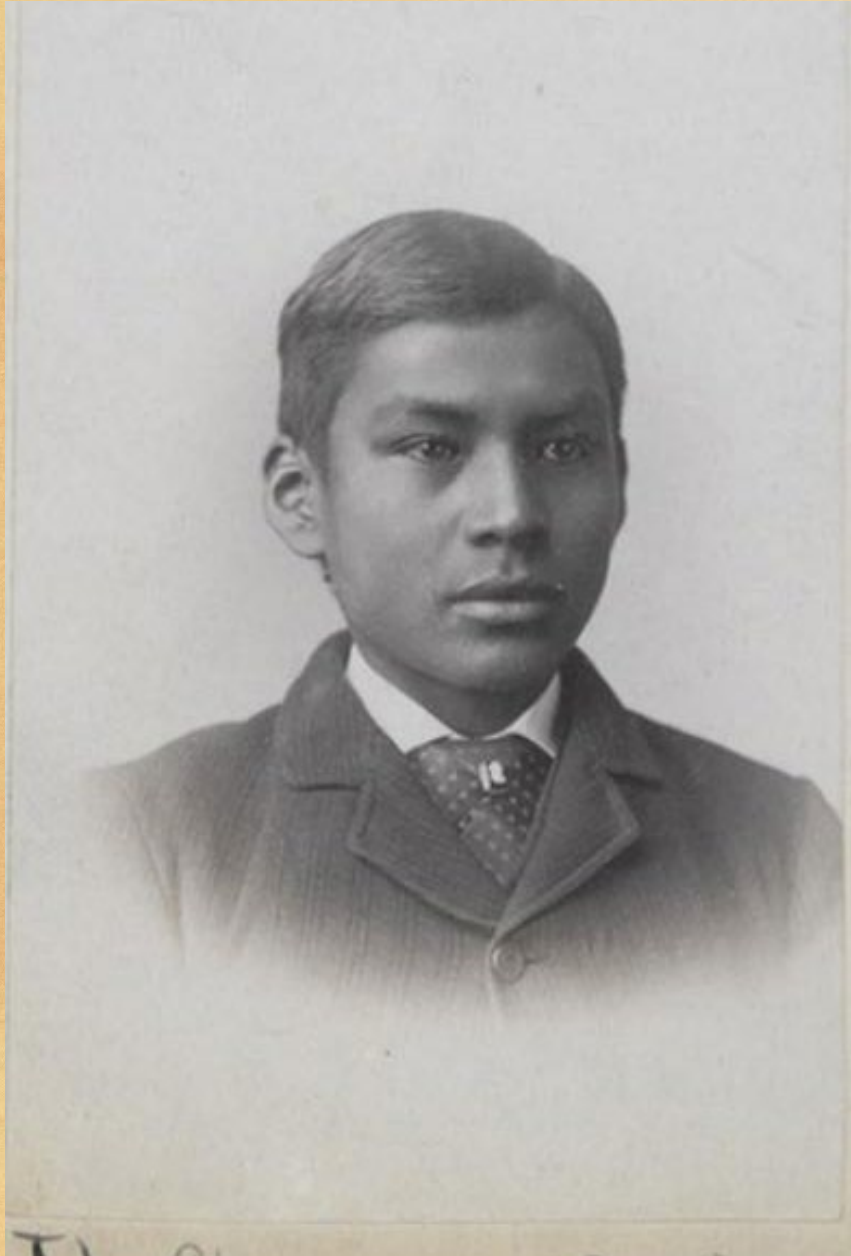




Interrogating Curricular Choices in Schooling for Indigenous Students

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**“Heritage”
is a
loaded word**

The Case Study



Research Questions

- How does a teacher's curricular choices impact students' sense of belonging?
- Do certain pedagogical practices marginalize diverse students?
- How does assimilationist ideology inherently shape curricular design?

Context of the School

- >50 years old
- “It is a diverse ethnic and socioeconomic area”
- 1,025 students, grades 9-12
- Academic Magnet:
Engineering & Computer
Science



Enrollment by Student Demographics and School Year

Sometimes
“DIVERSE”
is code for
non-White

	2023-2024
	43.1%
	56.9%
	2023-2024
Alaskan Native, non-Hispanic	3.1%
	0.6%
American, non-Hispanic	1.3%
of race	83.5%
aces, non-Hispanic	2.0%
White, non-Hispanic	9.6%
Tribal Affiliation Status	2023-2024
Tribal Affiliation	7.5%
No Tribal Affiliation	92.5%

Enrollment by Program and School Year

Receiving Free/Reduced-Price Meals	2023-2024
Free	99.9%
Not Participating	0.1%
English Learner Status	2023-2024
Current EL	18.5%
Not Currently EL	81.5%
Special Education Status	2023-2024
Students with Disabilities	24.9%
Regular Education and Gifted-only Students	75.1%



Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Framework

Tribal
Critical
Race
Theory

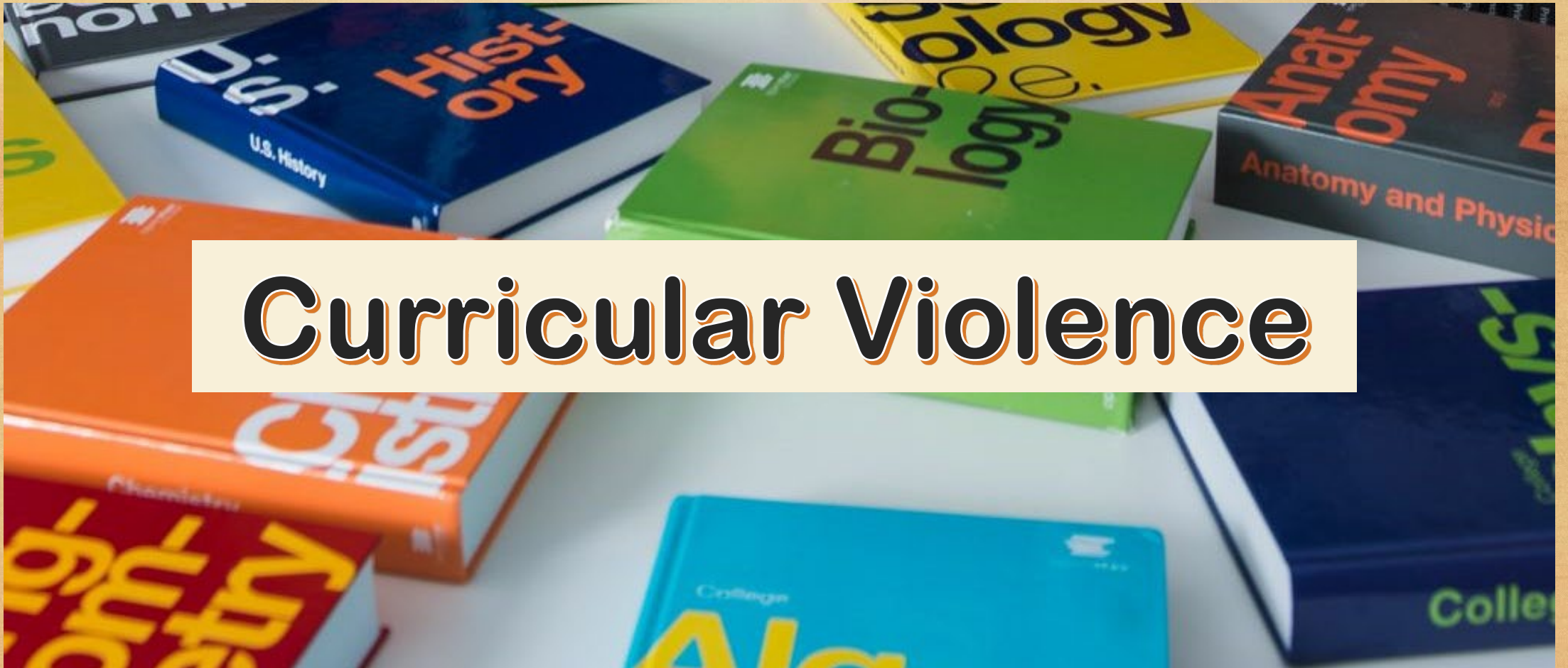
(Brayboy, 2005)

Culturally
Sustaining
Pedagogy

(Paris & Alim, 2017)

Culturally
Sustaining/
Revitalizing
Pedagogy

(Lee & McCarty, 2017)



Curricular Violence

“...curriculum designed to erase or otherwise marginalize voices, bodies, and experiences not accepted by or created for the benefit of white supremacist society.”
(Merchant, et. al. 2022)



“Invisibility is the modern form of bias”

Stephanie Fryberg, Ph.D.

Indigenous People are being left out of contemporary spaces in this country.

- INVISIBILITY
- OMISSION
- ERASURE

- Indigenous People portrayed in curriculum in pre-1900 contexts in academic standards in 50 states
- Media representations create our collective view of American Indians...
- Actions based on judgements made from misperceptions
- Implications for Accurate Representation

Curricular Choice

1. Colonization is endemic to society.
2. U.S. policies toward Indigenous peoples are rooted in imperialism, White supremacy, and a desire for material gain.
3. Indigenous peoples occupy a liminal space that accounts for both the political and racialized natures of our identities.
4. Indigenous peoples have a desire to obtain and forge tribal sovereignty, tribal autonomy, self-determination, and self-identification.
5. The concepts of culture, knowledge, and power take on new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens.
6. Governmental policies and educational policies toward Indigenous peoples are intimately linked around the problematic goal of assimilation.
7. Tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future are central to understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, but they also illustrate the differences and adaptability among individuals and groups.
8. Stories are not separate from theory; they make up theory and are, therefore, real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being.
9. Theory and practice are connected in deep and explicit ways such that scholars must work towards social change.

Tribal Critical Race Theory

Sustain:
Linguistic
Literate
Cultural
Pluralism

Culturally Sustaining
Pedagogies

Heritage Assignment

Context of the Curricular Choice

Heritage Assignment

Heritage Assignment

Unpack & Analyze

Discourse Analysis Framework

- Relational Approach Between Levels of Text
 - Social Structures
 - Social Relations
 - Discourse Genres

Heritage Assignment

Unpack & Analyze

- Assumptions
- Performative Cultural Relevance
- Omissions & Erasure

Heritage Assignment

Unpack & Analyze

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The “denial of my reality in academic spaces signals more than individual denial of others’ histories; it is a systemic denial within institutions built upon white cultural traditions that oppress and silence” those who are deemed different. (Christopher Emdin, 2016, p. 12)



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Weaponization of Education

Asynchronous Power Exercise of Agency

Power and Agency in the Classroom

Drop Out
Push Out
Erasure

“subtle cues push them out by telling them
they don’t belong” (Fryberg, 2018)

Application of CSRP

Pushback & Power

- Performative Inclusion
- Teacher Authority
- Fragility & Blame
- Student Agency

What can you do?

ERASURE AND CURRICULAR VIOLENCE

“...the ethical responsibility of educator is to liberate curriculum and pedagogy from Westernized schooling structures. Settler-colonial ideologies and structures through the schooling processes worked to disconnect Indigenous Peoples from their cultural traditions; therefore, Indigenous educators must find ways to reconnect and relearn their Indigenous languages, knowledge systems, values, and stories. In this regard, teachers are encouraged to be conscious of how their philosophy shapes their work in the classroom and be deliberate in choosing what to teach and how to teach.” (Shirley, ..., p. 17)

Interrogate and Unpack

PAUSE

- What is my positionality?
- How am I acknowledging the impactful curricular choices?
- What do I need to unlearn, relearn or reconsider?
- What spaces have I overlooked that could be sites of resistance and collaboration?
- How am I intentionally engaging Critical Indigenous Literacies in my classroom?

“Pedagogy, regardless of its name, is useless without teachers dedicated to challenging systemic oppression with intersectional social justice” (Bettina Love, 2019, p. 19)

Interrogate and Unpack

ACT

Curriculum Inventory:

- Textbooks
- Standards
- Lesson plans
- Discourse
- Classroom environment

Transformative teaching “essentially boils down to whether one chooses to do damage to the system or to the student (Emdin, p. 206)

Screening for Bias


ACT

Curriculum Inventory Tools:

- **WASHINGTON MODEL RESOURCE: Screening for Biased Content in Instructional Materials**
<https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2022-12/WA-ScreeningForBiasedContent.pdf>
- **ASSESSING BIAS IN STANDARDS AND CURRICULAR MATERIALS** Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED623049.pdf>
- **INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION** Forms of Bias in Textbooks and Instructional Materials <https://www.idra.org/equity-assistance-center/forms-bias-textbooks-instructional-materials/>
- **ANNENBERG EDEXCHANGE** Assessing Bias in Standards and Curricular Materials Toolkit
<https://edinstruments.org/instruments/assessing-bias-standards-and-curricular-materials-toolkit>

Screening for Bias

ACT

Dimension 	What the Inventory Asks You to Look For	Red Flags to Watch Out For
Gender & Sex	Are male and female characters equally depicted in leadership roles?	Women portrayed only in domestic roles while men hold professional positions.
Race & Ethnicity	Do historical and contemporary narratives feature non-White groups as active societal actors?	Historical whitewashing or studying minority groups only in isolated "special months".
Socio-Economic	Are various income levels, housing realities, and labor types depicted respectfully?	Implying that wealth equates to high intelligence or poverty equates to a lack of effort.
Family Structure	Are single-parent, LGBTQ+, and multi-generational households normalized in text examples?	Framing the nuclear family as the only standard or "default" family structure.
Language	Is non-discriminatory, neutral, and inclusive language used consistently?	Using gender-biased terms (e.g., <i>mankind</i> , <i>policeman</i>) or patronizing descriptors.

What impacts do your curricular choices make?

Dah'wah-eh

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