

# **Intergroup Dialogue**

Engaging Difference, Social Identities and  
Social Justice

*Edited by*

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**Intergroup Dialogue: Critical Conversations about  
Difference and Social Justice**

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Dialogue is a moment where humans meet to reflect on their reality as they make it and remake it ... through dialogue, reflecting together on what we know and don't know, we can then act critically to transform reality. (Freire, cited in Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 13).

To engage in dialogue is one of the simplest ways we can begin as teachers, scholars, and critical thinkers to cross boundaries, the barriers that may or may not be erected by race, gender, class, professional standing, and a host of other differences. (hooks, 1994, p. 130).

... for dialogue to be possible, people—particularly those who enjoy relative privilege—must take responsibility for identifying and reducing socially determined asymmetries that dictate who gets to speak, what forums and forms of speech are deemed legitimate, whose speech counts and to whom it counts. It is difficult to imagine what might motivate such efforts on the part of those who are comfortable within current social structures, but precisely this kind of imagining is needed. (Wood, 2004, p. xx).

Intergroup dialogue, the primary focus of this book, is a form of democratic engagement that fosters critical understanding, communication, and collaborative action across race and other social group boundaries about contentious issues in

educational and community settings. In education, intergroup dialogue has emerged as a promising social justice education practice that fosters meaningful and thoughtful conversations and learning about social justice issues such as racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ethno-religious oppression (Adams, 2007; Dessel & Rogge, 2008; Maxwell, Fisher, Thompson, & Behling, 2011; Mayhew & Fernandez, 2007; Zúñiga, Nagda, Chesler, & Cytron-Walker, 2007). An alternative to more formal “top down” instruction, intergroup dialogue engages multiple voices and experiences in the creation of shared meaning and new ways of thinking, relating, and acting, both inside and outside of the classroom. Intergroup dialogue may be broadly described as a democratic practice that fosters communication, critical self-reflection, analysis of social structures and conditions that contribute to social inequality; it also encourages collaborative social action across cultural and social divides. The goals of intergroup dialogue include critical co-inquiry, consciousness-raising about the causes and effects of social group inequalities, conflict transformation, and civic engagement in activities that foster learning and social change.

Challenged by increasingly polarized public debates about a number of pressing issues impacting public life in the United States (e.g., health care, school re-segregation, immigration, reproductive rights, gay marriage, and environmental pollution), more and more people from diverse backgrounds are engaging in dialogues across differences within local and regional communities, K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and workplaces. The call for dialogue as a way of addressing polarized issues is not new, but the growing number of institutional and grassroots efforts to establish and support dialogic practices in school cafeterias and libraries, college residence halls, houses of worship, and community centers represents widespread interest in this practice (Judkins, 2012; Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Thomas, 2010).

In the United States, intergroup dialogue practices gained national attention in the late 1990s as a result of President Clinton’s call for a national conversation on race and reconciliation across racial and ethnic boundaries (Schoem, Hurtado, Sevig, Chesler, & Sumida, 2001). The practice of intergroup dialogue, particularly in higher education, has been influenced by IGD,<sup>3</sup> the critical-dialogic educational model pioneered by the Program on Intergroup Relations at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, during a time of intense racial strife. The IGD approach to intergroup dialogue has been applied and extended in numerous settings and has been the focus of considerable empirical research (e.g., Gurin, Nagda, & Zúñiga, 2013; Lopez & Zúñiga, 2010; Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Zúñiga et al., 2007; Zúñiga, Nagda & Sevig, 2002). IGD and other approaches to intergroup dialogue have also gained recognition through various national and regional efforts, including the Ford Foundation’s “difficult dialogues” initiative, launched in 2005, and the work of other national organizations such as the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU), the Democracy Imperative, and the Deliberative Democracy Consortium (Thomas, 2010). Intergroup dialogues based on other practice models have also been initiated in K-12 schools and communities with the support of organizations such as Everyday Democracy (formerly called Study Circles), National Conference on Community and Justice, Public Conversation Project, and the Southern Poverty Law Center, among others (Dessel & Rogge, 2008; Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Walsh, 2007; Wayne, 2008). Despite this widespread interest in intergroup dialogues, these efforts are often underfunded and reflect the work of a small number of organizers and leaders, as well as the political and

institutional will of a handful of school principals or superintendents, college presidents or provosts, or community leaders (Chesler, Lewis, Crowfoot, & 2005; Thomas, 2010).

This book responds to the increased interest in intergroup dialogue by providing educators, practitioners, and researchers with a collection of empirically-based studies about the application and individual and collective impacts of a range of intergroup dialogue practices in formal and non-formal educational settings. These studies address various social justice issues, involve diverse populations, and reflect different and overlapping foundational and pedagogical frameworks. While the main focus of this volume is on intergroup dialogue practices in higher education and K-12 educational settings, we also include additional approaches to dialogue that have influenced the discourse and practice of intergroup dialogue across numerous cultural and institutional contexts. As a whole, the chapters in this book provide substantial support for the continuation and expansion of intergroup dialogue practices in multiple settings. In the following sections of this introduction, we examine the conceptual foundations of intergroup dialogue and situate intergroup dialogue as a social education between justice and pedagogy. Next we introduce approaches to intergroup dialogue reflected in this volume. After a brief review of prior research, we conclude with a discussion of contributions that the 11 chapters in this volume make to our understanding of intergroup dialogue.

## CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF INTERGROUP DIALOGUE

The dialogic practices that we refer to as intergroup dialogue are grounded in a variety of intellectual, cultural, and practice traditions (Dessel, 2011; Ellinor & Gerard, 1998; Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Zúñiga & Nagda, 2001; Zúñiga et al., 2007). Broadly speaking, intergroup dialogue practices are rooted in the dialogic and transformative learning traditions in education that were originally stimulated by the progressive education movement of 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s and inspired by the work of John Dewey (Diaz, 2009; Shapiro, Wasserman, & Gallegos, 2012). Intergroup dialogue practices have also been influenced by Martin Buber’s (1970) “I-Thou dialogic principle,” the intellectual and practical contributions of the intergroup education movement of the 1940 and 1950s, and Gordon Allport’s (1954) “intergroup contact hypothesis.” More recently, dialogic practices have been shaped by the writings of the postcolonial Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1970, 1974), who is known globally for his alternative theory of dialogue as “praxis,” and by critical, anti-racist, and feminist theorists and educators such as Patricia Hill Collins (1993, 2012), bell hooks (1994), and Iris Marion Young (1990). While there are important distinctions across these various intellectual legacies, all of these traditions underscore core humanist philosophical premises: the importance of subjectivity, the role of lived experience in the construction of meaning and generation of new knowledge, and the emancipatory potential of relational communication and learning.

### *Early Influences on Intergroup Dialogue*

Dewey (1916, 1938), a pragmatist philosopher who was deeply concerned about the relationship between education and democracy, underscored the centrality of experience and experimentation as ways to counter the negative impact of traditional rote learning practices on student engagement in public schools. He urged educators to

encourage democratic practices in their classrooms to help students develop the values, skills, and dispositions needed to engage in generative discussions and experimentation, and to prepare learners for democratic citizenship (Burbules, 2000; Preskill & Brookfield, 2009). Dewey believed that democratic educators needed to provide students with opportunities to work together and to build on their own experiences and on real life situations and problems to reflect critically about their experiences (Brockbank & McGill, 2000). Even though questions related to issues of identity, difference, and power were not addressed in Dewey's work, a set of dialogic and transformative education practices from citizenship education, learner-centered pedagogies, experiential learning, and constructivist approaches to teaching and learning are considered legacies of Dewey and the "progressive movement" in education (Adams, 1997; Banks, 2004; Cho, 2013).

In contrast, Buber's (1970) humanistic and existential philosophy of dialogue highlights the centrality of responsive communication to help actualize our ontological relational existence. In Buber's view, the "I-Thou" relationship allows for authentic and reciprocal responses that help break away from the tendency to manipulate or objectify relationships and to see them as a means to an end. While Buber stressed the importance of listening and being fully present and emphasized the idea of embracing the other as critical dimensions of dialogic communication and learning, he did not inquire into how social asymmetries might influence why some learners are more disposed to listen or the kind of personal work that is needed to be able to be open to do so. Regardless, Buber's work underscored the role of face-to-face interaction and self-awareness, in actualizing transformative learning.

Allport (1954), a social psychologist, became deeply interested in the cognitive nature of prejudice and how it shaped perceptions within majority-minority relations. Allport posited that internalized prejudices about social groups different from one's own could only be challenged through a form of relational learning structured under specific sociological conditions. The core premise was that if individuals from dominant ("majority") social identity groups were able to interact with members of non-dominant ("minority") social identity groups in an environment able to equalize asymmetrical relations under the right conditions, prejudice would be reduced. Allport proposed the following four conditions for this type of face-to-face encounter, commonly known as the "contact hypothesis": a) equal status (e.g., equal numbers of participants from participating groups); b) learning activities that actively engage participants in the development of a sense of common interest and shared humanity between the groups; c) shared goals; and, d) the support of institutional authorities (e.g., school principal, teacher, college president, city mayor). Allport's theory had a strong influence on the intergroup education movement of the 1950s and 1960s, which grew out of the social unrest following the Great Migration of large numbers of African Americans from the South to the industrial cities in the North (Banks, 2005). His theory also influenced contemporary pedagogical practices aimed at prejudice reduction, anti-racist, multi-cultural, or social justice education (Adams, 1997; Banks, 2005).

#### *Contemporary Influences on Intergroup Dialogue*

While many earlier philosophers and educators largely ignored the role of power and status in cross-group encounters, they laid the groundwork for the contributions of critical, post-colonial, anti-racist, and feminist theorists and educators. One of the most

powerful influences on contemporary intergroup dialogue practice, Paulo Freire (1970), made dialogue the center of his educational philosophy and in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* argued for a sociopolitical and constructivist view of knowledge and dialogical ways of teaching and learning. Freire viewed dialogue as inextricably linked to processes of *conscientization* (consciousness-raising) and education for freedom (see also Freire, 1974). In contrast to Dewey, Buber, and Allport, Freire offers a strong cultural and social critique of hierarchical and oppressive relations in education and society. He calls for a mutual learning process that allows teachers to learn from students as much as students learn from teachers. Members of oppressed and oppressor groups can learn from each other as well and become "critical co-investigators" of social realities to liberate themselves from hegemonic practices, an acceptance of oppressive scripts, and the belief that oppressor-oppressed relations cannot be changed (see also Cho, 2013).

Intergroup dialogue theory and practice have also been strongly influenced by national and international anti-colonial, civil, human rights, and feminist movements, and by feminist and anti-racist theorists and educators in the United States. These movements have highlighted how socially constructed identities, such as race and gender, influence a person's access to resources and political power, as well as their ability to speak and shape public and private relationships and discourses. Feminist theorists and educators, in particular, have examined how structural, hierarchical "relations of rule" (Smith, 1990) are reflected and reproduced in the classroom, how certain types of knowledge are valued and others devalued (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Collins, 1990, 1993; Haraway, 1988) and how the concept of "knowledge" itself has been constructed as objective, rational, and detached from relationships and emotions (Miller, 1986). Anti-racist educators and critical race theorists have also examined the relationship between social constructions of race and multiple forms of oppression, including cultural as well as physical colonization and emotional as well as physical exploitation, and have addressed the implications of these oppressive relationships for educational practices (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Common to all of these perspectives is the idea that all discourse and all relationships, including educational discourse and relationships, reflect the relative power, beliefs, and perspectives of those involved and where they are situated in relationship with one another in social hierarchies (Kincheloe, 2008). Some writers in cultural studies argue that these differences are so great that genuine dialogue and understanding across differences are limited or impossible because we live in a world where each voice does not carry equal weight (Boler, 2004; Burbules, 2000; Ellsworth, 1989). Patricia Hill Collins (1993, 2012), a Black feminist standpoint theorist, offers a different perspective. She argues that our ability to dialogue and connect with one another may be constrained by our differences, but we must begin to challenge dominant-subordination relations in educational settings anyway. One way we can do this is by trying to equalize the use of power in these settings so that "people of different levels of power can use race, class, and gender as categories of analysis to generate meaningful dialogue" (Collins, 2012, p. 224). Another way is to equalize racial or gender balances in classrooms so that members of marginalized groups who may normally feel silenced, invisible, or misrepresented can more easily share their own counter-hegemonic stories. Educators can also encourage everyone to identify ways of reducing social asymmetries that dictate who gets to speak and listen, and when, how, and why (Collins, 2012;

Wood, 2004). Through intentional processes such as these, Collins (2012) argues, relationships across differences are forged as people struggle to hear one another and to develop empathy for each other's perspectives. In a similar vein, building on Freire's work, hooks (1994) contends that dialogues between members of oppressed and oppressor groups require the development of authentic relations in which "all who are involved help each other mutually, growing together in a common effort to understand the reality which they seek to transform" (Freire, 1978, cited in hooks, 1994, p. 54). Through this intentional and collaborative praxis, participants may begin to develop agency for transforming their subjective and material social realities. In other words, critical dialogues across differences create spaces for intervening in and transforming the relationships between agency, power, and struggle.

### INTERGROUP DIALOGUE AS SOCIAL JUSTICE PEDAGOGY

Numerous efforts have been made in formal and non-formal educational settings to address issues of diversity, inequality, and social justice. While some of these efforts have focused on reducing prejudice or enhancing multicultural understanding, others have emphasized the study of social oppression and its many manifestations, particularly differences in power, status, and access to resources within and across social identity groups. Intergroup dialogue practices in educational settings reflect the third approach, social justice education, which addresses both difference and inequality while seeking to foster the dispositions and skills that may be needed to work together to address social injustices (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 2007; Adams et al., 2011; Goodman, 2001; Hackman, 2005). In this section, we situate intergroup dialogue as social justice education pedagogy and provide an overview of intergroup dialogue principles and practices. Next, we look at several approaches to intergroup dialogue practice that fit within this broader umbrella.

#### *Intergroup Dialogue and Social Justice Education*

Social justice education may be described as an interdisciplinary approach for examining social justice issues and addressing them through education. This approach to transformative education examines and addresses "the enduring and ever-changing aspects of social oppression" that perpetuate social exclusion and social inequities in particular historical periods and social contexts by examining "how 'common sense' knowledge and assumptions make it difficult to see oppression clearly" (Bell, 2007, p. 1). Social justice education relies on the development of critical consciousness and transformative pedagogical practices to foster educational change in classrooms, schools, and organizations. As such, it examines the sociopolitical and ideological dimensions of systems of privilege and oppression (e.g., adultism, ableism, sexism, and racism) while accounting for their "historical roots, intergenerational legacies, within-group differences, and local as well as global manifestations" (Adams et al., 2013, p. xxvi).

Social justice educators understand social identity group differences, both within and across groups, as socially and politically constructed; that is, as subjective rather than objective, as fluid rather than static, as specific rather than abstract, and as rooted in particular historical, geographic, and cultural contexts. Because differences are often used to justify inequality on the basis of hegemonic beliefs and explanations, especially

when these differences legitimize access to privilege for social groups associated with what is considered "normal," social justice education explicitly links conversations related to group differences to questions related to equity and social justice (Adams, 2011; Adams et al., 2013; Young, 1990). Social justice education is important because dominant cultural norms about how people should think, feel, live, or behave are assumed to be universal, when, in reality, people from marginalized or disadvantaged groups may not have the same means, experiences, or values as members of dominant or privileged groups and may not conform or subscribe to these beliefs and norms.

In classrooms, social justice educators integrate content knowledge about single and intersecting forms of oppression with a pedagogy that gives careful epistemological and relational considerations to how participants learn/unlearn about issues of oppression and how they consider taking action for individual and collective empowerment, equity, inclusion, and social justice (Adams, 2007; Bell & Griffin, 2007). Such pedagogical considerations are crucial because learners do not live or learn in a vacuum; they are historically, politically, culturally, and subjectively situated as members of social groups (knowingly or unknowingly) that have different social positions and may have a history of conflict with one another. For this reason, social justice education theory and practice strives for a "conscious and reflexive blend of content and process, intended to enhance equity across multiple social identity groups (e.g., race, class, gender, social orientation, and ability) to encourage critical perspectives and social action" (Carlisle, Jackson, & George, 2006, p. 57).

As a form of social justice education, intergroup dialogue seeks to engage difference, social identity, and social justice through an intentional process that attempts to enhance equity across two or more social identity groups with distinct subject positions and statuses in asymmetrical power relations. It does so by addressing some of the intergroup contact conditions outlined by Allport (1954). For example, most intergroup dialogues try to include fairly equal numbers of participants and facilitators from each of the groups participating in the dialogue. In addition, intergroup dialogue, like other forms of social justice education, gives particular attention to the experiences of marginalized groups and makes an effort to enhance equity by amplifying the voices of those who have had to struggle to be heard. Intergroup dialogue also challenges *all* participants to grapple with the interconnected histories and circumstances of their singular or intersecting privileged and disadvantaged social group identities within micro and macro sociopolitical contexts in order to engage and sustain a process in which multiple points of view can be explored and held as valid. Collins (2012) argues that honoring multiple perspectives is vital because in dialogue across differences participants bring a partial point of view that stems from their own experience and understanding of that experience; therefore, they need to hear other's partial perspectives to make sense of their own perspective and develop empathy for individuals from different social identity groups. Furthermore, in intergroup dialogue, it is just as important that members of privileged groups understand how they and others have been privileged by systems of advantage and domination as it is for members of less-advantaged groups to understand how they have been affected by systems of disadvantage and subordination (Zúñiga et al., 2007). Meaningful dialogue also requires that all participants gain a nuanced and complex understanding of how oppression becomes established and reproduced and how it can be challenged and transformed at the individual, group, community, institutional, and cultural levels. According to Collins (2012), this kind of learning requires developing a critical consciousness—"coming

to see how our individual biographies are shaped by and act on our specific historical and social contexts" (p. 130)—that can help participants understand how their distinctive group histories reflect power differences, privilege, and oppression. Educators hope that this critical consciousness will help participants develop a clearer understanding of socially constructed social group differences and begin to situate their lived experiences as social actors who have agency and can transform, as hooks (1994) states, "the barriers erected by race, gender, class, professional standing, and a host of other differences" (p. 130).

While intergroup dialogues often focus on a single issue (e.g., racial/ethnic relations or gender relations) or forms of oppression (e.g., racism or sexism), the range of possible issues and questions that emerge will vary from group to group. Issues of multiple and intersecting social identities and varied positions of power will inevitably arise in dialogues across differences. Hence, seldom are there "fixed boundaries" to a single social category (e.g., race or gender) or relationship (e.g., white people and people of color or men and women). Regardless of the primary focus of the dialogue, the diversity of ideas and experiences brought by the participants will ultimately shape the conversation and the extent to which participants grapple with singular or intersecting privileged and targeted social identities within a particular dialogue.

#### *Intergroup Dialogue as Critical Dialogic Praxis*

The practice of intergroup dialogue underscores Freire's (1970, 1974) definition of education as a practice for freedom by seeking to coordinate the processes of unlearning oppression with learning liberation. Toward this goal, intergroup dialogue seeks to embody the examination and transformation of oppressive social realities (critical praxis) with a socially-situated critical communicative and consciousness raising practice (dialogic praxis). Thus, intergroup dialogue can be conceived of as a critical-dialogic praxis that simultaneously supports *criticality* (the capacity to critically examine social hierarchies and dominant beliefs or explanations) and *liberation* (the capacity to free oneself and help support others to free themselves from oppressive scripts and habits through authentic dialogue, problem-posing, and reciprocal and empowered relations). Ultimately, intergroup dialogue may enable the development of a sense of individual and collective agency for creating social change and more equitable and just relationships across differences in power and perspective (Freire, 1970; Fassett & Warren, 2007; Shor & Freire, 1987).

In considering intergroup dialogue a critical dialogic praxis, it is important to keep in mind Freire's (1970) and Collins' (2012) recognition that multiple perspectives and unequal power relations are always present among participants and facilitators, learners and teachers, and members of oppressed and oppressor groups. This recognition frames how dialogue processes are conceived, theorized, and structured when diverse groups meet inside and outside of the classroom (Zúñiga et al., 2007). In such settings, multiple voices are valued, but not unquestioned. Participants' stories are encouraged as entry points for critical social inquiry to understand why people experience both common and different social realities and why they act in the ways that they do (Nieto, 2005). This level of engagement is not easy. Participants must be willing to engage in difficult conversations that critically examine how differences in perspective, values, and access to cultural and material resources impact social identities and relationships between groups within as well as outside of the group, and facilitators must have the

knowledge and skills to help them do this. Moreover, dialogue across status differences may only be possible when people from more advantaged social identity groups are challenged to take responsibility for identifying and reducing "socially determined asymmetries that dictate who gets to speak, what forums and forms of speech are deemed legitimate, whose speech counts and to whom it counts" (Wood, 2004, p. xx). This challenge requires a structured and intentional process and is addressed somewhat differently in different models of intergroup dialogue practice.

Regardless of the form it takes, however, intergroup dialogue addresses some of the challenges inherent in bringing members of different social groups together by promoting dialogue rather than debate or discussion. Debate aims to convince and to establish the superiority of one point of view over another, while discussion emphasizes "breaking things apart, seeing its elements" rather than "unfolding meaning that comes from the many parts" (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998, p. 20). The goal of dialogue is not to convince, but to critically analyze prevailing ideas and expand what is known in a space where listening, respect, appreciation, and inquiry build relationships and understanding. It is a process that engages the heart and the capacity to act, as well as the intellect (Huang-Nissen, 1999; Romney, 2003). Also different from "mere talk" or casual conversation, dialogue is an intentional practice that has a focus and a purpose (Romney, 2003; Shor & Freire, 1987). Intergroup dialogue challenges participants to be mindful, involved, responsive, and willing to explore contentious issues in collaborative way.

#### APPROACHES TO INTERGROUP DIALOGUE PRACTICE

In this section we briefly review four approaches to intergroup dialogue practice. These approaches share overlapping and distinct pedagogical features and specific goals as they strive to engage participants in a critical examination of social realities using dialogic and transformative pedagogical methods: (1) the critical-dialogic approach known as IGD; (2) "Cultural Circles" programs; (3) the Study Circles practice approach; and (4) the conflict transformation model. We situate individual chapters within each of these approaches to demonstrate the differing approaches to intergroup dialogue, but we recognize that our categorization may not fully capture the nuances of the pedagogies and practices described by the various authors and that the categories might not be mutually exclusive.

One of the most commonly used and most researched intergroup practice approaches, particularly in higher education, is the critical dialogic practice approach known as IGD (or Intergroup Dialogue) that developed out of the program on Intergroup Relations at the University of Michigan (Gurin et al., 2013; Sorensen, Nagda, Gurin, & Maxwell, 2009; Zúñiga et al., 2002). This critical dialogic approach embodies many of the premises discussed in the previous sections and it extends the focus of traditional intergroup education efforts by explicitly attending to, examining, and addressing misperceptions and intergroup tensions rooted in issues of difference, social identity, and social inequality through structured, facilitated, and sustained conversations across race and other social group boundaries. Prior to the development of the IGD approach, most intergroup education efforts emphasized group similarities and cooperation without fully considering the pervasive effects of systemic power and privilege on intergroup relations, including whose voices are heard and whose worldviews are valued and understood in conversations across differences. IGD, however, explicitly

recognizes and works with similarities and differences in values, ideologies, and social statuses that result from historical and contemporary social inequalities (Zúñiga et al., 2002, 2007).

The IGD approach relies on four design features to structure facilitated conversations across differences: (1) intimate engagement in small groups that is sustained over a period of weeks or months; (2) explicit attention to process (How are we talking about this issue?) and content (What are we talking about?); (3) an intentional design that scaffolds learning through structured activities and dialogic methods that encourage critical examination of social justice issues; and (4) the sequencing of four phases of dialogue. These phases build on each other and support participants to: a) build relationships and guidelines for dialogue; b) clarify expectations, share stories, and gain insight into the dynamics of privilege and oppression; c) explore controversial issues at the interpersonal, institutional, and cultural level; and d) end the experience with action planning and alliance building. Together these design considerations lend coherence to a very layered and recursive group experience (Zúñiga et al., 2007).

While each IGD program is tailored to the specific goals and needs of the campus (or school or community) that it serves, these programs generally share certain characteristics. For instance, IGD groups or courses involving undergraduate college students often meet for a sustained period of time over 8 to 14 weeks. In higher education settings, IGD programs may be structured as undergraduate courses or co-curricular activities and typically include 12 to 18 dialogue participants, with both or all of the social identity groups participating in the dialogue represented in fairly equal numbers. Examples of IGD groups that have been held on college campuses include men and women; white people, multiracial people and people of color; Latinos(as) and Blacks; lesbians, gay men, bisexual and heterosexual people; and Christians, Muslims and Jews. IGD groups are co-led by two trained facilitators who share salient social identities with participants in the dialogue (for instance, a race/ethnicity dialogue involving white participants and students of color would be co-facilitated by a white person and person of color with different gender identities). More recently, there have been efforts to implement IGD groups involving members of a single social identity group to encourage dialogue and actions about specific intragroup issues (e.g., men and masculinity, white racial identity and allyship, multiraciality, and pan-ethnic people of color dialogues) (Ford, 2012). While facilitators typically use a structured curriculum to guide the dialogue group, training models used to prepare and support IGD facilitators vary across programs and institutions (e.g., Maxwell, Nagda, & Thompson, 2011).

Seven chapters in this volume examine activities based on this critical dialogic approach (IGD). In Chapter 2, the authors investigate students' experiences in race/ethnicity dialogue and multiracial identity dialogue courses in a small, private, predominantly white, liberal arts college. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 draw from data from a multi-institution study—the Multiversity Intergroup Dialogue Research Project (MIGR), a field experiment conducted in nine colleges and universities with a design that included random assignment of student applicants to undergraduate IGD courses or a waitlist control group (Gurin et al., 2013). Chapter 3 focuses on the development of white students as racial allies and social change agents through race/ethnicity intergroup dialogue courses. In Chapter 4, the authors explain the connection between pedagogy, communication process, and psychological processes in race/ethnicity and gender intergroup dialogue courses for individual participants' commitment to action. In Chapter 5, the authors study aspects of the dialogic processes, and underscore the

role of listening in influencing the type of outcomes in gender and race/ethnicity dialogue courses. Lastly, Chapters 7, 8 and 9 provide illustrative examples of extensions of the IGD model outside higher education. Chapter 7 describes and reports on the ethnic identity and racism awareness outcomes of participants in a sustained youth dialogue program. Chapter 8 examines the learning experiences of a group of high school students in urban and suburban contexts, who come together during a one-day institute that was designed using IGD pedagogical principles to address the racial divide that impacts their high school experiences. In Chapter 9, the authors discuss the development and outcomes of co-curricular intergroup dialogue activities within public high schools.

The second approach to intergroup dialogue draws on Freire's (1970) "problem posing" method, commonly known as critical pedagogy (Kincheloc, 2008), which brings together diverse groups of people in "cultural circles" or "dialogue circles" to investigate cultural power relations and dominant ideologies and how they shape classrooms and communities (Fassett & Warren, 2007; Preskill & Brookfield, 2009; Souto-Manning, 2010). This approach to intergroup dialogue strives to foster a dialogic praxis through *conscientização*, the capacity to become aware of injustices and to act to change them (Freire, 1970). Freire and Myles Horton, for instance, used dialogue circle methods in the countryside of Brazil and Chile, and in the Appalachia region of the U.S., to facilitate the empowerment of these marginalized groups (Horton, Freire, Bell, Gaventa & Peters, 1990). In these two examples "circles of learners" or "cultural circles" of adult learners and community leaders came together to interrogate how particular social, cultural, and linguistic contexts impact the social realities in which they live and how these realities could be transformed (Arnold, Burke, James, Martin, & Thomas, 1991; Pheterson, 1990; Souto-Manning, 2010).

The Cultural Circles approach does not always make an explicit effort to address Allport's (1954) conditions of intergroup contact by bringing diverse groups together, though it does acknowledge the need to balance power and voice and to target social identities within the dialogue process and discourse. Transformation takes place through "dialogue and problem solving in a cyclical and recursive process which leads to transformative action" (Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 19). This dialogue model has been used in schools and communities across the globe in different educational settings (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009; Jennings, Jewett, Laman, Souto-Manning, 2010; Vella, 2008; Souto-Manning, & Wilson, 2010), and increasingly with urban youth through popular education and participatory action research efforts (Camerotta & Fine, 2008; Checkoway & Gutierrez, 2011).

Variations of this approach to dialogue may be found in Chapters 6, 10, and 11. In these three chapters, authors examine specific dialogic practices used in formal and non-formal educational context that rely on Freire's problem posing pedagogy. Chapter 6 analyzes the role of white faculty in facilitating critical discussions about race in the diverse college classrooms. While this case study does not describe classrooms that fully illustrate the "circle" approach to dialogue, the focus of this chapter is on democratic discussion practices that strive to mirror some of the tenets of Freire's problem posing pedagogy. Chapter 10 examines critical interracial dialogue involving teachers of color about their experiences as racial minority teachers. Lastly, Chapter 11 reviews five empirical studies to analyze the discursive practices used in critical dialogues across educational settings with diverse populations.



A third approach to intergroup dialogue, Study Circles, seeks to foster dialogue and deliberation about public issues in collaborative ways, to explore issues of difference, and to analyze the ways in which socially constructed difference may be used to reproduce inequality and social hierarchies in schools and community policies and practices (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Walsh, 2007; Zúñiga & Nagda, 2001). Similar to the IGD approach, practitioners working from this model often intentionally address Allport's (1954) conditions for intergroup contact when convening diverse groups of people to talk about race related issues, including stakeholders and authorities, based on the need to equalize the representation from participating groups. One successful application of this approach is the Everyday Democracy Study Circles practice approach (Flavin-McDonald & Barrett, 1999; McCoy & Scully, 2002), also known as deliberative civic dialogues, which aids communities in making progress on tough issues through community building, dialogue, deliberation, and action. Drawing from principles of deliberative democracy and intergroup education (equal representation, inclusion, diversity, and sharing of knowledge and decision-making), Study Circles bring diverse groups of people in schools and local communities together in small groups to build relationships, dialogue, and deliberate about issues, and explore actions for change (Fanselow, 2007; Pincock, 2008; Wade, 2007; Walsh, 2007). In some regions in the US, the Study Circle approach has been applied to dialogue about race and immigration among youth, within and across schools, with teachers and with community leaders. A variation of this deliberative approach to intergroup dialogue is described and examined in Chapter 12. The authors focus on public dialogue about affirmative action policies.

A final approach to intergroup dialogue focuses on conflict transformation in schools and communities. Dessel and Rogge (2008) define this approach as "a facilitated group experience that may occur once or may be sustained over time and is designed to give individuals and groups a safe and structured opportunity to explore attitudes about polarized issues" (p. 201). One application that illustrates this orientation toward intergroup dialogue is known as Sustained Dialogue (Parker, 2006; Saunders, 2003), which uses a multi-stage conflict resolution process that draws from work in international conflict resolution and peace building. In Sustained Dialogue, students and community members of diverse backgrounds meet over time to build mutual respect, identify issues of conflict, dialogue about conflicting issues, and, in some instances, generate action plans (Diaz, 2009). Another application that has had a strong impact in civic dialogues is the one developed by The Public Conversations Project (Chasin et al., 1996). This application actively seeks to prevent and transform conflicts driven by differences in identity, beliefs, or values. Examples of this application have been used in communities (Romney, 2003) and in colleges and universities (Buie & Wright, 2010; Thomas, 2010). While none of the chapters in this volume reflect the main tenets of this approach to intergroup dialogue, several of the practices described and empirically studied in this volume strive to build participants' capacity to address intergroup conflicts, particularly intergroup dialogue practices involving youth. For instance, three of the chapters described earlier, Chapters 7, 8 and 9, describe IGD efforts in schools that seek to raise racial awareness while addressing social identity based differences and conflicts between social identity groups. Furthermore, addressing intergroup conflicts in a constructive way is also a major concern for the IGD approach in higher education.

## RESEARCH ON INTERGROUP DIALOGUE

Parallel to the growth of interest in intergroup dialogue, is a growing body of empirical research within the social sciences and applied fields that offers empirical evidence of the educational benefits of intergroup dialogue for college students in higher education (Dessel & Rogge, 2008; Ford, 2012; Gurin, 1999; Hurtado, 2005; Zúñiga et al., 2007), K-12 schools (Dessel, 2010; Spencer, Brown, Griffin & Abdullah, 2008; Wade, 2007), and with youth and communities (Dessel & Rogge, 2008; Walsh, 2007; Wayne, 2008). For the most part, this research focuses on the IGD approach. Participation in IGD in college has been shown to have positive effects on students' beliefs about group inequalities and behavioral intentions to create change (Lopez, Gurin, & Nagda, 1998; Nagda, Gurin, & Lopez, 2003), communication and understanding of intergroup conflicts (Diaz, 2009; Gurin, 1999; Gurin, Nagda & Lopez, 2004; Lopez, Gurin & Nagda, 1998; Nagda & Zúñiga, 2003), ability to bridge differences across groups (Nagda & Zúñiga, 2003), and commitment to fostering self-directed and other directed actions for social justice (Nagda, Kim, & Truelove, 2004; Zúñiga, Williams, & Berger, 2005). More recent studies conducted as part of a national, multi-institutional longitudinal study of IGD, some of which are reported in this volume, also offer strong evidence of the positive effects of undergraduate dialogue courses for college students involved in race/ethnicity and gender IGD (Gurin, Nagda, & Sorensen, 2011; Gurin et al., 2013; Nagda, Gurin, Sorensen, & Zúñiga, 2009). Research on intergroup dialogues with young people in schools and youth organizations has also demonstrated positive effects in the areas of social identity awareness, reduction of prejudice and stereotyping, understanding of institutional racism and other forms of discrimination, and an increased capacity for addressing conflicts constructively and social action (e.g., Fanselow, 2007; Griffin, 2012; Nagda, McCoy, & Barnett, 2006; Spencer et al., 2008; Wade, 2007). Similarly positive outcomes have been reported from studies in community settings, particularly regarding alliance building across racial groups and civic action, such as organizing around immigration, achievement gaps in schools, and racial profiling (e.g., Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006; DeTurk, 2006; Pincock, 2008; Wheatley, Christman, & Nicolas, 2012). While this body of research has provided a clearer understanding of the educational and social outcomes associated with intergroup dialogue, particularly IGD, gaps in knowledge remain within the literature. There are a number of empirical questions that need to be asked about intergroup dialogue processes and outcomes across social identity groups and settings. There is also a need for more theoretical understanding and empirical research in response to program growth and increased offerings across K-12 and community, as well as higher education settings (Bowman, 2011; Dessel & Rogge, 2008; Stephan & Stephan, 2001).

As stated earlier, the main purpose of this volume is to present empirically-based studies about intergroup dialogue in formal and non-formal educational settings that address various social justice issues, involve different populations, and reflect different and overlapping foundational and pedagogical frameworks. We provide an overview of these chapters here, focusing first on higher education settings and next on dialogue efforts in schools and communities. This collection of chapters provides conceptual, empirical, and practice-based knowledge about a wide range of dialogue practices by a multi-disciplinary group of researchers and educators in the fields of education, sociology, psychology, and social work. Together, these chapters extend rigorous analyses and applications of intergroup dialogue to postsecondary, K-12, and education-community

initiatives. The authors examine the processes and the effects of intergroup dialogue using quantitative, qualitative, descriptive, and mixed methods research. They also discuss pedagogical and facilitation considerations and pose questions about the limits and challenges of intergroup dialogue education.

Part II of the book focuses on intergroup dialogue in higher education. The five studies conducted in higher education contexts cover the potential effects of intergroup dialogue courses; capture student experiences, reflections, and applications; and consider faculty challenges in facilitating democratic discussions in college classrooms. Part III focuses on six dialogue efforts in schools and communities. These studies provide a broader perspective on critical dialogues across differences in education and communities. They include implementation across differing institutional or social contexts and are inclusive of a wider set of communities and participants.

### *Part II: Intergroup Dialogue in Higher Education*

The first four chapters in this section focus on the IGD approach in higher education. The first chapter in this section, "I Now Harbor More Pride in my Race: The Educational Benefits of Inter- and Intra-Racial Curricular Dialogues on the Experiences of Students of Color and Multiracial Students," by Kristie A. Ford and Victoria K. Malaney, investigates students' experiences in race/ethnicity dialogue and multiracial identity dialogues within a small, private, predominantly white, liberal arts college located in the northeast U.S.. Importantly, this work focuses much needed attention on the experiences of students of color and multiracial students in both intergroup and intragroup dialogue courses. The authors examine how these students "make sense of their own racial group membership and how they navigate raced interactions in college" before and after the class. Applying a theoretical and research framework based in critical race theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) and Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), as well as earlier work on intergroup dialogue and students of color in higher education, Ford and Malaney summarize results from a qualitative analysis of students' writing (n=31) at the beginning and end of each course. They identify a range of student learning outcomes and provide examples of students' shifts or "script changes" during the semester with respect to the following inductively-derived themes: the salience and complexity of racial/ethnic identities, self-esteem, individual biases, analysis of power and privilege, and sense of personal responsibility to create change. In doing so, they are able to uncover some of the educational benefits of engaging students of color and multiracial students in race-focused dialogue courses.

In "From Dialogue to Action: The Impact of Cross-Race Intergroup Dialogue on the Development of White College Students as Racial Allies," Craig Alimo focuses attention on what white college students learn through intergroup dialogue. More specifically, Alimo underscores the role of intergroup dialogue courses focused on race and ethnicity in the development of white students as racial allies and social change agents. This quantitative study analyzes pre- and post-test survey data from a multi-institution study—the Multiversity Intergroup Dialogue Research Project (MIGR). This project implemented intergroup dialogue courses at nine colleges and universities in varied geographic areas and the design included random assignment of student applicants to dialogue courses or a waitlist control group (see also Gurin et al., 2013). Alimo assesses the development of confidence and frequency in white students' commitment to actions

that are aligned with allying behavior. The chapter reports that dialogue students (n=181) more frequently participated in allying behavior than students in a waitlist control group (n=174) but did not necessarily feel more confident about how to appropriately do so. The conceptualization framework used by this study, as well as the quantitative results forward discussions both about the impact of learning through intergroup dialogue for white students and the possible processes by which this may shape students' future actions. Similar to the next chapter, this study is significant in its emphasis and findings related to the relationship between dialogue and action.

Chloé Gurin-Sands, Patricia Gurin, Biren (Ratnesh) A. Nagda, and Shardae Osuna closely examine the question of intergroup dialogue processes that are critical for fostering student action in "Fostering a Commitment to Social Action: How Talking, Thinking, and Feeling Make a Difference in Intergroup Dialogue." The authors apply a multi-method approach to explaining the connection between student participation in race/ethnicity and gender intergroup dialogue courses and their commitment to action. They conducted a quantitative analysis of qualitatively coded categories/variables from students final papers (n=739) collected as part of the multi-institution (MIGR) study mentioned above. They tested and found support for a theoretical model connecting dialogue pedagogy, communication and psychological processes, and students' actions, including educating and collaborating with others. Gurin-Sands and colleagues report that students in race dialogues wrote more about educating others as compared to students in the gender dialogue courses. This pattern mirrors some of the trends reported in the next chapter by Zúñiga and colleagues, where distinct patterns were found for intergroup dialogues that focused on race in contrast to those focused on gender in the MIGR.

In "Engaged Listening in Race/Ethnicity and Gender Intergroup Dialogue Courses," Ximena Zúñiga, Jane Mildred, Rani Varghese, Keri DeJong, and Molly Kechn also study dialogue processes and underscore the role of listening in these courses. Drawing from the MIGR data set, these authors focus on engaged listening in intergroup dialogue and present findings from a two-phase qualitative grounded theory analysis of a sample of interviews (n=248/40) conducted with students who completed a race/ethnicity or gender dialogue. By examining moments of engaged listening, the study explores when and why participants in intergroup dialogue listen and what they gain from engaged listening. The authors also identify a number of differences in the patterns of findings for engaged listening in race/ethnicity and gender dialogues. Findings suggest that participants in race/ethnicity dialogue courses recall more moments of engaged listening and may have gained a more complex understanding of structural inequality from engaged listening than participants in the gender intergroup dialogue courses did.

The final chapter in this section examines white instructors' experiences facilitating democratic discussions about race in undergraduate classrooms, particularly when teaching white students. Specifically, in "White Educators Facilitating Discussions About Racial Realities," Stephen Quayle asks, "How do educators engage students in constructive discussions about racial realities in postsecondary classroom settings?" Using a white faculty development framework for facilitating classrooms discussions that blend dialogue and discussion as democratic forms of discourse in postsecondary classrooms (Brookfield & Preskill, 2005), Quayle presents a qualitative analysis of two instructors' narratives to provide an understanding of the challenges and successes some white educators face when facilitating difficult conversations about race and racism in their courses. This study illustrates ways that white instructors might use

specific pedagogical tools, including self-disclosure and storytelling about their own racial identity development, to engage white students in constructive conversation.

*Part III: Intergroup Dialogue in Schools and Community Settings*

The focus of Part III is on intergroup dialogue in school and community settings. Authors apply a range of methodologies as well as approaches to dialogue. In some ways, the results described provide further support for arguments and findings highlighted in the studies that focus on higher education settings. In other ways, this second set of studies identifies key issues for specific populations (e.g., K-12 students and teachers) that are deserving of further attention and that may diverge from research and practice in higher education settings with college students and faculty.

In "Raising Ethnic-Racial Consciousness: The Relation Between Intergroup Dialogues and Adolescents' Ethnic-Racial Identity and Racism Awareness," Adriana Aldana, Stephanie J. Rowley, Barry Checkoway, and Katie Richards-Schuster present results from research conducted through the Youth Dialogues on Race and Ethnicity in Metropolitan Detroit. Drawing from racial identity development frameworks, this quantitative study examines student (13-19 years old,  $n=147$ ) change in racial consciousness while participating in cross-racial dialogue. Survey measures included a range of learning outcomes, drawing from established measures and earlier research, including ethnic-racial identity and racism awareness among youth. These researchers report pre- and post-increases in racial consciousness. They further tested ethnic-racial group differences among students and report significant differences for ethnic-racial identity but not for racism awareness. This study, considered together with research from higher education settings, begins to provide a more detailed picture of the shared and distinct effects of intergroup dialogue for students of color and white students.

The next chapter continues to focus attention on diverse adolescent youth and centers student voices in doing so. In "Writing the Divide: High School Students Crossing Urban-Suburban Contexts," Gretchen E. Lopez and A. Wendy Nastasi apply a qualitative-based program evaluation to understand and analyze student perspectives ( $n=88$ ) on participation in a cross-school, urban-suburban, dialogue that reflect several dimensions of the IGD approach. While the Aldana et al. chapter presents a youth dialogue initiative that is sustained over time outside of school contexts, Lopez and Nastasi describe a university-community collaboration that brings together two public schools with the Syracuse University Intergroup Dialogue Program. The university program hosts a one-day institute for local high school students taking English courses focused on race, rhetoric, and voice. The institute dynamically engages students in dialogue and writing as activism; it involves meaningful small group work, including drafting letters advocating an issue of shared concern across students and schools. The study provides examples of students' writing, including responses to open-ended evaluation surveys. Through inductively guided research, three themes emerged. Students wrote about growing awareness of inequalities, reflections on agency, and interest in further engagement. These findings connect to the conclusions established in the research based in higher education described above that details the impact of intergroup dialogue for students' awareness of inequalities, understanding of social responsibility, and the significance of alliances.

The next chapter, "Critical Education in High Schools: The Promise and Challenges of Intergroup Dialogue," also addresses IGD practices with high school students and

identifies both the promise and challenges of such work. Shayla R. Griffin, Mikel Brown, and Naomi M. Warren discuss building intergroup dialogue programs and/or offerings within public high schools. With an emphasis on practical applications, this chapter features the Intergroup Social Change Agents (I-SCA) project between the University of Michigan Ann Arbor's School of Social Work and four public high schools in the surrounding area. Applying a critical multicultural (Banks & Banks, 2009) and critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970) framework, the authors provide a model for what a high school intergroup dialogue structure might look like and outline the potential impact it can have on students, including challenging stereotypic attitudes, enhancing communication skills, decreasing discriminatory and/or bullying behaviors, and furthering intergroup relationships.

In "Racial Pedagogy of the Oppressed: Critical Interracial Dialogue for Teachers of Color," Rita Kohli shifts attention to the experiences and reflections of teachers of color in school settings. Kohli qualitatively analyzes dialogues involving teachers of color from diverse backgrounds enrolled in a social justice-based teacher education program. The analysis presented in this suggests that this group of Black, Latina, and Asian American women teachers benefited immensely from participation in critical race dialogues premised on Freire's (1970) work on the significance of consciousness-raising. Kohli found the teachers broadened their understanding of racial oppression and applied this to critical self-reflection as well as pedagogy in their current classrooms. Kohli addresses the need for more initiatives like this for teachers of color, given the role(s) they play in public schools in contemporary U.S. context. Like Quayle's chapter, Kohli's work is important in providing examples of reflections from educators on the difficulties of negotiating race in the classroom and the various strategies that are adopted and adapted in turn.

"Supporting Critical Dialogue Across Educational Contexts" further develops questions of facilitation and extends the analysis of critical dialogue across varied education, community, and international settings. Tasha Tropp Laman, Pamela Jewett, Louise B. Jennings, Jennifer L. Wilson, and Mariana Souto-Manning draw from five empirical studies to analyze discursive practices used across educational settings. The data considered include middle school students discussing immigration picture books, a teacher study group exploring text on homelessness, a teacher education class studying critical literacy, working-class adults in a culture circle in Brazil discussing poverty, and teens in youth organizations discussing their photo essays that challenge negative stereotypes toward youth. The authors stress that "genuine dialogue is often imperfect and unfinished" and suggest specific practices for facilitating dialogic communication across varied educational spaces/populations from the collective findings. Their analysis articulates the importance of time as a necessary condition for critical dialogue, space as dynamic and co-constructed, and the significance of using authentic texts.

The last chapter in this section focuses on a single public dialogue event about affirmative action policy. In "Speaking Across Difference in Community Dialogues on Affirmative Action Policy," Kristen L. Davidson and Michele S. Moses raise interesting questions about what forms of discourse carry more weight in civic dialogues across group-based differences. The authors conducted civic dialogue groups and research in the months preceding the 2008 election to ban affirmative action in Colorado. They frame this research study within Young's (2000) discussion of multiple legitimizing forms of discourse in deliberative efforts across social group differences, bringing another literature to bear on intergroup dialogue and its effects with a focus

on the raced and classed impact of who is able to shape the discourse in cross-race civic dialogues. This study uses a qualitative research methodology to explore the communicative processes exhibited in the dialogue groups to examine the significance of participants' social group memberships, including race, gender, and professional status. While a range of communicative strategies were identified and used in these groups, the findings suggest that participants' professional status appears to influence both the amount of participants' contributions and the extent to which ideas were considered most persuasive; participants' race and gender was also identified as potential contributing factors. These findings suggest the need for more in-depth research on public dialogues, especially regarding current local, state, and national level debates and group-based policy discourse. The study also highlights the need to study professional status and related constructs of socio-economic status and their potential role in group-based public discourse, persuasion, and ultimately policy and social change.

This collection of empirical studies extends our knowledge about intergroup dialogue and the ways it may be engaged in a number of different settings to further social justice education inquiry and practice. Importantly, these studies also suggest new directions and questions for research. These studies support earlier research that suggests that intergroup dialogue has a number of positive effects for both students of color and white students. They also suggest that intergroup dialogue may have positive effects for college and university and K-12 teachers as well. This might be an important and interesting area for future research. Furthermore, these studies provide evidence of the need for, and significance of, critical dialogic practice and research with community participants, which is also an area that is under-researched. This collection of studies clearly captures how intergroup dialogue is not simply about "talk"; it strengthens listening and communication skills and fosters the development of critical consciousness. Further research on which aspects of intergroup dialogue help build these skills and consciousness, and illustrate how and why they may be useful in the context of growing inequality across educational, social, and community lines, is also needed. Finally, the studies in this book offer considerable insight on how critical processes in intergroup dialogue lead to action and/or cognitive and affective orientations important for collective organizing and social change and suggest areas of future inquiry that may help to build on this important outcome. Taken together, these studies further our knowledge of intergroup dialogue as a transformative social justice education pedagogy and its implications for practitioners and participants in schools, higher education, and communities.

## SUMMARY

The studies in this book make a number of important contributions to the intergroup dialogue literature. Both the practices and research methodologies used by the authors and their colleagues, as well as the extension of intergroup dialogue approaches to new contexts, suggest new ways for engaging with issues of difference, identity, and social justice through formal educational and community-based initiatives. While the approaches to intergroup dialogue represented by these studies may differ in regard to design, structure, time, facilitation, focus, and setting, they share a common sense of purpose and a commitment to critical dialogic theory and pedagogical practice. All build from an understanding that structural forms of group inequality are socially unjust and must be addressed. All attempt, in some way, to reconcile rifts, particularly

across race/ethnicity and class lines, and to work proactively with aspects of the conflicts caused by these inequities at the local level. Significantly, all maintain a belief in the transformative power of sustained critical dialogue as a way to begin bridging current social, cultural, political, and economic divides. While several of the studies offer evidence for the positive effects of intergroup dialogue for particular groups, populations, or communities, others generate specific methods and strategies for implementing and facilitating intergroup dialogue in the face of challenges experienced by communities and organizations. We believe that by bringing these various approaches together in one volume, new insights about intergroup dialogue will be generated.

## NOTES

- 1 This chapter builds on our Guest Editor Introduction to the special issue of *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 45(1), published in February 2012, entitled "Intergroup dialogue: Engaging difference, social identity and social justice."
- 2 We would like to thank Javier Campos, Molly Keehn and Cassie Sanchez, Dave Neely, Jane Mildred, and Cassie Sanchez for their valuable input and feedback in the completion of this chapter.
- 3 Consistent with the current literature, we will use "intergroup dialogue" when referring to intergroup dialogue more broadly and "IGD" when referring to the specific dialogue approach developed at the University of Michigan in the late 1980s and then developed further at numerous institutions of higher education across the US.

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## “I now harbor more pride in my race”: The Educational Benefits of Inter- and Intragroup Dialogues on the Experiences of Students of Color and Multiracial Students

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How do students of color and multiracial students learn to make sense of and navigate race within historically white institutions (HWIs)? And, what pedagogies and inter-/intragroup dynamics facilitate increased understanding of issues of race, racial identity development, and racism in the U.S.? This project examines students' of color (SOC) and multiracial students' learning in the Intergroup People of Color-White People Dialogues and Intragroup Multiracial Identity Dialogues at a small private liberal arts college in the Northeast. Through qualitative, inductively-derived analyses of student papers, this study advances understanding of how SOC/multiracial students make sense of their own racial group membership and how they navigate raced interactions in college. It also continues and extends national efforts to conduct and disseminate research on both the substantive nature and process of the Inter-/Intragroup Dialogues and their impact on students.

I admit, it's been a roller coaster semester for me, but the People of Color-White People Dialogues helped me keep my feet on the ground while allowing my brain to go to new places, far and beyond from where it ever was before . . . You know how people say, “You will always remember a specific class from college that changed your life,” well that class is Dialogue. I continue on this journey next semester, ready to learn, grow and take on the world. —Rob, Latino man

It has been a challenging journey, but Multiracial Identity Dialogue has opened my perspectives and forced me to recognize that there are differences in society because I am usually blinded by the notion that I have not been triggered by references to my identity. —Makayla, multiracial woman

Racial diversity is the “buzz-word,” or prevailing theme, in institutions of higher education; given that, many colleges and universities are looking for ways to become more racially and ethnically diverse (Chito Childs & Matthews-Armstead, 2006; Humphreys, 2002). Less attention, however, has been paid to the positive classroom-based pedagogical interventions that help students of color (SOCs) and bi/multiracial<sup>1</sup> students thrive in historically white institutions (HWIs).

Critical race theory (CRT) seeks to critically understand the experiences of people of color through an analysis of race, racism, and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Two CRT principles relevant to the framing of this study include recognizing that: (1) racism is normalized within U.S. society and impacts the everyday lived experiences of people of color; and, (2) people of color