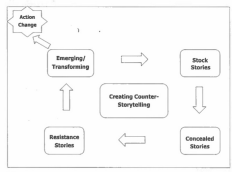


Lee Anne Bell, Storytelling for Social Justice Ch 1: Critical Teaching About Racism through Story and the Arts and Ch 2: Stock Stories: Reproducing Racism and White Advantage

- typical narratives about race relations that circulate in mainstream media typically oversimplify realities of racism, which blocks the awareness, knowledge and concerted action needed for progress
- we have unacknowledged biases
- How we talk about race matters
- racism is a system of interpersonal, social and institutional patterns and practices that maintain social hierarchies in which Whites as a group benefit at the expense of other groups
 - Shapes our govt., schools, media, etc
- MLK's vision for color-blindness - eradication of racism would eliminate barriers for people of color
- Critical Race Theory - race/racism central to analysis of inequality
- Storytelling to explore racism is effective because its personal
 - help connect individual experiences w/ systemic analysis → help uncover patterns and historical relations that perpetuate racial privilege
- racism is here in our daily lives
- we often unsettle what we take for granted
 - help us envision new possibilities for changing/challenging oppressive circumstances
- Story form can be problematic - not all stories are equally valued
- POCs tend to bear weight of talking about race and racism - storytelling project aimed to ensure dominant group members take on fair share of burden
- Storytelling project model:



- Ground rules for storytelling must acknowledge differences in groups
 - used to facilitate thoughtful discussion and engagement
- telling our stories can help us remember forgotten pain
- 4 story types: stock stories, concealed stories, resistance stories, and emerging/transforming stories
 - most public and provide ground against which we build our analysis; told by dominant groups, tell about what a society considers important/meaningful
 - hidden from mainstream view, but provide different perspectives; stories uncovered through critical analysis of historical and social science data that illustrates how race shapes experience in our society; tend to normalize the past and ongoing realities of racism
 - demonstrate how people have resisted racism, challenge the stock stories that support it and fought for more equal and inclusive social arrangements throughout our history but not fully taught in our schools; teach about antiracist perspectives and practices
 - new stories deliberately constructed to challenge the stock stories, build on and amplify concealed and resistance stories, and create new stories deliberately constructed to challenge the stock stories, build on and amplify concealed and resistance stories, and create new stories to interrupt

the status quo and energize change

• All 4 are connected

• Stock Stories - set of standard, familiar stories held in reserve to explain racial dynamics in a way that supports the status quo

↳ affirm the superiority of the stock of whiteness

• majority of white Americans believe that we are in a "post-racial" era

• In order to see or understand patterns that sustain racial hierarchy and inequality, we must account for the history of race relations in our country

• Stock Stories allow Whites to draw upon negative stereotypes and complain about other groups w/o being subject to charges of racism themselves

↳ ignore the ways past inequalities continue to play out in our present economic and social structure, support assertions that our society is "color-blind" and perpetuate

that anyone can advance based on individual merit

• American Dream is a stock story → Whites believe it works for everyone

• I think a way to incorporate this reading into my classroom is through my unit on Puerto Rico - maybe discussing the inequities Puerto Ricans face especially as being a U.S. territory - the difference of that between a state

• I could also discuss how the US got Puerto Rico as a territory - discuss ways some people are fighting for Puerto Rico to become its own country

• maybe discuss protest through song?

Philip Nel, Was the Cat in the Hat Black?: The Hidden Racism of Children's Literature, and the Need for Diverse Books. Ch 2: How to Read Uncomfortably: Racism, Affect, and Classic Children's Books

• Removing off offensive books for young readers is so common that it usually happens w/o comment

- ex. Charlie and Chocolate Factory - omg - loompas were originally African pygmies

↳ current edition doesn't indicate books contents are different

• People feel comfortable changing children's books because we believe in the innocent child

• to equate childhood w/ innocence is to idealize an unsustainable, negative state in which "the child replaces the Noble Savage as a human ideal, a stance that entails valuing nature and instinct over art, intelligence, and acquired knowledge"

• If we exclude troubling literature works from discussion, the children will face pain, bigotry, and sorrow on their own.

• critical reading can be a source of pleasure and power because children quickly understand that critical sensibility strengthens them

• problem w/ innocent child is white child constructed as tender angel while black children labeled as noninnocent nonchildren

• racism has stolen black childhood

- ex. justice system → POC youth guilty until proven innocent

• original version of works have played in dehumanizing POCs

• harmful effects of prejudice aren't equally distributed

• If white children are going to stop perpetuating racism, they will need to recognize racial injustice

• If children of color are going to survive in the US, they'll need to learn how to respond to racism

• Adults in the lives of children POC won't have the choice of whether to discuss racism with them because the topic will come up

- ex. The Trump Effect

• "that's - what - everyone - thought - back - then" argument is weak because its what white people thought back then, POCs back then didn't think they were inferior to whites, they were just treated that way

- The n-word is used to harm black people
- Many people claim they are color-blind, but that just means they are unconscious of their own racism and prefer denial to self-examination
- Huckleberry Finn - Impassive to create authentic version w/o n-word
 - ↳ racism is the central theme
- "slave" lacks oppressive force of the n-word
- Original terms/racism in books might be more effective in nudging a reader towards critical examination
- Teaching racist literature can help direct anger of readers who are racism's targets
 - ↳ implies nonacceptance of the present event as necessary or inevitable, and implies that the event is amenable to being changed - shape, fight is meaningful
 - ↳ learn how to express their anger
- Example: happily enslaved Oompa-Loompas, young readers might need to learn
 - why the book should trouble them
 - it's okay to be angry at the book
 - how they might productively direct that anger
- We need to foster critical reading strategies that acknowledge mixed feelings
 - ↳ anger is an appropriate reaction to racist attitudes
- If children don't know how to express anger when facing racist art, they may only be left w/ pain that can damage them → must avoid bitterness
- Children must also read books that offer affirmative images of racial group members and supply some of the necessary history that will help young readers make sense of the structures of racism
- Books by Morrison, Tan, King, and Monkman display the pain inflicted by invading cultures, countering Dahl, Lofting, and Travers who depict colonization as a form of benign human progress
- Can teach both racist and imperialist children's literature
- Should let students know that some of what we read will make them uncomfortable and it's okay to be uncomfortable
 - do this by acknowledging your own discomfort
 - ↳ ex. white teachers reading the n-word
- Asking children about these books can foster a more uncomfortable affective relationship
- Older generations use "classic" stories as an argument against a book's bawdization
- Children do deserve a life free of prejudice, but since encounters of racism are inevitable, literature can offer a safe space for young people to explore the difficult emotions that racism elicits
- Failing to confront racism is more dangerous than ignoring it
- This was very insightful of how I can discuss racist parts of history and literature, especially as I begin my Puerto Rico unit → maybe I can use what I learned in this reading to discuss how PR became a US territory, how race plays a role in puerto rican society, how that differs from the US
- I could also talk about colonization, slavery in caribbean, etc.