

Table of Contents

I-Disclaimer & Acknowledgements	pg. 1
II- General Doctoral Student Advice (For New Students)	pg. 1
III- The Meaning of Orals	pg. 3
IV- Breakdown of the Session	pg. 3
V- Committee Selection	pg. 4
VI- Lists	pg. 5
VII- Studying Reflections and Techniques	pg. 7
VIII- Things to do before your exam (logistics)	pg. 13
IX- Timeline	pg. 14
X- The Big Day Itself	pg. 15
XI - What to do when you are finished	pg. 16
XII - That's It!	pg.16
<u>Appendix</u>	
Micia's Orals List	pg. 17
Micia's Study Questions	pg. 23

I- Disclaimer & Acknowledgements

I am writing this packet as if I was sitting down with a friend. As a result the style is pretty informal. I am also writing it based on my experiences in the Graduate School of Education at U.C. Berkeley. This document is not meant to address the needs of every student taking orals. In fact many departments and schools have different formats and requirements for oral exams. That said, I hope that people who find this packet useful will share it with folks who they think can also benefit from it. Please understand that I am compiling my thoughts about orals based on my own personal experience and the advice I have received from many friends and colleagues. Not every idea is a Micia Mosely original, but hey at least I'm writing it down. I want to specifically thank each member of my orals committee for all of their hard work and patience: Patricia Baquedano-Lopez, Anne Haas Dyson, Ruth Wilson Gilmore and Glynda Hull. I also want to thank Christina Ree for taking the photo of me, and designing the cover. Finally, I want to thank everyone who shared their ideas and experiences with me. These people are too numerous to mention; plus I'm sure I'd forget someone and then their goes that friendship. So I'll just say a big fat general thank you to everyone. Please read through the entire document before you try anything. I tried to outline the advice in an orderly fashion, but there are bits and pieces of advice tucked away in every area. Have Fun!!!

II- General Doctoral Student Advice (For New Students)

In preparing for orals I have learned a lot of things that I wish I knew before I got to this stage. Since this document is mostly my reflections I figured I'd insert some words of wisdom here. In some cases I have numbered the points underneath each category for clarity purposes, but the order has no particular significance. **Note: A friend of mine who read a draft of this brought it to my attention that the advice in this section really applies to first and second year students. If I was so inclined I could write a guide to getting through you first two years of graduate school, a guide to orals and a guide to writing your dissertation. Since I want to graduate someday I'm not doing all of that. Instead I am trying to mush a lot of ideas into one packet. This general advice section just highlights some things that newer students may want to consider. I realize that many of the people reading this document are in the middle of their program and much of the advice in this section is not applicable. Don't worry if you didn't do some of the things that I suggest when you were a first or second year. I am writing this so that if you have time to do them you will or you will share these ideas with newer students that you meet.**

Bootstrap vs. Bus Theory

Some people believe that they got to graduate school through hard work, self-discipline and determination. This is true for many of us. But *no one got here alone*, and guess what, *you won't get through alone*. I do not subscribe to the "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" theory. Instead I use the "get on the bus" approach. This means you find a bus filled with people going in the same direction you are and you travel with them. Not everyone gets on at the same place and not everyone gets off at the same place. What matters is that while they are travelling they are doing it together. They are pooling their resources (money) and sharing (space). O.K. now in terms of graduate school this means finding people to work with. Find people to share ideas, materials, or study time with. Recently I began studying with people who are not in the school of education. We just meet at someone's house or on campus and work. We support one another by holding each person accountable for being at the study session. Since we are in different fields we don't talk about readings or anything, in fact we don't talk at all. We just sit and work.

And when we have “break time” there is a friendly face to look at. In my first year of graduate school I would get together with my classmates and we would divide up the reading for the class and then share our notes. We all know that we *want* to read everything that is assigned to us but often don’t have the time. This was a useful technique for getting through one of my classes. My basic point is that you should try to work with other people in whatever way is helpful to you. We are trained to believe that success is *only* attained through individual effort (individual grades, little modeling for co-authorship), but in our hearts and minds we know better.

Advising

1) Understand that you should have multiple advisors. You will have one “official” advisor who is in charge of guiding your research, signing forms and writing recommendations. But very few advisors can do it all. For example, do you have an advisor that will: Tell you about conferences that pertain to your work? Help you write proposals to present at conferences? Tell you about and help you get funding? Give you specific and clear feedback on your written work? Guide you in developing a theoretical framework? Help you gain clarity on the appropriate methodology? Guide you through the process of publishing? Tell you about journals that you should know about / be reading regularly? Tell you which classes you should take and when? Help you understand what it means to write “a graduate level paper”? Help you get summer jobs? Help you write your curriculum vita? In order for many of us to get the most out of the graduate experience we need the help of many people. People who give us advice that we listen to- these people are advisors and should be looked at in that way. Don’t put your eggs all in one basket. As the old phrase goes, “it takes a village to produce a Ph.D.” or something like that!

2) Even though you should expect help from multiple sources, your “official” advisor is key to your progress. When someone asks, “whom are you working with?” That is the person you will mention. So, get to know your advisor. You should know how they like to work and when they like to meet (only office hours, special times are o.k., are they morning people or not?). It is important to cultivate the best relationship with them that you can. You will need their support in order to get through, so try to make it a pleasant experience for all involved.

Classes

People often take classes and don’t get as much out of them as they can.

1) For example many of us read what is assigned and don’t connect it to our work. So my advice is *every time you read something* a) write the bibliographic information in a program like End Note, Microsoft Excel or something b) write a brief summary (like a paragraph) of the reading (this will help you with orals, but more on that later) c) write up how you think it connects to your work. I realize that most of us are lucky if we have even skimmed the readings before class, but even if you do this after the class is over it will be really valuable. Note: Summer can be a good time to do this kind of thing.

2) Every seminar paper that you write is a potential publication. When you get a paper back ask the professor what you need to do to turn it into a position paper. In theory position papers (a.k.a. qualifying papers) are supposed to be good enough for publication. Ask your professor (or advisor) what journals might be interested in that paper. It seems intimidating and I know I’ve written paper that only my mother and I should know about, but it forces you to think about your work on a higher level. In other words, you aren’t just writing a paper for a class you are writing to contribute to a larger body of literature. Just think, “My work is so fabulous everyone

should read it.” Also if your work is not so fabulous you will force your professors to make it clear to you what it will take to make it fabulous!

3) **Get to know professors in other departments.** You need to have at least one person from outside of your department on your orals and dissertation committees. They can (and I think should) be the same person. When you are fulfilling your requirement of taking outside classes, don't just take a class because the title sounds interesting- be strategic. Ask yourself if this is a person who you might want to have on your orals / dissertation committee. Go to their office hours and talk to them. When you write their seminar paper (or whatever they require), let your voice come through. This will give you an indication of what kind of feedback they give on papers and whether or not you want to work with them in the future. Feedback on your writing is key, because your dissertation is usually in writing. (I know your thinking “a written dissertation- that Micia, what would I do without her key insights!”) Also, choose people who are going to be around by the time you take your orals. Visiting professors are nice, but *when they leave, they are gone*. (Sometimes I'm so deep I amaze myself). Many students have trouble finding an outside member for their committee because they didn't plan ahead. Remember the old saying, and ounce of prevention is worth um something☺ Anyway, you get my point.

Extras

1) Know your handbook. In the school of education we a fortunate to have a handbook that is given to us when we enter our programs. It is important to look at this book from time to time to make sure you have all of you official paperwork in order and to ensure that you are fulfilling your requirements. I consider myself someone who stays pretty on top of things and I was missing a key piece of paper right before my orals: I received my masters as part of my time in the school of education. In order to do that I had to fill out an outline of program, which I did. I didn't realize that I needed to fill out a separate outline of program for the Ph.D. that included my areas of focus (orals areas). Luckily my advisor caught it and all was well. I could have caught this myself had I read my handbook more carefully. Remember that your handbook is your friend. Some advisors are better about checking up on logistical and technical things than others. *Since you are responsible for your education*, make sure that you do all that you can.

2) Go to workshops and speakers that “may be valuable”. You have or will be bombarded with emails and flyers about workshops, speakers and events both on and off of campus. I went to many workshops my first and second year. I found most of them useful in demystifying many of the processes that I've had to go through. It's nice to have a picture of what lies ahead, so going to an orals workshop before you are ready to take them may be helpful; the same with a dissertation workshop. Be sure that you time it well, you don't want to go to workshops so far in advance that they aren't really applicable to you and end up being a waste of time. When it comes to speakers I think it is important to take advantage of opportunities to think critically in different spaces. You can learn something everyday and it doesn't have to be in a class. Cal is lucky to attract a number of speakers from a variety of disciplines. Try to see at least one speaker a semester. It may make you think in ways that you have never imagined.

3) Have a life outside of school. We have all heard this before, but many of us forget it during times of stress (like preparing for orals). Get a hobby and enjoy it. Make sure you have something going on in your life besides school that makes you happy. Remember while we need to stay focused to accomplish our goals, there is more to life than getting a fancy degree.

III- The Meaning of Orals

Orals are also known as the qualifying exam. This means that you are qualified to write your dissertation. In other words you have the theoretical background / knowledge of the applicable literature to be able to accurately situate your research. It also means that you are an “expert” / can teach a class on each of your three areas. One professor argued that this is an opportunity to shape your intellectual world-view and it is exciting. Others have mentioned that you stop being a student and start being a colleague. Some people say its socialization into the academy. Some just call it academic hazing.

IV- Breakdown of the Session (well this is how it went for me, different people = different sessions)

1) The oral exam usually lasts about three hours. The session begins with you giving a brief (5-7minutes) professional history. This is your opportunity to tell your committee a bit about who you are and how you got here. You can also talk about theoretical frameworks that have shaped your thinking and your dissertation research briefly. Use this time to calm your self down and build your confidence. Remember you are the #1 expert on yourself and your history.

2) Next your chair will review the order of the areas and who will take the lead in each area. Remember you decide the order and lead people in advance and tell your chair. It should be made clear that each person will have an opportunity to ask questions in each of the three areas (and they will). Your chair will also ask when you want to take a break.

3) The first professor beings with the first area. The first question should be an overarching “lay of the land” type of question. That is, not something about a specific author or text. You should ask the lead off professor to tell you what the question they will start with. They may not tell you but you should ask them anyway. Then the chair will ask if other professors have any questions. Then they go on to the other two areas and do the same thing. Usually you take a break between areas 2 and 3.

4) After area 3 is finished your chair will ask you to step outside. The committee will discuss just how fabulous you were. After a few minutes (5-15 usually) they will call you back in and tell you that you have passed. Sometimes you can use this time to get feedback on how you did. If not try to schedule a meeting with your advisor and one with your chair to discuss how you did. Most people pass so it’s good to get feedback beyond “you passed!”(If you choose, and have worked it out with your committee ahead of time, you can have your dissertation proposal meeting at this time as well. The chair will keep the orals shorter so that you have time for this meeting. Some people choose to do this because they like to get it all over with at once and / or it may be difficult to get their committee together twice. I had my proposal meeting at the beginning of the following semester, about six weeks after my orals. It gave me a chance to focus on orals and then focus on the dissertation. Remember the proposal meeting is the last time your committee will get together, since we do not have a dissertation defense in the school of ed).

5) Then you smile, thank them, pack up your stuff and celebrate!!!!

V- Committee Selection

1) I think who sits on your committee is just as important as any other part of the orals process. As with many parts of the orals process I recommend talking to your colleagues. Talk to people in and outside of your department and program. Find out who has had particular professors and what their experiences were. Understand that professors are human beings and grow and change over time like all of us. So you may have heard about a professor who did not behave well in one of the first orals they sat on. Talk to more people and see if they changed over time. Get as many different viewpoints as possible.

2) I was blessed to have a wonderful committee and choosing them taught me a great deal. In the beginning I was obsessed with matching “experts” in a particular field to each area. I soon realized that for me this was simply not possible. My areas (see attached) did not “match” up with the faculty that existed at the school when I took them. While it is nice to have people whose research closely matches your areas it is important to remember that professors are smart. I also learned that I was making a lot of assumptions about what people knew and what they were “qualified” for. It’s bad to assume. For the most part they will ask you questions about what you say and not about specific texts. I’ll say more on that later. So matching is nice but not essential. The most important factor for me was my individual relationships with my committee members. I needed to feel safe in my exam and know that the people in the room only wanted the best for me. As a result, I chose people who I respected and who I felt comfortable working with. My Chair was Glynda Hull, and my other members were Anne Haas Dyson (my advisor, note: the same person chairs your dissertation committee cannot chair your orals committee), Patricia Baqudano-Lopez and Ruth Wilson Gilmore (Geography). These women were amazing. I chose them because I felt close to them, but also because they were smart and tough. I figured if I was going to spend months studying for this exam I wanted to be challenged. I wanted to be sure that if anyone asked me a question about my areas that I would be able to answer it. My committee selection process was based on who I felt could provide a kind of “tough love”. I realize that not everyone has made these kinds of connections and as a result has these kinds of choices. But if you can find people, who you connect with, go for it. If not choose people who you feel will help you in your work.

3) Even though matching professor’s research to your areas is not essential you do need to figure out who will take the lead in each area. Your chair will usually act as a floater. By “taking the lead” each of the other committee members will ask the first question in their designated area. They will usually ask the most questions in that area although all committee members will have an opportunity to chime in. This person will help you develop your list for that area, since they are “taking the lead” / “in charge” of that area.

4) One thing to watch out for in committee selection is personalities. Professors are people too. They have issues / disagreements with each other just like all of us do. Some professors are more professional than others. What I’m getting at is that sometimes professors will use oral exams to have debates with their colleagues or to try to show that they are smarter than their colleagues are. This is especially known to happen if certain junior professors are insecure about their tenure opportunities. I didn’t experience this at all (as I mentioned I had the best committee in the world) but I know people who have and it was not cute, not cute at all. One way to prevent this is to talk to people who have had particular combinations of professors on their committees. Find out what they did and what they would do differently to prevent an incident from occurring.

5) Talk to your chair. This may be the most important relationship that you have of all of your committee members. You must tell your chair what you expect of them. Everyone has different styles and I don't mean to imply that you should be arrogant or disrespectful in your demands. However, it's important to remember that this is **your orals**, it should be **the best experience for you**. Your professors already had their exams; now it's time for them to work for you. Your chair is there to help you control the room. Some professors are more experienced at chairing than others and as a result they already know what to do. For others you may have to be explicit about your needs. Your chair should protect and look out for you. Make sure that you feel comfortable telling them any concerns that you have. That way they can look out for certain things and bail you out of tough spots. **Choose your chair carefully and tell them what you want.**

VI- Lists

1) You have three areas that you will focus on. If at all possible you should try to connect your areas thematically. My areas have the very obvious theme of race (see attached). They also have a macro to micro order to them. Think about what each area has to do with your dissertation and connections should appear.

2) Some people choose their areas by what they have already read and some by what they want to read. In general I think you will blend the two. Remember each area should be broad enough that you could teach a course on it and specific enough that there is a point to it. Too often people want to put every book that they ever thought was interesting on the list. Remember anything you put on your list is up for grabs in terms of questioning by your committee, so choose carefully. This is not the time to show them all that you have read. Chances are they have read more than you have and they could care less about quantity anyway.

3) Start by looking at other peoples' lists. Look at the lists of people whose work is as closely related to yours as possible. There is probably some sort of (un) official cannon. This will become clear as you see what common texts and/or authors appear on different lists. As you look at peoples' lists highlight the readings that interest you. That is, mark the ones that "could go on the list". Don't worry if you have a whole bunch. The highlighting process allows you to get your feet wet. After you have highlighted, next to each reading write why you picked that book. Was it on everyone's list and so you figured you should add it to yours too? Did you read it earlier and it transformed your thinking? Does it represent everything that you stand for? Or everything that you stand against? Did someone you admire tell you "you gotta read this book"? This process can be quite time consuming. If you don't have the time to write why you highlighted each reading at least give yourself sometime to think about it.

4) Then ask yourself "If I were going to talk for a couple of hours what would I want to talk about? What do I have to say? How can I divide my talk into three areas? How can these areas reflect some of what I have learned and some of where I am going? Then look at back at other people's lists. What were their areas? Do different people have the same basic area with five different titles? Hopefully some ideas will come. Try to pick three areas to work with. These will probably change but you have to start somewhere.

5) For each area write a blurb, a paragraph that outlines what your thoughts are on the area. What you want to say about it. For example my first area was "Race and Education". This is very broad but I knew I wanted to talk about larger theories of race and their impact on

education. I also wanted to focus on Black people. By writing the blurb I was forced to take a stand about what I was and was not talking about in a particular area. A friend recently suggested that you should think about each blurb as an abstract of a paper. This will prove invaluable when trying to choose which books should be included on your list and which should be saved for your “spare time”. (You might remember “spare time” from your early childhood).

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6) After you write your blurb write 3 or 4 guiding questions for your area. These are questions that the books on your list will help you answer. Do not expect your committee to ask you these questions in the session. However, you should know the answers by the day of the exam. These questions are for you. They, like the blurb will keep you focused and will help with list compilation. At this point I feel compelled to remind you that what I am writing is simply a guide. Many people have different ways of doing things. You may look at some lists and people have questions and no blurb or vice versa. Some people may have a title and only a list. To each his own. I am telling you what worked for me.

7) O.K. the moment you’ve been waiting for (drum roll please....) now it is time to put together your list. Because of all of your amazing prep work putting the list together is now fairly simple. Look at your blurbs and your questions and choose books and articles that address what you wrote. Make your list a mixture of what you feel is essential for someone to read if they were taking a course on your area, what you have read that inspired you and what you really want to read. Now comes the tricky part while these categories are not mutually exclusive I recommend limiting the texts that you haven’t read yet. Find a balance. Remember some books belong on your orals list and some you “should” read before you finish your dissertation or in your lifetime. Not every interesting book on your area belongs on your list. I recommend choosing 15-20 texts for each list and then showing your list to the committee member who will take the lead in that area. I suggest 15-20 because professors always add readings. They don’t usually take things off of your list unless you ask them their opinion on a specific text. Since this is your exam remember that you should try to take as much control as possible. You will inevitably cite something or someone who is not on your list. You will know more concepts and texts than what will appear on your final list. I have heard that in the school of education each area has 25-30 readings (total 75-90). In other departments like Ethnic Studies and English these numbers are usually larger. Again, I recommend showing your committee a fraction of these numbers because *they will add readings*. In terms of content again look to you blurbs and questions for guidance. Also consider that you may have texts that represent a viewpoint that is contrary to yours. This can often provide a nice way to position your arguments. Instead of saying “some people say xyz” you can ground you statements by saying “Jimmeny Cricket argues xyz and I disagree with him on three main points of his arguement.”

8) It is also nice to consider works written by your committee members and or works that they have put on their syllabi repeatedly in classes they have taught. In the case of his own books and articles, one friend's advisor asked her "How come none of my stuff is on here?" While my advisor said "Why do you have one of my books on here? How is that going to help?" Use your discretion, but consider it. Some people will put their own works on there and you may have to navigate how to criticize them to their face. This is a good skill to learn, so don't run away from it.

9) Articles are your friends. It's nice to say that you have read so and so's whole book. But you will be reading a lot of stuff so give yourself a break. Ask yourself “will an article from a

particular person tell me the same basic stuff as the book?” If so, maybe you want to put the article on your list and not the whole book. You want to have a “nice balance” (this means different things for different people) of books and articles.

10) Keeping control- One technique that I used to keep control of who and what was on my lists was when a professor tried to add a reading I asked “do you think this is essential for my orals or should I read this for my dissertation?” That way I acknowledged that they thought this was important for me to read and I committed to reading it, but I forced them to articulate if it was important for me to read right away.

11) When you are ready to finalize your list you should be able to say why each reading is on your list. “I should read it” is not good enough. You should be able to make a clear and convincing argument about why it cannot be taken off. “One of my committee members won’t come to the exam if I take this off of my list” is an acceptable answer☺

VII- Studying Reflections and Techniques

Treasure this time

Studying for orals may be the only time in your life when your main job is to read texts that you care about. It is a privilege to be in graduate school and to have this opportunity. Stay grounded and be humble, recognizing that as hard as school is, many people don't have the chance to do what we are doing. Enjoy reading and remember you chose most if not all of these texts for a reason.

Remember that you are smart

For many of us graduate school is an emotional and psychological challenge. We are constantly forced to demonstrate that we are smart enough, quick enough or strong enough to be at our beloved university. The orals process can make you question yourself in ways that you can hardly imagine. I found myself calling on my friends for support more than ever. In order to get through the experience I returned to church after an 8-year absence and I went back to therapy. I share this personal information because I have seen other brilliant people question their intellectual worth when they get to this stage of graduate school. My friends, church and therapy continue to help me remember that I am capable of doing anything I put my mind to. If you find yourself in a slump, feel free to reach out. As I said earlier, none of us get through challenges like graduate school alone. I don’t know anyone who has gotten through orals alone. Don’t try to be the first, it’s not worth it.

Know Yourself

When studying for orals or writing your dissertation you should think about what works for you / what are your modes of “scholastic productivity.” For me, I need to work with people and or be around people. I am not very productive when I work in my house alone. So I go to cafes or libraries, I invite people over to study or I go to their homes. I need to work during the day usually in the mid - morning or evening. When I studied for orals I studied all of the time, but I was most productive in the morning and evening. It is important that you tap into what works for you.

Stay Healthy

Orals can be a stressful time and stress can equal sickness for many of us. Try to pick at least one day a week to sleep in. Eat good food. A friend (who has many fancy degrees) recommended what she calls "brain food." She says that there are certain foods that help you remember information. Specifically she recommends: fish, bananas, coconut or anything that has essential fatty acids. She calls it "greasing your brain." She also recommends natural vitamin supplements like 'Super Nutrition Einstein's Favorite with Ginko and DMAE' and 'Mental Edge.' I can speak for the Einstein's tablets. I took those and I really remembered more stuff. I must say that it could have been due to excitement or exercise also. But for those of you who try to get through studying with common "bad for you" drugs like coffee/caffeine this might be a nice alternative.

Study with a friend

The processes of studying for your orals and writing your dissertation can be extremely isolating if you let them. I was blessed enough to have a close friend to study with for part of my orals process. This helped in a number of ways. First it allowed me to bounce ideas off of someone. Second, when I felt dumb it was nice to have someone remind me that I am smart. Third, it kept me grounded. We were able to remind each other that it was "just orals". It is important that you study with someone you trust. You want to be able to share your thoughts without feeling threatened. There may be a bit of competition between you, given that many of us were raised in American "gotta be the first and best" culture. If your study partner is a friend, then it should all work out in the end.

Plan your study / Orals Syllabus

1) Once you have your lists, get a calendar and decide what your goals are for each week. Basically make yourself a syllabus. Some people spend six months studying for orals and some people spend two months. I found that about three solid focused months worked for me. (It is important to note that I spent the summer before my orals beginning the study process. I read a little and did some writing for another project.) I started counting the three months in the fall when I was able to dedicate all of my time to studying. If you have a family or other major obligations you should factor that in. Think about how fast you read. I am a slow reader so I gave myself a lot of time. When making your syllabus give yourself a free week or two to catch up. You always go slower than you think you will. Consider holidays and travelling. You aren't going to read as much as you might think if you go to visit family for the holidays or over the summer. Many of us have experienced lugging work on a plane across the country just to bring it back undone. Now is a time to get real about time. The syllabus approach allows you to get a real handle on what you have left to read and summarize and what you have done. Also, cross readings off of your list when you are done (reading, summarizing and synthesizing). This will give a great sense of accomplishment and makes the task of studying more manageable.

2) A little reality check: You may not get through all of the reading on your list. You will plan and plan, but life happens. Don't freak out. Most of the people I talked to (including myself) had readings on their lists that they did not get to and we still passed.

Reading

1) With about a month and a half left to go before my orals I got the most important piece of advice I have received to date. **Read what you need.** I was in a café and bumped into a friend from the English department who had taken his orals the previous semester. I told him that I felt

totally overwhelmed and that I didn't think I would get through my lists. Ever! He told me to think about why I am reading a particular text. Since you helped create your list you should know why something is on there. If a professor added something to the list you should have asked them why they thought it was important for you to read for your orals. Is there a specific concept this reading explores? Or do you need to know the general summary of this text? This piece of advice helped me zoom through the rest of my lists. Before I sat down to read something I asked myself what do I want to get out of this? Then I read for that. **You should not feel compelled to read every text from cover to cover.** If you do, you may never finish. When you are in the midst of reading and you feel overwhelmed just ask yourself: Am I reading what I'm needing? (Hey, that rhymes! If this Ph.D. thing doesn't work out I may try rap. I mean if Cornel West can do it, why can't I?)

2) Many people have asked me if they should read one area after another. Well, this is kind of tricky. Taking my list as an example, you can see, I have sub areas under each main area of focus. I would read 1a then 2a then 3a, then 1b and so on. This way you get a "taste" of each area, and you have a sense of completion. You will want to schedule a mock orals before you are done reading everything. Planning to read a little in each area allows you to be better prepared. I'll say more about mock orals in a bit.

Book Reviews are your friend

I must share the joy of book reviews. Some books are on your list because you need to know generally what is in there. This is a key time for book reviews. I went to the information desk in Doe (the main library on campus) and asked about where to find good reviews. I won't take you through the process in this guide but I will say that you want to look at refereed journals and pay attention to page length. For example, you may see a 1page review of *The Bell Curve* in Newsweek and 5-page review in the Harvard Educational Review. Don't waste your time hunting down the Newsweek one. I encourage you to go to Doe and find out about book reviews. Doe is a good place to start because if you have books that are in areas that are not only education specific, you can often find all of the journals there or in Moffitt (they two libraries are attached). One of my committee members told me to look at book reviews instead of trying to read whole books. In some cases I used the reviews as an introduction and they highlighted important chapters that I then read. In other instances I only read the reviews and I didn't touch the book itself. "Don't worry it's not cheating, it's just being efficient." That is a direct paraphrased quote from one of my committee members.

Techniques- Individual Readings

1) Index Cards

One of my committee members gave me this technique and it is the main one that I used in my process. You will use one index card for each reading. I got three different colored pack for each of my areas, but I'm a little anal. Take a lined 4x6-index card (she used a 3x5, which I found too small and another friend used a 5x7, which I found too big, you do what you want). On the top of the lined side write the author, title and year of publication (another committee member stressed the importance of knowing when something was published so you know if it is old or new and if was written during a time period where people were all thinking and acting a particular way). On the first line write a one-sentence summary of the reading. Skip a line, then write a one-paragraph summary of the reading. On the back draw a vertical line about a third of the way to the left edge of the card. Title this area key words / concepts. On the right side of the line make three equal areas by drawing two horizontal lines. Title the top area (+

commendations), the middle area - critiques, and the bottom area evidence. The bottom area should be for evidence / proof that the text provides for a particular idea or concept (one of yours or someone else's). I found this approach helpful because I could fit my cards in my back pocket and carry them with me everywhere. If I was standing in line at the grocery store, I could study. It was very convenient. While I love this system I must say the approach of having all of your summaries handwritten and not stored in a computer is nerve racking. Some technologically savvy people could save computerized summaries in a small font on paste them onto index cards. I didn't get that far.

Front

Author	Title	Year of Publication
1) One sentence summary		
2) One paragraph summary		

Back

Key Words / Concepts	+ / Commendations
	- / Critiques
	Evidence this text provides

2) Annotated Lists

This is the most straightforward approach and most people use a computer program of some kind. Basically after you read a piece you summarize it (for what you want to get out of it, remember to “read what you need” in a paragraph or two. The key here is that you put your summaries as part of your lists. So you have everything together. Many people do this is word-processing programs like Microsoft Word or bibliographic programs like End Note. Whatever floats your boat.

3) Sound Bites with key vocabulary words

An alumnus of my program shared this technique with me and I think it's fabulous. This is kind of a combination of #1 and #2. For each reading and / or author write a phrase or sentence that

will help you remember the bulk of the text. For example, I might put “Bowles and Gintis-school sets you up for work.” Then at the end of each area write a list of key vocabulary words that you need to know when discussing that area. Be sure to cite people whose definitions you are using directly or who help you develop your own unique definition.

Techniques -Synthesizing

1) Butcher Paper and Post its

This approach is for the visual learner. A friend took some post its and as she was inspired by a reading or idea or whatever she wrote it on a post it (always citing a person). On butcher paper she wrote themes that she wanted to address. She placed the post its under the themes and moved them around as she became inspired to do so. This allowed her to get out of the area-focused approach and look across areas at themes and ideas. She found that people from her first area were talking to people from her second and third areas. I like this technique because it reminds you that the areas we have chosen are artificial and that we should not feel bound by them. In my exam I used references from the first area in the second and so on. Your committee cares that you have a command of the material and that you can support your arguments. They are not going to worry if you are using an idea from an area you are not discussing at that moment. Remember they are not testing you to see if you can summarize each and every reading. They want to make sure you can synthesize and move across concepts and themes.

2) Area papers

That said, one way to bring your ideas together is to write. For the writer types this is a great technique. A friend of mine wrote three thirty page papers, one for each area. They acted as kind of literature reviews that focused on the themes for that area. While this can be time consuming it helped him “put it all together”. He planned for it and was done with his papers with a week to spare before his exams. Another benefit of the area paper is that he can now use some of that writing for his literature review chapter in his dissertation. Remember you should connect your three areas to your dissertation research. That’s how you determine what should go in your blurbs and what you are reading for.

3) Drawing

Again for the visual learners, you can draw a road map of how your themes connect. You can use Venn-diagrams, arrow or whatever you like.

Questions and Talking

1) Six types of questions

After talking to my committee members I identified six types of questions you can anticipate being asked in your exam. I think the titles are pretty self-explanatory.

Type 1- Basic Concept / Definition (e.g. What is race? What do you mean by X,Y,Z?)

Type 2-What’s out there? / Lay of the land (e.g What are some competing theories about the most effective kind of professional development for teachers?)

Type 3-What’s your take on it? Who do you support / critique? (e.g. What do you think we should do to eliminate the achievement gap in schools?)

Type 4- Compare one theorist or idea to another (How does art relate to power? or How would Paul Gilroy respond to Cathy Cohen's assertion that we need to look for broader definitions of

Blackness?) Note: This kind of question usually comes up after you have mentioned a specific person or idea. It is a common “follow-up” type of question.

Type 5-What empirical evidence supports your assertion? (What evidence do you have that teacher reflection will improve teacher practice?)

Type 6-What are the implications? / Applications to real life situations (If you could propose a district wide professional development plan to the superintendent of Oakland public schools what would it look like? or If you were teaching a class for student teachers about race and teaching how would the class be structured, what books would they read and why?) Assume that all of these kinds of questions end with “and why?”

2) Talking to yourself

I found that after I read a few books and articles I needed to speak. Unfortunately there wasn't always someone around to listen to me. I decided to talk to myself just to get ideas out of my head and into the universe. Also I wanted to hear how I would answer particular questions. I wanted to know if my speech would match my thoughts. When I was in public this became embarrassing, so I came up with a nifty idea. I took out my cell phone and pretended like I was talking to someone else, even though I was just talking out loud! I also used the more explicit technique of talking into a tape recorder. I taped my some of my study sessions and mock orals. I must say that the taping method was mostly to make me feel better. I never got around to listening to the tapes. But I still have them. The friend who recommended the taping technique said that she played the tapes as she went to sleep so that she could hear herself talking about complex issues in her sleep. She said it made her feel more comfortable about what she was saying. She is a little hard core. Another friend who struggles with feeling comfortable speaking in academic language said that taping herself boosted her confidence because she could hear herself speak and focus on what she wanted to improve.

3) Best and Worse case scenario preparation

The hard core friend who told me about the butcher paper, tape recording and post it's also suggested that I visualize everything that could possibly go wrong and prepare for it. She talked to all of her friends that took their orals and asked them what went wrong for them. She wrote all of their experiences down and then thought about what she would do if it happened to her. For example, one person had an experience where two professors who disagreed intellectually basically used her to have an argument. One professor would ask her a question and then before she could finish the other would have a retaliatory question. It is said that orals should feel like you are having a conversation and not like an exam. I think this is true, but in this case the conversation turned sour. If that had happened to me I would have looked to my chair to take control. If she didn't then I would have stayed silent while they argued and tried to make a summary point that mentioned the heated process that had just occurred. This is easier said than done, and really it didn't happen to me so who knows how I would have actually responded in the moment. The point is try to anticipate the bad stuff. On the flip side of things, I think visualizing the good things that can happen and asking people for positive stories from their orals is also helpful.

4) Practice sessions with friends / colleagues

Just like you want to have a study buddy to practice with, it is also nice to have short practice sessions with people. This is not the same as a mock orals (more on that in a bit). A practice

session can be focused on just one or two of your areas. If you have a friend who knows a lot about one area spending some time answering questions about just that stuff can be helpful.

5) Meeting with committee members

You should meet with each of your committee members at least twice: once to go over and finalize your list and once to practice. It is good to get a sense of what kinds of questions they will ask you. Each time you meet with them have an updated copy of your lists and any questions that you have for them. I showed each committee member only the list for the area they were taking the lead on in the beginning. At my last meeting with each of them I gave them the whole list. Show them some of the list; show them all of the list, it doesn't really matter. What matters is that you practice with them as many times as possible until you feel comfortable. I met with my chair twice to go over the process and expectations. I met with each of the other committee members anywhere from 2-4 times depending on the area. If you have a professor that you don't know very well, you may want to meet with them more, just so you get in tune with each other. I recently heard of a professor who said that she "doesn't do practice sessions." If this is the case for you try to get as much information about what kinds of questions they are going to ask you, and then talk to people who have had them on their committees in order to get a picture of what their personality is like.

You pass the exam in those meetings. You position yourself and your opinions in terms of being a colleague. Give them copies of your qualifying papers. This helps them get an idea of how you have been thinking about things. Don't get offended if they don't read them. They are busy people. By the time you sit for your exam you should have a handle on how your intellectual view matches with theirs. Note: It's o.k. if you don't agree on everything. The idea is to know what you think and believe, and then be able to say something about it. Remember your committee wants you to succeed. (Well usually, I have to admit I have heard stories of professors seeming like they wanted the person to do poorly. All I can say is try to get supportive people on your committee.)

6) Mock orals

I have saved the best for last. Mock orals were the key to my success in the orals process. I suggest that you plan to have three having mock exams, knowing that you will probably only do one or two. The first should be about 4-6 weeks before the big day. The last should be about 1-2 weeks before the big day. Whenever you schedule your mocks you want to have something to say *in all three of your areas*, otherwise just stick to practice sessions. This has implications for how you set up your orals syllabus. I planned on reading my areas in order. I found that by the time I wanted to take my first mock I hadn't read anything in area three. I then had to adjust my syllabus, but you, you can plan ahead! (Lucky Stiffs!) Your mocks should have three-four people, usually friends and or colleagues from your department. If you can get an outside person, do it. It helps make it more real. Designate who will take the lead on each area and who will act as chair. You could have people role play the individual on your committee or they can just be themselves. Try to have your chair be someone who has taken their orals already, so they know what it's really like. Give your mock committee the list in advance. Book a room, preferably the one your actual exam is in. Bring food, it's nice to treat your friends like you would treat your professors. Go through the structure as outlined in section IV. The two greatest benefits of mock orals are demystifying the process and getting the experience answering the "follow up" and "statement" type questions (not outlined above). These questions are in the moment. The follow up is when people ask you about something you said; sometimes

they want clarification, or expansion. The statement type is when a professor really wants to talk / make a statement, but acts like they are asking a question. These kinds of questions can be good. They may mean that the person is actually listening to you and not thinking about their grocery list. It can also mean that the exam is becoming more like a group conversation where you are the center, and that's a good thing. (It can also mean that they are trying to show off, but let's focus on the positive!) Ask your mock committee to really focus on asking follow up type questions. Since you can practice some questions ahead of time you want to use the mock to its full potential. You will answer the same question ten different ways depending on how you are feeling the moment they ask you about something. The mock allows you to be in the moment. Schedule your mocks for two hours. Spend about 20-30 minutes on each area and leave the rest of the time for debrief and reflection from your mock committee. Try to really listen to their feedback and take notes. They are there to help you.

Other Things to consider in preparation

-What is your committee reading? What have they written lately? What project are they working on now? Let's face it we all like to talk about our work. It is likely that your committee may ask you questions through the lens of their work or stuff that they are thinking about. Try to get a handle on what they are thinking about. Don't spend too much time on this. It's just a little something extra to consider.

-Read the newspaper and clip any articles that may relate to your work. It's a nice way to put your work in a current and lived context. Also it shows that what you're thinking about is hot news.

Frequently Asked Questions (That may not have been answered already)

-What if it's a week before and I'm not ready?

Your committee will not let you sit for your exams unless you are ready. If you are really concerned ask each of them if they think you are ready. If they don't think you are ask them to give you specific instructions about what to do, so that you will be ready. Then follow their instructions.

-What if I get asked a question during an exam and I have no clue how to answer?

If someone brings up a reading that is not on your list you can say, "You know I'm not familiar with that text." If you get asked a really big or complex question that no one can really answer you could say, "You know I don't think anyone knows, but here's how I would pursue it." And then give it your best shot!

VIII- Things to do before your exam (logistics)

1) Study (see above)

2) Let your program assistant know when you have set a date and time of your exam. Either you can find a room or s/he will find one for you. It is important to let them know time and place of your exam because s/he must bring your file to the exam. (Did you know you have a file? You do, and it doesn't hurt to check it every once in a while and make sure everything that is supposed to be in there is in there). Also your program assistant may choose to send out reminders to your committee members as you get closer to the date. Even if they don't send out

reminders, you should check in with your committee and make sure they remember. Believe it or not your committee members lives do not revolve around your orals.

3) You need to “apply” to take your orals at least one month before your exam date. This consists of filling out a form. Do this as soon as possible. You can apply to take your exam when all of your qualifying papers are signed off and your required course work is completed. (Note: I have heard that some people are allowed to take orals if they are currently enrolled in a required course, but I’m not sure. Check for yourself.) I was working on my final position / qualifying paper while studying for orals. This application process meant that I had to get my paper signed off at least a month before my exam. Try to finish your papers as soon as you can. It can be a drag to write a position paper and study at the same time.

4) Though the requirements are always changing, you usually have to get a prospectus signed off as part of taking your exam. Everything changes and is different in every department, but I figured I’d mention it just in case. Basically you should check with your program assistant about what needs to be in and when as soon as possible. Try to put a checklist of paperwork together for yourself, so that you don’t forget anything.

5) Also it is a tradition in the school of education to bring food and drinks for your committee members. This has been controversial, but it is expected. A friend recently told me that one of her committee members does not like students to bring a lot of food because it is "unfair to those students who either don't know or can't afford to do the same." Another one her committee members asked, "you are going to bring us some good food right?" This can be confusing. Check in with your committee members and see what they think. I think everyone expects you to bring a little something. I recommend getting to know what your committee likes to eat and / or drink. I happened to know that some of my committee members have a particular affinity for diet coke and another member really liked fruit. In one case I asked one person what they liked to eat. You can also ask your program assistant and/or other people who have had those professors on their committee. Don’t make a seven course meal; just bring something so they aren’t hungry. You want to make sure that everyone (including you) is as comfortable as possible. Hunger is uncomfortable.

6) The day before your orals do something relaxing and fun. This can be hard, but try. A good friend of mine was wonderful enough to buy me an hour massage and some time in a private hot tub at a local spa. (I love California.) I sat in the tub talking to myself. I shifted between talking about my areas and telling myself to stop thinking about orals and start relaxing. When it came time for the massage, the therapist was working on my shoulders and kept telling me to relax. I told her I was relaxed. Just because my shoulders were practically attached to my ears and solid as a rock didn’t mean that I wasn’t relaxed!!!! The point is do the best that you can.

IX- Timeline

Don't freak out if you can't work by this timeline. For example some of you are reading this guide and your orals date may be a month or a couple of weeks away. These are just some general benchmarks for you to consider; this is not the only way to do things. Don't forget it's just a guide.

6 months before your exam- start narrowing down who you want to sit on your committee and begin to compile other people's orals list in order to get some general areas.

4 months before your exam- start setting up your committee, and finalizing a date, time and place. Begin to finalize your list with each committee member. Create a study plan (syllabus). Start gathering articles and books. Remember that **you do not need to buy every book on your list**. We have many wonderful libraries that have many wonderful books that you can **borrow**. Also, try looking for used books in local (**independent!**) bookstores or on-line.

3 months before your exam- start implementing the plan. If this plan includes finishing a qualifying paper, remember all of the deadlines that may apply. Give your self some time for revisions and communicate with the people reading your papers. Say, “I am taking my orals and they are set for x.y.z date so I need to have all of my papers signed of by x,y,z date. When can you get this back to me for revisions?” Don’t be obnoxious; just be assertive. *You are responsible for your education. Nobody is forcing you to get a Ph.D.*

X- The Big Day Itself

What to Bring

1) Bring yourself and your wonderful mind. Also bring food, copies of your list for your committee (I know you already gave them a copy, but they may forget to bring it) and a pen and paper. You are allowed to have your list and blank paper in front of you during your exam.

Questions and Answers

1) As I stated earlier I have found six basic types of questions that people will ask. But in my experience the follow up questions to what you say are the ones to look out for. I could have brainstormed 8,000 questions and I still wouldn’t have been fully prepared for some of the questions I got. For example, in a response to a question in one area I talked about the power dynamics behind race in this country. In another area I talked about teaching as an art form. Later one committee member asked me “What do you see as the relationship between power and art?” Now take a second to flip through my orals lists. Do you see any guiding questions, or blurbs that talk about the relationship between power and art?!? After getting on her case about asking me such a hard question, I answered it based on what I was passionate about- teaching. I said something about the power dynamics behind our choices of how and what to teach, and the aspect of art comes into play because even though we may gather the materials and visualize the outcome, teaching, like art, is about creativity, being in the moment and the dynamic interaction between materials, ideas and humans. As a result we are constantly creating and recreating the experience. It was fancier when I said it that day, but hopefully you get my point- there are certain questions that you cannot anticipate. I was able to respond to that question because I was clear about what I wanted to say about teaching. I cared deeply about my areas and I interpreted every question through the lens of what I wanted to think and talk about. There are many ways to talk about art and power, and teaching was the way that made the most sense to me in that moment.

2) I recommend outlining your answers before you start. If it is a particularly complex question you can write it down or write notes down. In some cases writing interrupts the flow of a “discussion-like” atmosphere. In other instances it helps slow down a pace that may be getting out of control or may be too fast. I found that until I slowed down by writing, the pace was fast and none of my committee members ate because we were all into the conversation. While it was nice to be in the midst of this heated and friendly conversation, it was tiring. By outlining the question first I mean: getting clear on what you are going to say before you say it. So you are

not just talking off of the cuff. For example, my first question was something like “What is race? How do people talk about it?” I responded by saying “I will answer that by focusing on two themes in discussion of race, biology and social formation” Then I answered in just that order. When I was done talking about biology stuff I said something like, “Now I will pick up the second theme, social formation.” Outlining your answer helps you and your committee know what you are going to say. In terms of content remember to think about what you want to say. What do you think? Often times there is no one right answer. Most importantly remember to cite. You should drop names like they are going out of style. When you make a statement ask yourself Who do I draw / stand on to say this? Usually I outlined my answers in my head right before I spoke. When I did write things down it was usually to help me remember whom I wanted to cite. Each of your answers should be contextualized by an author. Again it could be someone who you are disagreeing with, but it has to be someone. Finally, it is o.k. to use people more than once. You will have certain theorists who you lean on more than others and that’s cool. Try to use different people but just remember to cite!!!!

3) Some people have asked me how they can return to something that they want to talk about if the conversation gets away from them. First, look to your chair. Hopefully they can help out. Second, try to rephrase the questions in terms of the themes you want to discuss. Remember you may walk in with an idea about what you want to say, but if it really turns into a conversation, who knows where it will go. If you are clear about what you are thinking about you can usually make the conversation work for you.

4) Don’t forget to refer to your research (past, present and future). Remember you have done research of some sort in order to be in that room, value it enough to share it.

Gain clarity on your next steps

Before you leave the room remember to gain clarity on your next steps. If you choose to have your dissertation proposal meeting separate from your orals, this might be an excellent time to schedule that meeting. (If you want to do this, remind your committee members to bring their planners). If you have your meeting there and they give you the go ahead to start your research, find out how they want to receive your writing. If you need to meet with individual people, then do that. Just make sure you know what to do next in terms of your research.

XI - What to do when you are finished

1) Celebrate. You should tell your friends when your exam is and try to have a few of them waiting for you when you get out. I felt really lightheaded (with joy) when I was done and it was great to have my friends waiting for me when I got out. They scooped me up, helped me pack up my belongings and took me for a celebratory lunch. My friends rock the house. I also called family members and told them how things went. Basically, share your joy.

2) Help other people out. This guide is one of the ways I am choosing to give back to my academic community, but I am also sitting on mock orals and giving advice (solicited or unsolicited- I like to talk). Anyway, remember to help those who are coming after you. That is how we build and maintain communities. I cannot stress this point enough.

XII - That’s It!

One of the last pieces of advice I got came from a professor in my program. He said don't be nervous. Remember this is an exam with a 99% passage rate! Every time I got nervous I tried to

think about his words. Well, now you are ready to go. I hope you have found this guide useful. Please share it with friends and colleagues. Good Luck and Peace. – Micia

AREAS OF STUDY FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

Of the many problems with race in U.S. society, the one that I have committed myself to investigating in my research is that of racial inequality in schools. In order to understand this problem we must understand what "race" is and how it functions in this country. The works in this list will analyze race and its impact on schools from two different levels. The first area takes up the macro level, which looks at theories of race in society as a whole and schools in general. The second area, a micro-level of investigation, will address the impact of race on classroom practice, as well as analyze how race becomes conflated with culture in a classroom level analysis. Finally, the last area presents research that offers solutions to racial inequality in schools and specifically in classrooms, through professional development. In total my analysis will use race to explain inequality in schools and to understand some of the attempts to address that inequality.

Area 1 - Race and Education

1A- Theories of Race (Focus on Blackness)

I rely here on various theorists that frame an analysis of the formation and function of race. Some structural theorists argue that race is inextricably tied to economics and explain racial inequality in terms of its connection to class. Others address race in terms of how socio-economic structures center or marginalize specific racial groups. Critical race theorists have adopted a race lens to explain inequality in this country. They explore how race has impacted this country, such as through opportunity structures, using historical, economic and legal examples. Finally, Afrocentrists move from race to a cultural analysis by placing the differences between "African culture" and Western culture at the center of their analysis of racial inequality. They argue that because of this mismatch between cultures, institutions like schools will not serve the needs of African students and inequality will persist. Together these theories frame an understanding of how race has been understood in the last century.

Asante, M. (1987) *The Afrocentric Idea* Philadelphia: Temple University Press

Clark, K. (1965) *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power* New York: Harper and Row

Cohen, C. (1999) *Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Collins, P. H. (1991) *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment* New York: Routledge

Cruse, H. (1967) *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* New York: Quill

Davis, F.J. (1980) Chapter 1 in *Who Is Black? One Nations Definition* University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press

Fanon, F. (1967) *Black Skin, White Masks* New York: Grover Press

Gilmore, R. (1993) "Public Enemies and Private Intellectuals: Apartheid USA" *Race and Class*, 35,1

- Gilmore, R. (1991) "Decorative Beasts: Dogging the Academy in the Late 20th Century" *California Sociologist*, 14,42
- Hall, S. (1996) "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity" In D. Morley and K. Chen (Eds) *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*
- Lemelle, S. (1993) "The Politics of Cultural existence: Pan Africanism, Historical Materialism and Afrocentricity" *Race and Class*, 35,1
- Lorde, A. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House" in *Sister Outsider* Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press Feminist Series
- Marger, M (1994) Chapter 1 in *Race and Ethnic relations: American and Global Perspectives* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing
- Moynihan, D. P. (1965) *The Negro Family: Case for National Action* Washington D.C.: Department of Labor
- Myrdal, G. (1944) Introduction to *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* New York: Harper and Bros.
- Omi, M and Winant, H. (1994) *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960's to the 1990's* New York: Routledge
- Wilson, W.J. (1978) *The Declining Significance of Race* Chicago: University Of Chicago Press
- West, C. (1993) *Race Matters* New York: Vintage Books

1B- Race in Schooling and Urban Education

This area will focus on schools because as many researchers have noted, they provide a great potential for change. As microcosms of the larger society, schools provide daily manifestations of racial inequality, reflecting socioeconomic structures and functions of this nation. This area will situate theories about race in relation to the processes of urban schooling. These texts will help define urban education and draw out the complex interaction between race, class, power and difference in urban education. Given the connection between schools and the larger society, this analysis has implications for practical responses to inequality in this country as a whole.

- Anyon, J. (1997) *Ghetto Schooling: The Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform* New York: Teachers College Press
- Cohen, J. (1993) "Constructing Race at an Urban High School: In their minds, their mouths, their hearts" In L. Weis and M. Fine (eds) *Beyond Silenced Voices: Class, Race and Gender in United States Schools* Albany, NY: SUNY Press
- Giroux, H. (1992) "Redefining the Boundaries of Race and Ethnicity: Beyond the Politics of Pluralism" In *Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the politics of Education* New York: Routledge

Hernstein, R. and Murray, C. (1994) *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life* New York: Free Press

Ladson-Billings, G. and Tate, W. (1995) "Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education" *Teachers College Record* 97, (1), 47-68

Noguera, P. (1996) "Confronting the Urban in Urban Education" *The Urban Review* 28,1

Oakes, J. (1985) *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality* New Haven: Yale University Press

Payne, C. (1984) "Black Bastards and White Millionaires" and "Westside Production of Disorder" in *Getting What We Ask For: The Ambiguity of Success and Failure of Urban Education* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press

Woodson, Carter G. (1990, 1933) *Miseducation of the Negro* Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press

Area 2 – Race and Teaching in Urban Education

2A- Teacher's Work and Racial Conflict

This area will take the discussion of race in schools further by examining the roles and experiences of classroom teachers in urban schools. These works investigate the work of teachers in schools and how discussions of race complicate that work. Specifically, researchers in this list have focused on a perceived mismatch between white teachers and Black students and viewed it as a conflict. In so doing they have complimented many of the mismatch theories of Afrocentric researchers. If we know more about the racial issues between White teachers and Black students in schools we can make better connections with the experiences of other teachers and students. In all sum this area will articulate the problems associated with race and teaching.

Cochran-Smith, M. (1995) "Uncertain Allies: Understanding the Boundaries of Race and Teaching" *Harvard Educational Review* 65(4), 541-570

Delpit, L. (1990) *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflicts in the Classroom* N.Y.: The New Press

Dyson, A. (1997) "On the Meaning of Difference: Identifying Who and What is Different" In *What Difference Does Difference Make?: Teacher Reflections on Diversity, Literacy and The Urban Primary School* Urbana, IL: NCTE

Fordham, S. and Ogbu, J. (1986) "Black Students' School Success: Coping with the 'Burden of Acting White'" *The Urban Review* 18,3 176-206

Foster, M. (1997) *Black Teachers on Teaching* New York: The New Press

Friere, P. (1970) Chapters 1, and 2 in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* New York: Continuum

Haberman, M. (1994) "The Pedagogy of Poverty Versus Good Teaching" In Kretovics, J and Nussell, E. (eds.) *Transforming Urban Education* Boston: Allyn and Bacon

Hargreaves, A. (1994) *Changing Teachers, Changing Times* New York: Teachers College Press

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Labov, W. (1982) "Objectivity and Commitment in Linguistic Science: The Case of the Black English Trial in Ann Arbor" *Language and Society* (2)

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2B- Culture in the Classroom

A great deal of research has been conducted on the impact of culture on the classroom. Embedded in these discussions of culture are dialogues about race and racial inequality, because race gets conflated with culture in this research. We can learn a great deal about different responses to racial inequality through these texts. This area will address the research on culture in classroom practices as it relates to race. Specifically, multicultural education and culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy have offered theoretical and practical solutions to cultural (mismatch) problems that emerge in the classroom. This area will explore these explanations and suggestions regarding the direction of classroom practice for increased equity.

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Ladson-Billings, G. (1994) *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

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McLaren, P. (1989) "Critical Pedagogy and the Egalitarian Dream" and "The Emergence of Critical Pedagogy" in *Life In Schools: An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundation of Education* New York: Longman

Nieto, S. (2002) "Introduction and Chapter 1" in *Language, Culture and Teaching: Critical Perspectives for a New Century* Mahwah, NJ: Lauren Erlbaum Associate Inc.

Area 3– Reframing Race in Professional Development

3A- The Evolution of Professional Development

This area will trace the changes in modern professional development for teachers. In discussing professional development I include teacher education because many teachers' pre-service training frames much of their teaching experience. Understanding teacher training is key because this area represents the greatest potential for teachers to improve their practice and contribute to the work to end racial inequality in schools.

The field of professional development has moved from a curriculum-centered focus to a teacher-centered focus. In contemporary professional development teachers are attempting to improve their practice by reflecting on it. For many this exercise involves reflecting on the impact of race in their classroom.

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Darling-Hammond, L. (1995) "Changing Conceptions of Teaching and Teacher Development" *Education Quarterly* v22 n4 p9-26 Fall

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Grossman, P. (1990) *The Making of a Teacher: Teacher Knowledge and Teacher Education* New York: Teachers College Press

Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. (ed.) (1992) "Teacher Development and Educational Change" in *Teacher Development and Educational Change* Bristol, PA: Falmer Press

Ladson-Billings, G. (1999) "Preparing teachers for Diverse Student Populations: A Critical Race Theory Perspective" *Review of Research in Education* Washington, D.C.: American Educational research Association:. 211-247

Little, J.W. (1993) "Teacher Professional Development in a Climate of Educational Reform" *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 15(2), 129-151

Schon, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner* New York: Basic Books

York, D (1997) "Preparing teachers for Tomorrow's Children: Cross-Cultural Training for Teachers" in King,J., Collins, E, and Hayman. W (eds) *Preparing Teachers for Cultural Diversity* New York: Teachers College Press

3B- Whiteness in Professional Development

Many White teachers work in schools filled with students of color. For many of them the racial differences that they experience are a challenge. The purpose of professional development is to help teachers meet the challenges they face in their practice. Much of the literature that discusses race and professional development focuses on helping white teachers understand how their race impacts what happens in their classrooms. This area explores theory about whiteness and the use of whiteness in teacher training, allowing a closer examination of the theories, processes and insights gained through that training.

Harris, C. (1995) "Whiteness As Property" in K. Crenshaw, N. Gotandu and K. Thomas *Critical Race Theory: Key Writings That Formed the Movement* New York: The New Press

King, J (1992) "Dysconscious Racism: Ideology, Identity and the Miseducation of Teachers" *Journal of Negro Education* 60(133-146)

Lawrence, S and Tatum, B.D. (1997) "White Educators as Allies: Moving from Awareness to Action" in Weis, L., et. al (ed) *Off White: Readings on Race Power and Society* New York: Routledge

McIntyre, A. (1997) *Making Meaning of Whiteness: Exploring Racial Identity with White Teachers* Albany: SUNY Press

Paley, V. (1979) *White Teacher* Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Sleeter, C. (1993) "How White Teachers Construct Race" In C. McCarthy and W. Chrichlow (eds) *Race Identity and Representation in Education* New York: Routledge

Guiding Questions

Area 1- Race and Education

- 1) How has race been formed historically and how does it function currently in this country?
- 2) What are varying explanations for how race and class interact in this nation?
- 3) What are the manifestations of racial inequality in urban education?
- 4) How do schools contribute to the perpetuation of racial inequality?

- 5) Given the widespread recognition of race as a social construction, are essentialist theories of race still relevant for explaining the teaching experiences for Black educators? Why or why not?

Area 2- Race and Teaching in Urban Education

- 1) What are competing conceptions of teacher's work?
- 2) How do issues of race and culture shape teachers' beliefs and work?
- 3) How do the manifestations of culture in the classroom compare to those of race?
- 4) What is the value of multicultural education and culturally relevant pedagogy?

Area 3- Reframing Race in Professional Development

- 1) How has professional development evolved in the last 30 years?
- 2) How have theories of Whiteness been used in teacher education?
- 3) Given the controversies about the role of race and teachers' work, what are various theories about the direction that professional development should move in?

Micia's Study Questions

(I did not show these to my committee- they were just for me!)

Area 1- Race and Education

Type 1- Basic Concept

- 4) What is race?
- 5) What is ethnicity?
- 6) What is culture?
- 7) What are some competing theories about race?
- 8) What is Critical Race Theory?
- 9) What is Afrocentrism?

Type 2-What's out there? / Lay of the land

- 1) How has race been formed historically and how does it function currently in this country?
- 2) What are varying explanations for how race and class interact in this nation?
- 3) What are some of the main theories regarding the relationship of race to education? How do these various theories explain, or in some cases justify, the racial disparities in school achievement in urban public school? [connect to points in history and the influence on education] (genetic/IG, class/economic, culture/family, social/racial restricted access/tracking, power relationships, identity, hidden curriculum/white norm)

Type 3-What's your take on it? (Who do you support / critique?)

- 5) How does race function in society today?
- 6) What are the manifestations of racial inequality in urban education?
- 7) How do schools contribute to the perpetuation of racial inequality?
- 8) Given the widespread recognition of race as a social construction, how are essentialist theories of race still relevant for explaining the teaching experiences for Black educators?
- 9) Despite critiques of genetic and cultural deficit theories, What accounts for the persistence of genetic/racial views as an explanation of academic success and failure and for the achievement gap between students of color and middle-class white students?
- 10) How have Blacks historically experienced the U.S. public education system?

Type 4- Compare one theorist or idea to another

Type 5-What empirical evidence supports your assertion?

- 1) What evidence do you have that a racialized achievement gap exists?

Type 6-What are the implications? / Applications

- 1) If you were to teach a class on race and education, what would it be like? [course description]

Area 2- Race and Teaching in Urban Education

Type 1- Basic Concept:

- 1) What is critical pedagogy?
- 2) What is culturally relevant teaching?
- 3) What is multicultural education?

Type 2-What's out there? / Lay of the land

- 1) What are some competing conceptions of teacher's work?
- 2) What are some key perspectives on multicultural education?
- 3) What are the competing analyses of what makes "effective teaching"?
- 4) How have educational inequities been perceived and addressed at the classroom level?
- 4) How has mis-match theory been used in describing the relationship between Black students and White teachers?
- 5) What has the research said about culture in the classroom?

Type 3-What's your take on it? (Who do you support / critique?)

- 1) How do issues of race and culture shape teachers' beliefs and work?
- 2) How do the manifestations of culture in the classroom compare to those of race?
- 3) What is the value of multicultural education and culturally relevant pedagogy?
- 4) What is the relationship between race, teaching and language? (relate to politics, debate on ebonics, labels)
- 5) How does Critical Pedagogy inform race and culture in the classroom? How can it help ameliorate racial inequities in schools?
- 6) How do teachers' understandings of race and culture impact their teaching?
- 7) How has mis-match theory been used in describing the relationship between Black students and White teachers?
- 8) What the problems associated with race and teaching?

Type 4- Compare one theorist or idea to another

- 1) How do Afrocentric theories relate to cultural mis-match theories?

Type 5-What empirical evidence supports your assertion?

- 1) What evidence do you have that race is a problem for some teachers?
- 2) What kind of practical solutions to cultural mismatch have multicultural education and culturally relevant pedagogy offered?

Type 6-What are the implications? / Applications

- 1) In talking to a superintendent what would you suggest about race and teaching?
- 2) If you wanted to recruit more teachers of color what would you do?

Area 3- Reframing Race in Professional Development

Type 1- Basic Concept:

- 1) What is professional development?
- 2) What is Whiteness?

Type 2-What's out there? / Lay of the land

- 1) How has professional development evolved in the last 30 years?
- 2) How have theories of Whiteness been used in teacher education?

Type 3-What's your take on it? (Who do you support / critique?)

- 1) Given the controversies about the role of race and teachers' work, what are various theories about the direction that professional development should move in?
- 2) How can teacher training help reduce inequality in schools? (teacher agency)

Type 4- Compare one theorist or idea to another

Type 5-What empirical evidence supports your assertion?

Type 6-What are the implications? / Applications

- 1) How would you imagine a Teacher Education program that would have a Critical Race Theory perspective? Describe the experiences participants could expect?
- 2) If you were hired to help a multi-ethnic group of urban teachers, what issues would you address in their professional development?
- 3) What can we learn from Whiteness and teacher education?