in classrooms. I will observe and interview teachers using the novel *The Hate You Give* to discuss racial injustice in classrooms across the state.

Intellectual Merit:

Ta Nehisi Coates(2015) states, “English teachers should be librarians of justice, hope, and consciousness. English classrooms should provide something more complex than grammar, something deeper than the classics, and something much more meaningful than writing between the lines”(p.26). As the researcher, examines how educators in various parts of Mississippi are implementing the YA novel, *The Hate You Give* to promote social justice in ELA classrooms, strategies for supporting educators and preservice teachers to teach *THUG* will be explored. This study will investigate the following: How are Mississippi teachers using this YA novel? What challenges do Mississippi teachers face when teaching *THUG* to address racial injustice ? What successes have teachers had using the text? What type of support and resources do educators feel they need to effectively teach *The Hate You Give* ? The researcher seeks to utilize the findings from this study to help teacher education programs prepare English educators to implement social justice literacies in classrooms.

External Opportunity:

The ALAN Foundation Grant is funded through the National Council of Teachers of English and provides \$1500 toward research in young adult literature. The ALAN Grant application was due on September 15, 2019. Grant Winners also are invited to publish research findings in the ALAN Review.

Research Strategy

Problem:

Mississippi's long-standing history of racial injustice and educational inequities has stained the state's reputation for decades. In many regions, schools are still segregated due to the influx of private academy's in 1960's and 70's (Carr, 2012). The racial injustice in the state, parallels the educational inequities that caused the state to rank 48th in Education nationwide according to *U.S. News Report on Worst States* (2019). The lack of discussion of current social justice issues and the lack of literature that young people consider relevant within school curricula is a major issue (Caneva, 2017). As a result, many students have become uninterested in reading and school altogether. Students are unable to see how literature connects to their lives, schools continue to fail, and this just leads to more social and educational problems.

Purpose and Research Questions:

The purpose of this study is to explore how educators in various parts of Mississippi are implementing Young Adult Literature to promote social justice in ELA classrooms. *The Hate You Give* is a popular YA novel by a Mississippi author that promotes social justice. This study will examine the experiences of educators teaching *The Hate You Give in Mississippi*. This study will investigate the following: How are Mississippi teachers using this YA novel? What challenges do teachers face when teaching *The Hate You Give* in Mississippi? What successes have teachers had using the text? What type of support and resources do educators feel they need to effectively teach *The Hate You Give* ?

Significance of the Study

Currently most Mississippi schools are still highly segregated by race or social class and fail to include the discussion of modern racial injustices within the school curriculum. For example, the Mississippi ELA text exemplar list for ninth English grade does not include any contemporary YAL or content on modern racism. Only recently has the young adult novel, *The Hate You Give* been added to the 2019 Secondary English Mississippi Text Exemplar curriculum, so this study will be spearheading new educational opportunities in the Magnolia State. As racial violence and hatred continue to terrorize our student's and communities educators need to take a stand against police brutality and racial injustice ,and it should start in the classroom. Johnson, Jackson, Stovall, & Braszile(2017) state, " the violence will not cease as long as the curriculum reinscribes and perpetuates oppression. Therefore, ELA teachers and literacy educators must reimagine ELA classrooms as revolutionary sites that disrupt racial injustice while striving to transform the world and humanize the lives of Black youth"(p.62) When educators and students discuss and examine how the injustices in *The Hate You Give* mirror issues in their own

communities it can ignite change. When students read thought provoking, engaging, and relevant YAL it can increase their interest in reading, enhance critical thinking skills and social consciousness. It is the expectation of the researcher that when teachers witness students' engagement and interest in *The Hate You Give*; they will share these positive experiences with other educators. As a result, more teachers will advocate for the inclusion of YAL and social justice in school curriculums across the state. When educators and students discuss and examine the racial injustices in *THUG* it can empower students and teachers to become advocates for change. When we increase students' exposure and engagement with social injustice literacies through young adult literature it may help them develop their literary voice into the type of social agency that can transform communities.

Methods and Procedures:

Participants in this study will be ten Secondary English educators purposefully selected from five distinctly different geographical locations across the state of Mississippi. There will be two teachers from each region. The researcher will obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval through the University's procedure for research. Once IRB approval is obtained, the researcher will contact the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and school districts to identify participants. Once participants are identified, the researcher will require all participants to sign consent forms. The researcher will conduct an initial meeting with all the participants in a central location to explain the research design, timeline, and procedures for the study. Then participants will then implement the reading and curriculum and the researcher will travel to each research site at least once to observe. Teachers will be asked to develop a journal and reflect on each lesson and its impact on students. The researcher will interview each participant post curriculum implementation. The interviews will be transcribed. The journal entries from teachers and the observation field notes will be utilized along with the interview transcripts as data. Data will be coded into themes and categories utilizing the method of constant comparison (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Broader Impacts of Research

When students read thought provoking, engaging, and relevant YAL it can increase their interest in reading and inspire them to read more books by YA authors. This increase in literacy can improve students test scores and academic performance. It is the expectation of the researcher that when teachers witness students' engagement and interest in *The Hate You Give*; they will share these positive experiences with coworkers. As a result, more teachers will advocate for the inclusion of YAL and social justice in school curriculums across the state. When educators and students discuss and examine how the injustices in *The Hate You Give* mirror issues in their own communities it can ignite change. It is the expectation of the researcher that teachers and

students will begin considering solutions and become advocates for change. When we increase student exposure and engagement with this type of young adult literature it may help them develop their literary voice into the type of social agency that can transform communities.

Dissertation Research Timeline

Jan. 2020	Begin Dissertation Research Proposal
April	Prospectus Defense
May	IRB Approval
June -July	Working with the Mississippi Department of Education and regional school districts to identify and contact potential participants
August	Send out research Project Packets to participants and Conduct Focus Group.
Sept.-Dec.	Data Collection: Observe and interview participants.
Jan. 2021	Transcribe, code, and analyze data
Feb.-March	Write results, conclusions, and recommendations for further study
April	Defend Dissertation

Budget and Budget Justification

Item	Cost.	Comments
Ten Class sets of Books	300 books x \$7.71=\$2,313	Each participant will receive 30 copies of the novel. One
Ten Copies of the audio version of the book	10 copies of audio x \$15= \$150	for the teacher and 29 for the students. Each participant will receive a copy of the audio book
Meeting Space at the UM Mississippi Campus University	\$0 Compliments of the University of Mississippi	A meeting will be held at a Jackson, Mississippi private centralized location in Jackson, Mississippi.
Travel Mileage for Study Participants	\$0.535 per mile x 517 miles = \$276.60 Trips from Oxford, Gulfport, Meridian, and Greenwood to Jackson, Mississippi and the returning trip	Oxford to Jackson=166 miles Gulfport to Jackson=161 miles Meridian to Jackson 92 miles Greenwood to Jackson 98 miles

TOTAL REQUESTED \$1,000

Budget Justification

The researcher would like to request money for 300 copies of *The Hate You Give* by Angie Thomas for participants to use for this study. The study will take place in 10 different Mississippi classrooms and each class needs 30 books and a copy of the audio.

The researcher would like to request money for participants to travel to Jackson Mississippi where an introductory meeting and focus group will be held. The researcher has also applied for The ALAN Foundation Grant through the National Council of English Teachers. The ALAN Foundation Grant awards \$1,500 toward research regarding Young Adult Literature.

SHIMIKQUA ELECE ELLIS

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Education:

2017 - 2021 PhD in English Education, University of Mississippi

2004 - 2008 Masters in the Art of Teaching Communications, Webster University

2000 - 2004 Bachelors in English, Clark Atlanta University

Professional Experiences:

2017-Present Graduate Instructor University of Mississippi

2014-2016 Instructional Coach Teach for America Mississippi

2006-2014 English Teacher Hazelwood East High School

Presentations:

“Hot Titles for ELA Classrooms” Presentation for National Conference of Teachers of English Baltimore, Maryland – November 2019

“Reimagining Teacher Education with the Hate You Give” Work presented at ELATE Conference Fayetteville, Arkansas – July 2019

“Literacy for Multimodal Learners” Work presented at Literacy Association of Tennessee Conference Murfreesboro, Tennessee – December 2018

“All American Boys, #Black Lives Matter, and Socratic Seminar to Promote Productive Dialogue in the Classroom ” Work presented at National Conference of Teachers of English Houston, Texas - November 2018

“Building Bridges and Not Walls to Integrate Technology in English Classrooms” Work presented at Transitions to College Writing Symposium Oxford, Mississippi -October 2018

Professional Organizations:

2019- Present Assembly of Literature for Adolescents(ALAN)

2017-Present	National Association of Multicultural Educators(NAME)
2012- Present	National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)