

# Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (ACMRS) RaceB4Race Needs Assessment

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# **INTRODUCTION**

The Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (ACMRS), housed at Arizona State University, is a research center promoting and supporting premodern studies and scholars whose work will advance dialogues about the past and "point us to different, more inclusive futures."



Funded by the <u>Mellon Foundation</u> and directed within ACMRS, **RaceB4Race: Sustaining, Building, Innovating** is led by Principal Investigator Dr. Ayanna Thompson and Co-PI Ruben Espinosa. The project undertook a needs assessment to guide its work as it aims to expand premodern critical race studies through focusing on curricular development, field diversification, academic mentorship, and making the humanities relevant and accessible to public audiences. The goals of this needs assessment included identifying areas of curricular need, understanding what additional tools and resources are needed among those teaching premodern critical race studies (PCRS) across a variety of humanities fields, and assessing barriers to using PCRS materials in higher education courses. A major objective of the Mellon-funded project is to create curricular materials that would enhance premodern studies courses. These materials will be free of charge and available to anyone who wishes to access them. As such, this needs assessment is an important first step toward this objective.

This report details the following:

- Faculty familiarity with PCRS and their perceptions of the value of PCRS
- Faculty use of PCRS in research and teaching
- Barriers and challenges to using PCRS in higher education coursework
- Likelihood of adopting or adapting various types of PCRS-focused teaching and course materials
- Support needs for using PCRS-focused teaching and course materials
- Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected over the course of spring 2022. Data
  were collected through a needs assessment survey and four focus groups derived from a
  subset of those who took the survey. This report details the findings of the needs assessment
  survey and focus groups.

#### RaceB4Race: Sustaining, Building, Innovating

Supported by the Mellon Foundation, RaceB4Race: Sustaining, Building, Innovating expands our work by focusing on curricular development, field diversification, academic mentorship, and public humanities work around race in premodern humanities fields.

The goal of the grant is to expand and diversify the reach and tools available to those contributing to the robust body of premodern critical race scholarship, which, while having revealed some of the earliest formations and elements of systemic racism, has yet to find its way into higher education curricula and wider public discourse.

# **NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

# Methods

To achieve a sample that represented those in the field who would have some awareness and/or knowledge of premodern scholarship, recruitment emails were sent to the following targeted groups with an anonymous survey link. Email recipients included:

- ACMRS mailing list
- RaceB4Race past attendees
- Medieval Academy of America mailing list
- Centers and Regional Associates (CARA) affiliated faculty
- Shakespeare Association of America mailing list
- The Folger Institute mailing list
- The Newberry Library Center for Renaissance Studies mailing list

The email also asked that the survey link be forwarded to any others who may be interested in providing information about the topic.

Once the recipient accessed the survey, they were asked to identify their professional role, academic field of study, the institution at which they are associated, types of students they serve, types of courses they teach, teaching modality, familiarity with premodern critical race studies (PCRS), use of PCRS in courses, perceived need for PCRS in higher education coursework, the need for PCRS-related pedagogical supports or tools, likelihood of adopting various types of PCRS materials, and barriers and challenges to implementing PCRS in courses.

The evaluation team tracked the number who accessed the survey and those who completed all or some of the survey. The survey was accessed 758 times (i.e., clicks on the survey link). These 758 clicks resulted in the following completion rates as defined as the percentage of questions previewed on the survey: 333 completing 100% of the survey, four completing 88%, four completing 72%, 13 completing 56%, two completing 53%, 71 completing 31%, and one completed 9%. The percentage of "complete" simply refers to viewing questions within the survey. As such, even those with 100% completion rate (i.e., previewed all the questions) may still have missing data on some variables as respondents were not required to answer questions to proceed all the way through the survey.

### Reach of Survey: Institutional Affiliation and State/Country

Survey respondents were asked to list their institutional affiliation. Seventy-nine did not provide any information, three specifically refused to supply it (one noting that they were worried about being identified in their "red state"), one said they were an independent scholar, and one said none. Of the remaining 344 who provided some indication of their institution, two were not readily identifiable due to simply using an abbreviation (e.g., MO and UW). Ultimately, respondents were from at least 333 unique institutions in 41 U.S. states, Washington D.C., and six countries other than the U.S. There

were 22 respondents located outside the U.S. including locations in Canada (n=13), England (n=5), Hong Kong (n=1), Ireland (n=1), Norway (n=1), and Singapore (n=1).

#### Types of Institutions and Students Served

Respondents were asked to identify if their institution is a Hispanic Serving Institution, women's college, tribal college, or Historically Black College or University. In this same question, respondents were asked whether their institutions serve a large percentage of underrepresented populations but without a designation, or whether it serves a large percentage of economically disadvantaged students. Respondents could select as many options as applicable to their institution. Of the 310 who responded to the question, 56% (n=174) said at least one of these categories applied to their institution. Based off respondent perceptions, 32 said their institution is HSI, 12 said their institution is a women's college, 5 said their institution is a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), and one said their institution is a tribal college. Approximately 30% of respondents said their institution serves a large percentage of underrepresented populations or a large percentage of students who are considered economically disadvantaged.

56% identified their institution as serving a large percentage of underrepresented students, economically disadvantaged students, or that their institution is specifically designated as HSI, HBCU, a Women's College, or a Tribal College

Importantly, there are inconsistencies in how institutions are perceived among respondents. For example, one California university identified as some participants' institutional affiliation does not have an official Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation, yet some respondents from this university marked this response choice while others did not. Responses for this category must be interpreted with caution.

Survey participants were asked what they primarily consider their institution, and 416 responded to this question. Of these respondents, 61% (n=255) said their institution is a research institution, 16=7% (n=70) said liberal arts college, 14% (n=59) said teaching college/university, 6% (n=24) said other, 2% (n=7) said community college, and less than 1% (n=1) said not applicable. Those who answered "other" were invited to respond with information on their institution, and 21 of the 24 supplied such information. Responses from these 21 ranged from two considering their institutions a Research II university, three saying their institutions are "comprehensive," and a range of one-time responses such as "A bit of a mix between teaching university/research university" and "Christian Teaching SLAC."

#### **Primary Role at Institution**

Survey respondents were asked their primary role at their institution from a list of choices including administrator, faculty member, graduate student or post-doc, instructor/lecturer/educator/contract faculty, and other. Those who selected "other" were prompted to write in their role. There were 417

valid responses to this question. Of these 417 responses, 68% (n=255) said faculty member, 16% (n=68) said graduate student or post-doc, 7% (n=29) said instructor/lecturer/educator/contract faculty, 5% (n=19) said other, and 4% (n=16) said administrator. Among those responding "other," five wrote in that they are emeritus/emerita (one noted they are still teaching), three wrote they are retired, and two noted they are independent scholars. Other one-time mentions include a department chairperson, curator, administrative staff, researcher, research staff, support staff, and librarian/educator. A final person did not specify their role after selecting "other."

## **Fields of Study**

Of the 417 respondents providing their field(s) of study, 242 (58%) marked just one field of study, while 175 (42%) marked more than one field of study, an indication of the interdisciplinary nature of literature and PCRS. The table below lists all close-ended response choices, and respondents were also able to write in a field if they selected "other." As shown in the table, the most common field of study was Literature at 52% (n=217). The second most common field of study was History with 42.4% (n=177). The third most common field was

42% of respondents are in more than one field of study, and 52% consider literature one of their fields of study

Humanities with 25.4% (n=106). All other fields were selected fewer than 60 times by respondents. Just over 16% (n=69) wrote in fields such as Art History (7.2% n=30), Music (n=3), Women and Gender Studies (n=3), Archaeology (n=2), Law (n=2), Theater (n=2), and Theology (n=2). All other fields written in by respondents were one-time mentions and represented a diverse range of fields such as Dance and Drama, Global Health, Library and Information Science, Politics, and Social Work.

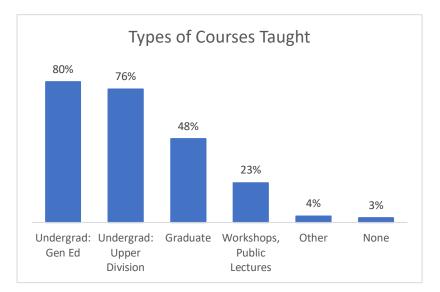
Field(s) of Study	% (n)
Literature	52% (217)
History	42% (177)
Humanities	25% (106)
Religion	13% (56)
Comparative Literature	10% (43)
Classics	7% (29)
World Languages	7% (27)
Composition	3% (14)
Philosophy	3% (12)
Other (write-in) such as:	17% (69)
Art History	7% (30)
Music	.01% (3)
<ul> <li>Women and Gender Studies</li> </ul>	.01% (3)
Archaeology	.01% (2)
• Law	.01% (2)
Theater	.01% (2)
Theology	.01% (2)

Note: One-time mentions for those answering "other" who wrote in a role are not included in the chart above.

## **Types of Courses Taught**

Over 75% of survey respondents teach undergraduate courses Survey participants were asked to select what types of courses they typically teach. Response options included undergraduate general education, non-majors/multiple disciplines; undergraduate classes: upper division, majors; graduate classes; workshops and/or public lectures; other with an option to write in the type, and none. Respondents could select as many responses as applied to them. Of the 417 responses to this guestion, 80% (n=333) teach

undergraduate general education courses, 76% (n=316) teach upper division undergraduate courses, 48% (n=198) teach graduate courses, 23% (n=94) teach workshops or public lectures, 4% (n=15) selected other, and 3% (n=11) selected none. As can be seen in the chart below, over 75% of respondents teach at least some undergraduate courses and this is an appropriate target demographic.



Note: Respondents could select more than one category.

Those responding other wrote in a variety of responses such as consulting, dissertation advising, honors, directing an ensemble, research, non-profit, student, upper-level independent studies, high school, capstone courses, writing seminars and writing project courses, and Master's summer courses.

### **Teaching Modality**

Respondents were asked to select the teaching modality used for the classes they typically teach. The response choices included in-person, online, hybrid, and not applicable. Respondents could select as many choices as applied to them. Of the 414 who answered the question on teaching modality, 92% (n=382) answered in-person, 41% (n=169) said online, 31% (n=130) said hybrid, and 3% (n=11) said "not applicable." The majority of those responding to the survey teach at least some in-person courses.

# Familiarity with Premodern Critical Race Studies

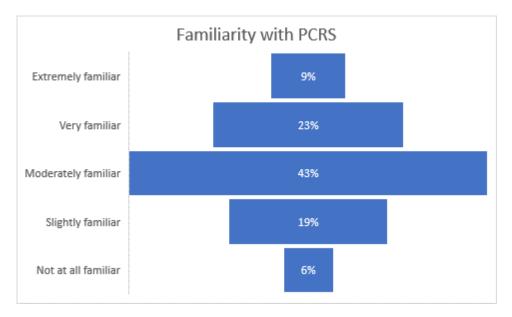
Survey participants were asked to read this short description of premodern critical race studies (PCRS).

Today's students demand histories and narratives that explain how the actual structures of systemic racism came to exist. While many popular and academic narratives about the history of systemic racism begin in the 18th or 19th centuries, premodern critical race scholars know that racial formations and the systems that created inequities based on those formations began well before then. As Ibram X. Kendi argued in his 2021 keynote for RaceB4Race, structural racism as we know it began in premodern Europe. Systemic racism persists in part because its full and long history is frequently concealed and suppressed.

There is a robust body of premodern critical race scholarship created by the scholars involved in the RaceB4Race collective that has excavated the earliest formations and elements of systemic racism. RaceB4Race aspires to have an even greater impact—to transform the way the premodern past is taught and understood.

Survey participants were then asked to rate their familiarity with PCRS on a 5-point scale (extremely familiar, very familiar, moderately familiar, slightly familiar, and not at all familiar).

Of the 348 respondents who answered the question about familiarity, 9% (n=32) said they were extremely familiar with PCRS, 23% (n=81) said they were very familiar, 43% (n=151) said they were moderately familiar, 19% (n=65) said they were slightly familiar, and 6% (n=19) said they were not at all familiar. This information is displayed in the chart below. The distribution of responses was relatively normal.

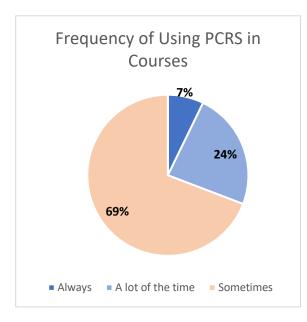


#### Use of PCRS in Research and Courses

Survey participants were asked if they use PCRS in their research, in the courses they teach, or in other capacities. Respondents could select multiple response choices. Of the 344 who answered this question, 55% (n=189) said they use PCRS in their research and 70% (n=240) said they have used it in courses they teach or have taught. Respondents were also provided with the option to answer "other" and explain their response, and 11% (n=38) selected this response option and left comments.

Of the 38 responding "other," 16 left comments that did not give insight into other uses of PCRS. For example, two simply said "No," another said "Never," and one responded, "I don't use any." Two left comments suggesting their intention to use PCRS; one said, "I need to get up to speed" while the other said, "not yet, but I've begun to look into it." One responded by explaining, "I haven't had much opportunity to include scholarly articles and reading in my courses, but I do bring them into the classroom informally, discussing them with my students when applicable topics arise."

Four others affirmed they use PCRS in courses they teach, despite not selecting this option in the survey. Of the remaining comments, four described discussing PCRS informally with colleagues. For example, one respondent explained they use PCRS in "discussions with colleagues and casual inquirers." One wrote of using it "a small amount in the course I teach, but I would like to use it more." Four cited uses for their own personal development with one noting, "To be informed about scholarship in my field, even if it's not for my own research." Three noted uses at conferences or presentations, two noted use as part of an initiative (e.g., "DEI efforts on university level"), two noted use in training or advising of graduate students, two mentioned using it indirectly in their instruction (e.g., "Reading such scholarship informs my own thinking, which then enables me to improve my teaching, so I use it indirectly in my courses"), and two were not sure if they use it (e.g., "I address issues of race and its construction historically, but am not sure I technically use critical race

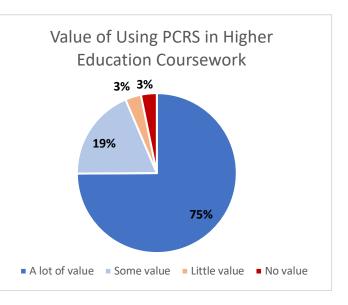


scholarship for all versions of that."). All other comments were one-time mentions such as using PCRS when relevant, using it in the community, and rarely using it. Finally, one respondent, a graduate student or postdoc who said elsewhere in the survey they teach undergraduate courses, left a comment that read, "Courses designed but not taught."

A follow-up question for those who said they use PCRS in their courses asked respondents to rate their usage of PCRS in their courses on 4-point scale (never, sometimes, a lot of the time, always). Of the 237 who responded to this question, 69% (n=154) said sometimes, 24% (n=56) said a lot of the time, and 7% (n=17) said always. The response distribution is displayed in the pie chart to the left.

## Value of Premodern Critical Race Scholarship in Higher Education Courses

Survey participants were prompted to rate the value of PCRS materials in higher education courses on a four-point scale (no value, little value, some value, a lot of value). Of the 347 respondents who answered this question, 75% (n=260) said a lot of value, 19% (n=65) said some value, 3% (n=11) said little value, and 3% (n=11) said no value. These results are illustrated in the pie chart to the right.



### Analysis of Familiarity, Value, & Use of PCRS

Important background questions for the needs assessment included respondent familiarity with PCRS, perceived value of PCRS in higher education coursework, whether the respondent already uses PCRS materials in courses they teach, perceived barriers to using PCRS materials, and how likely respondents might be to use materials of different types.

A working hypothesis of ACMRS heading into the needs assessment was that one's primary role may influence the perceived value of PCRS, use of PCRS, perceived barriers, and likelihood of using materials since primary role can influence teaching autonomy as well as the need or desire to learn more about PCRS. Each of these questions was analyzed in conjunction with the primary role of the respondent for those who answered this response earlier in the survey with a primary role of either administrator, faculty member, graduate student or post-doc, or instructor/lecturer/educator/contract faculty, and other (n=417). For the purposes of the analysis that follows, primary roles were initially separated as they were in the survey and analyses were run with combined groups as follows: graduate students and post-docs combined with contract faculty due to workload requirements, and administrators and those who self-defined as "other" combined due to their likelihood of reduced teaching load.

Additional analyses tested for associations between those teaching at institutions with a large proportion of underrepresented groups or economically disadvantaged students and barriers, likelihood of adopting different types of materials, and support. It was hypothesized that those teaching at institutions with a large proportion of underrepresented groups or those teaching at institutions with a large proportion of underrepresented groups or those teaching at institutions with a large proportion of underrepresented groups or those teaching at institutions with a high proportion of economically disadvantaged students may perceive barriers differently, have a different likelihood of adopting different types of materials, and desire different types of support.

#### Familiarity with PCRS

Familiarity with PCRS was assessed using a continuous scale (not at all familiar, slightly familiar, moderately familiar, very familiar, extremely familiar) while primary role is a categorical variable. Two ANOVAs were run to test the association between role and familiarity with PCRS and primary roles. In the first, primary roles were left separated as they are in the survey (administrator, faculty member, graduate student/post-doc, lecturer/instructor/educator/contract faculty, and other). The second ANOVA was run with primary roles collapsed (administration with other, graduate students and post-docs combined with contract faculty, and faculty members). In each ANOVA, there were no statistically significant differences in variability among means within and between groups. Familiarity with PCRS is not significantly associated with any single type of role.

#### Perceived Value of PCRS

Perceived value of PCRS use in higher education coursework was assessed using a continuous scale (no value, little value, some value, a lot of value) while primary role is a categorical variable. As such, an ANOVA was initially run to test the association between role and familiarity with PCRS. Two ANOVAs were run. In the first ANOVA, primary roles were left separated as they are in the survey. In the second, the ANOVA was run with collapsed role categories. In each ANOVA, there were no statistically significant differences in variability among means within and between groups. The perceived value of PCRS is not significantly associated with any type of role.

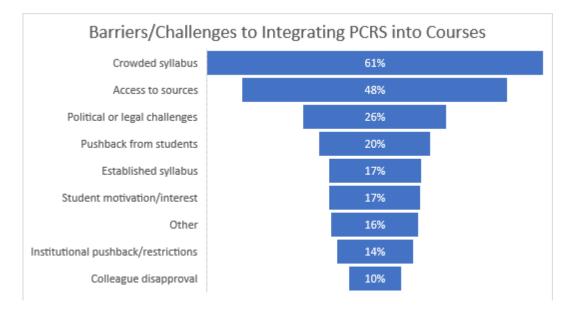
#### Existing Use of PCRS

A Chi-square test was used to determine the association between primary role and the existing use of PCRS in one's courses as use (yes/no) and role (administrator and other role, faculty member, and post-doc/grad student/contract faculty) because they are nominal variables. The collapsed categories for role increased cell counts to acceptable levels for a Chi-square test. The association between primary role and use of PCRS was statistically significant ( $\chi^2$ =24.155, df =2, p = <.001), but the strength of this association was small to moderate (Phi=.263). A Chi-square test could not be run with primary roles separated as they appeared in the survey due to violation of appropriate cell counts.

### **Barriers to PCRS Use**

Respondents were asked what challenges or barriers they anticipate when it comes to integrating PCRS into their courses. A list of barriers was provided to respondents, which included access to sources, crowded syllabus, established syllabus across multiple sections (less flexibility), student motivation or interest, pushback or resistance from students, institutional pushback or restrictions from leadership, disapproval or other negative responses from faculty colleagues, political or legal challenges, and other. Respondents could select as many barriers as applicable to their situation. Of survey respondents, 293 answered the closed-ended question about barriers. Of these 293 respondents, 61% (n=179) said a crowded syllabus is a challenge to integrating PCRS into their courses. Access to sources was the second most common barrier or challenge at 48% (n=140), and political or legal challenges ranked third with 26% (n=76) of respondents saying this could pose a

challenge. All other listed barriers were selected by 20% (n=<59) or fewer of the respondents. A visual breakdown of responses is below.



Note: Respondents could select multiple barriers/challenges.

A chi-square test was used to determine the association between primary role and the perceived barriers to using PCRS in one's courses since both are nominal variables. Because respondents could select multiple barriers, a Chi-square test was run for each barrier.

Disapproval or other negative responses from faculty or colleagues were statistically significant by role ( $X^2$ =8.340, df=2,  $\rho$  = .015), but the association between role and this barrier was small (Phi=.015). The only other barrier approaching significance by role was the barrier of institutional push-back or restrictions from leadership ( $\rho$ =.101), but once again the association was small (Phi = .101). No other listed barriers were statistically significant by role. No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large proportions of students from underrepresented groups and any of the barriers were found.

Respondents were also asked to explain the barriers they selected or wrote-in under "Other," and 214 or the 293 who answered the multi-select question about barriers left comments. All comments were coded using an open, thematic coding scheme. An open, thematic coding scheme allows for multiple categories to be assigned to each comment. For example, the comment left by one respondent stating, "It has been hard to get premodern race studies courses approved to satisfy diversity requirements in my university because scholars of more modern periods often insist these courses are simply replicating the perspective of oppressors. At the same time, I live in a state where legislators are trying to ban CRT, and my students have a wide range of political perspectives and are sometimes resistant to thinking or talking about race" is included in three coding categories. These

categories include faculty/colleague pushback, political issues, and student resistance to talking about race. In another example, the following quote was coded in two categories: political issues and student resistance. "I live in a state that is explicitly challenging the teaching of what it deems 'critical race theory,' which seems to include in some people's minds anything to do with the history of race and colonialism. My upper-division English majors are fascinated and interested in these topics, but in my general lower-division classes, and in composition classes, you always know that you are one student complaint away from a suspension." Key challenges and barriers with more than 10 mentions by survey participants are displayed in the table below along with select representative illustrative quotes.

Theme	n	Illustrative Quotes
Legal/state government/policy/politic s discourages or forbids CRT	36	<ul> <li>I live in a state that is explicitly challenging the teaching of what it deems "critical race theory," which seems to include in some people's minds anything to do with the history of race and colonialism.</li> <li>A bill restricting teaching on race and racism (and other aspects of intersectional privilege/marginalization) came up in the legislature last year. It was defeated, but I don't think it will be the last.</li> <li>Politicians too often intrude upon academic freedom to score political points, either pro- or anti-critical race scholarship.</li> <li>With the pushback against CRT in many states I would be most concerned with job security as a non-tenured faculty.</li> <li>I live in a state that has passed a law banning the use of critical race theory in all classrooms. After that bill became law, my university immediately scaled back a freshman-level course on race relations, and it has signaled reluctance to push back against the legislation. The current legislature is considering more bills that will further restrict the teaching of these subjects.</li> </ul>
Student reluctance or resistance to PCRS	33	<ul> <li>Some of my students are resistant to studying race because it makes them uncomfortable; likewise, my campus has a pretty active and vocal TPUSA student organization, and we recently had students go on Fox News to complain about diversity training. So there are a lot of students who are invested in not learning about race, gender, and sexuality.</li> <li>My upper-division English majors are fascinated and interested in these topics, but in my general lower-division classes, and in composition classes, you always know that you are one student complaint away from a suspension.</li> <li>I have experienced some resistance from a handful of students, and I wonder if that might increase as the climate becomes increasingly hostile to "CRT." To my mind, this is all the more reason to teach with PCRS materials.</li> <li>Resistance to learning about racism can be endemic among students who are white. Sometimes students of color also do not want to hear about racism, especially from a middle-aged white professor.</li> </ul>

		• I am fortunate to live in a state and work in a university with less resistance to critical race theory, but I find most students don't engage with "controversial" topics or are very passive.
Insufficient access to materials, poor library access	31	<ul> <li>I'm at a tiny institution with limited resources, in a state likely to see some legislative challenges to teaching "critical race theory." I trust my administration to back me up and let me teach what/how I want, but access is the biggest challenge I face.</li> <li>My biggest concern is access to sources. I am not expert in this area of the field, it's come up from time to time in various texts, but I want to strengthen my understanding appropriately.</li> <li>My library does not buy a lot of books and we have restrictions on making materials available digitally if the library doesn't own it; we also try very hard to keep the cost of textbooks low.</li> <li>For earlier periods, it is difficult to find sources and even critical material that addresses the differences in what race meant in/to the different cultures that I study. With few materials, or with a small example/time period for discussion, the possibility of collapsing modern and American-specific models onto different modalities increases and defeats the point of uncovering a long, differentiated history.</li> <li>Finding good, engaging primary source material for undergraduates, especially from outside the British Isles (e.g. Slavic, Byzantine, Germanic, Islamic) is really hard.</li> </ul>
<i>Time to cover these topics in the semester (crowded syllabus)</i>	29	<ul> <li>I feel, already, as though our jet through the material is superficial at best.</li> <li>Finding the translated resources and incorporating into already full syllabi would be biggest challenge, but inclusion of these materials would be helpful.</li> <li>I tend to teach undergrad courses about gender and sexuality and sometimes struggle with how much there is to "cover" with those topics/questions; layering race into the mix, while I am committed to doing soand have been doing so for quite a whiledoes pose challenges of "coverage".</li> </ul>
Time to do the new prep/ change my teaching curriculum/ do own research/ feel knowledgeable	22	<ul> <li>Time is the other major challenge. I teach a 5/5 load and making small changes to classes is often exhausting and time consuming.</li> <li>I am very interested in making changes to my approaches to standard subjects, but it does take time which is hard to find when you already have a packed schedule</li> <li>I'm just exhausted with curricular development. I have prioritized incorporating critical race studies but I often feel that it isn't "enough" - I want to do better and assess my techniques and student learning but I end up spending a lot of time lately tending to student mental health crises; there isn't much left over.</li> </ul>
Administration or institution discourages; concerns about	17	<ul> <li>My students have always been extremely interested in discussing race in the premodern, but the institution seems increasingly</li> </ul>

administration or institution		<ul> <li>concerned over how the national political discourse might affect our funding.</li> <li>It has been hard to get premodern race studies courses approved to satisfy diversity requirements in my university because scholars of more modern periods often insist these courses are simply replicating the perspective of oppressors.</li> <li>My department is very conservative; I'd definitely have support from some colleagues, but not all.</li> </ul>
Syllabus is not under instructor's control (Gen Ed, or grad student)	13	<ul> <li>Also, I teach undergraduate survey courses, and while there is some flexibility within what type of survey course we design, we do not have complete full reign.</li> <li>In some of my courses, especially our first-year seminar, we have shared syllabi, and my ability to shape the curriculum is somewhat limited at present.</li> </ul>
PCRS is bad scholarship, too faddish	11	<ul> <li>I do not support the teaching of "race" as a medieval conceptexcept perhaps to make students aware of it as a modern trend and to give them the opportunity to discuss and debate it.</li> <li>The idea that CRT should automatically be included in any and all premodern history courses strikes me as odd, totally without context and considerations of appropriateness. It suggests that everyone teaching premodern history should accept as an unquestioned premise that race (however defined) is a foundational or defining element of all premodern culture, society, thought and institutions. The presence of concepts of race in all of premodern cultures and society is what is to be considered and examined, not accepted as a presumption.</li> <li>The "barrier" is that this scholarship is biased and based on falsehoods.</li> </ul>

Additional barriers and challenges noted in comments by survey participants included students lacking in necessary skills or skills to make sense of primary sources (n=8), costs to students related to accessing materials (n=7), textbooks or anthologies not including PCRS (n=4), PCRS materials being hard to locate if one is not in literature (n=4), one's lack of familiarity with PCRS (n=3), feeling like PCRS should be woven in rather than a standalone topic (n=3), a need for more primary sources (n=2), time for students to do reading (n=2), attachment to the cannon (n=2), external scrutiny or societal disapproval (n=2), student motivation (n=2), declining enrollments (n=1), desire for compensation to do new learning related to PCRS (n=1), materials not being suitable for undergraduate level learning (n=1), cost to faculty (n=1), and simply not wanting to change (n=1). Additionally, nine also said teaching PCRS was not relevant to their current situation (e.g., not currently teaching, CRT is not established in their area of the world or field).

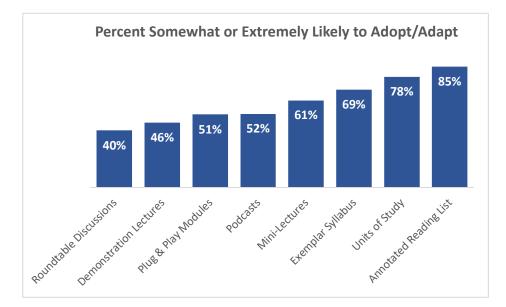
# Adoption & Adaptation of New PCRS Materials

Questions on the needs assessment survey asked about the likelihood of adopting or adapting a variety of materials on a 5-point scale (extremely likely, somewhat likely, unsure, somewhat unlikely, extremely unlikely).

As shown in the chart below, more than two-thirds of respondents said they were somewhat or extremely likely to adopt or adapt annotated reading lists (85%), units of study (78%), and exemplar syllabi (69%). Mini-lectures, podcasts, and plug and play modules were slightly less

At least 2/3 of respondents are likely to adopt or adapt annotated reading lists, units of study, and exemplar syllabi

likely to be adopted or adapted with 61%, 52%, and 51% respectively either somewhat or extremely likely to adopt or adapt these materials. While fewer respondents said they were somewhat or extremely likely to adopt or adapt recorded roundtable discussions and demonstration lectures, over 40% of respondents said they were at least somewhat likely to adopt or adapt these materials.



Categories of likelihood of adopting or adapting materials were collapsed to make for a more useful analysis comparing those likely to those unlikely to adopt or adapt materials. Responses indicating the respondent was somewhat and extremely likely to adopt or adapt were combined. Responses indicating the respondent was unsure or somewhat or extremely unlikely to adopt or adapt were combined. Due to the re-coding of the variables, both variables in the analysis are nominal. As such, a Chi-square test was conducted to examine the existence of a statistically significant association and strength of association between each material type and likelihood of adopting by the respondent's role. A benefit of collapsing these categories also ensured that cell counts for the Chi-square test met test requirements. The results of such tests are discussed in the sections that follow.

#### Annotated Reading Lists

Of the 331 respondents who answered the question about their likelihood of adopting or adapting an annotated reading list, 85% (n=281) said they are somewhat or extremely likely. The Chi-Square test examining the association between adopting/adapting an annotated reading list and the role of the respondent did not result in any statistically significant differences ( $X^2$ =4.334, df=2, p=.115) and found only a small association (Phi=.115). No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large proportions of students from underrepresented groups and likelihood of using annotated reading lists were found.

#### Units of Study

Of the 329 who answered the question about their likelihood of adopting or adapting units of student such as an approach to teaching text, 78% (n=256) said they are somewhat or extremely likely. The Chi-Square test found statistically significant differences by the respondent's role and their likelihood of adoption of units of study ( $\chi^2$ =6.449, df=2, p=.04), but the association was small (Phi=.140). No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large proportions of students from underrepresented groups and likelihood of using units of study were found.

#### Web-Based Annotated Texts and Primary Documents

Of the 328 who answered the question about their likelihood of adopting or adapting web-based annotated texts and primary documents, 82% (n=268) said they are somewhat or extremely likely. The Chi-Square test found statistically significant differences by the respondent's role and their likelihood of adoption of web-based annotated texts and primary documents ( $X^2$ =7.048, df=2, p=.029), but the association was small (Phi=.147). No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large proportions of students from underrepresented groups and likelihood of using web-based annotated texts and primary documents were found.

#### Exemplar Syllabus

Of the 324 respondents who answered the question about their likelihood of use of an exemplar syllabus, 69% (n=223) said they are either somewhat or extremely likely to adopt or adapt an exemplar syllabus. Based on the Chi-square test, statistically significant differences exist by the respondent's role ( $X^2 = 6.193$ , df=2, p=.045), but the association was small (Phi=.138). No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large proportions of students from underrepresented groups and likelihood of using an exemplar syllabus were found.

#### Mini-Lectures

Of the 325 who answered the question about their likelihood of adopting or adapting mini-lectures, 61% (n=199) said they are somewhat or extremely likely. The Chi-Square test examining the

association between adopting/adapting mini-lectures and the role of the respondent did not find any statistically significant differences ( $X^2$ =4.142, df=2, p=.126) and found only a small association (Phi=.113). No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large proportions of students from underrepresented groups and likelihood of using mini-lectures were found.

### Podcasts

Of the 323 who answered the question about their likelihood of adopting or adapting podcasts, 52% (n=167) said they are somewhat or extremely likely. The Chi-Square test examining the association between adopting/adapting podcasts and the role of the respondent did not find any statistically significant differences (X=1.994, df=2, p=.339) and found only a very small association (Phi=.079). No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large proportions of students from underrepresented groups and likelihood of using podcasts were found.

## Standalone Plug and Play Modules

Of the 319 who answered the question about their likelihood of adopting or adapting standalone plug and play modules, 51% (n=164) said they are somewhat or extremely likely. The Chi-Square test examining the association between adopting/adapting standalone plug and play modules and the role of the respondent did not find any statistically significant differences ( $X^2$ =1.3442, df=2, p=.511) and found only a very small association (Phi=.065). No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large proportions of students from underrepresented groups and likelihood of using plug and play modules were found.

# Demonstration Lectures

Of the 322 who answered the question about their likelihood of adopting or adapting web-based annotated texts and primary documents 46% (n=147) said they are somewhat or extremely likely. The Chi-Square test examining the association between adopting/adapting this demonstration lectures and the role of the respondent did not find any statistically significant differences ( $X^2$ =.710, df=2, p=.701) and found only a very small association (Phi=.047). No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large proportions of students from underrepresented groups and likelihood of using demonstration lectures were found.

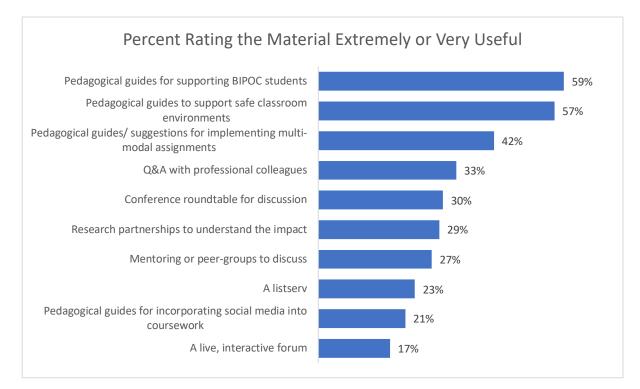
### Recorded Roundtable Discussions

Of the 324 who answered the question about their likelihood of adopting or adapting recorded roundtable discussions, 40% (n=130) said they are somewhat or extremely likely. The Chi-Square test examining the association between adopting/adapting recorded roundtable discussions and the role of the respondent did not find any statistically significant differences ( $X^2$ =2.933, df=2, p=.231) and found only a very small association (Phi=.095). No statistically significant associations between those teaching at institutions with large proportions of economically disadvantaged students or large

proportions of students from underrepresented groups and likelihood of using recorded roundtable discussions were found.

# Supports Related to PCRS Materials

Respondents were asked to identify how useful various types of support would be for PCRS materials if they integrated these materials in their courses. The usefulness scale was a 5-points scale (extremely useful, very useful, moderately useful, slightly useful, and not at all useful). Options for types of support included pedagogical guides to support safe classroom environments, pedagogical guides for supporting BIPOC students, pedagogical guides/suggestions for implementing multi-modal assignments, pedagogical guides for incorporating social media into coursework, mentoring or peer-groups to discuss, Q&A with professional colleagues, conference roundtable for discussion, a listserv, an interactive forum, and research partnerships to understand the impact. For each option the number of responses ranged from 318 to 325. Respondents could select as many options for support as they desired. The most useful



support types among those rated as extremely or very useful are pedagogical guides for supporting BIPOC students (59%), pedagogical guides to support safe classroom environments (57%), and pedagogical guides/ suggestions for implementing multi-modal assignments (42%). These results are illustrated in the chart above.

Respondents could also select "Other" and write in a response for an alternative type of support. A total of 15 respondents left comments for the question on support and five more marked 'other' but did not specify anything. Of the 15 commenting, two left comments saying this is not relevant to them (one is retired, one is research faculty and does not seem to teach), one left a comment about how

"many of these would be very helpful for my TAs" and did not add anything additional that might be useful for them. Most comments were one-time mentions, and these comments were as follows:

- Total absence of for-profit involvement
- Funding, internal or external
- Specific advice for teaching Chaucer, Medieval Romance, Medieval Women writers
- My own assessment of scholarship in the field of CRT.
- A FAQ based on colleagues' past experiences
- Testimonials from others who have implemented materials
- Sources appropriate for graduate students to read.
- Reading lists
- A database of resources (pedagogy, history, criticism, etc.)
- Online courses that provide digestible, easy-to-implement ideas in the classroom
- Online source collections
- Accessible online texts

Analyses testing for associations between those who identified themselves working at an institution with large proportions of underrepresented groups or large proportions of economically disadvantaged students and types of support found no statistically significant associations with this category.

# FOCUS GROUP DATA

### Methods

Needs assessment survey participants were asked if they would be willing to participate in a focus group to further discuss PCRS materials use, needs, and challenges. Of survey respondents, 98 responded they would be willing to participate in a focus group. These 98 participants were sent a short survey to help CREST identify the best candidates for focus group participation based on teaching versus research load and their willingness to engage with PCRS. Forty-nine of the 98 responded to this short survey, and 31 people ultimately participated in one of four focus group interviews.

During the focus group interviews, participants were asked to discuss their awareness of teaching materials in their respective field that focus on PCRS, types of materials they typically use in their classes, how they learn about or educate themselves about PCRS, challenges they encounter when looking for supplemental materials for their courses, materials they wish were available, content areas or topics in their field feel would be beneficial, how they would like new materials packaged, and challenges they face when addressing potentially controversial topics.

Focus groups were held via Zoom in May 2022. Focus group audio was recorded and focus group chat comments were saved as participants were routinely commenting in the chat and sharing links

to resources. Focus group transcripts were examined for themes and coded by CREST for the purposes of this report. In addition, chat sessions were sent to participants in the focus group interviews so they had access to the resources shared within the discussion.

Within the analysis of the transcripts, we noted individual participant comments; however, Zoom transcripts often confuse voices of participants, so audio recordings were used in an attempt to verify the accuracy of participant responses. Therefore, numbers in this report of focus group mentions of certain themes are most likely underestimated. Focus group participants were also commenting in the chat and others were using emojis to show their agreement, responses that are not captured in audio recordings or transcripts. CREST tracked these discrepancies in audio and transcripts to the best of our knowledge and took care to note the presence of emoji use and chat comments when possible. Quotations from participants used in this section are lightly edited for clarity. Certain words or phrases are bolded to draw attention to key points participants made.

# **Focus Group Participants**

The participants varied in position type, academic department affiliation, and areas of interest and expertise. One participant is a research fellow at a museum, two participants are community college faculty, and four participants are Ph.D. candidates. Finally, 23 are in professorial, dean, or director positions affiliated with 4-year colleges or universities. One did not share the nature of their institutional affiliation, but made it known they teach.

Academic departments represented include history, British literature, English, medieval studies, early modern literature, comparative literature, classics, art history, international studies, languages and culture, interdisciplinary studies, acting, music, German, and Hispanic studies.

Those who noted more specific areas of focus mentioned medieval Europe, premodern world history, early modern literature and culture, 16<sup>th</sup> century religious writing, medieval art, manuscript art, 14-16<sup>th</sup> century Italian art and history, Mediterranean and Northern European art, early modern drama, 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century studies, book history, Mediterranean history, Asian interstate relations, actor training, Anglo Saxon through the 18<sup>th</sup> century English literature, global prehistory through the 16<sup>th</sup> century, medical history, music history from antiquity through the 18<sup>th</sup> century, opera, music and art in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, German literature and art, medieval literature, and history of ideas.

# **General Use of Materials in Classes**

An initial question asked of focus group participants was simply, "What types of materials do you typically use in your classes?" The graphic below shows the various types of general resources mentioned by participants during these discussions. Counts within the graphic should be interpreted with caution as they are verbal mentions and items mentioned within Zoom chats. Other participants may have agreed by head nodding or giving an emoji thumbs up, but these are hard to capture during focus groups. As such, the counts reflect a more conservative tally of the resources mentioned. As the graphic below shows, books (n=12) and websites (n=10) were the most common mentions of types of sources used. Bibliographies, primary source excerpts, professional organizations, and YouTube or video lectures each received four mentions. Maps were mentioned by three participants.

Blogs, podcasts, internal department lists, conference sessions, and Folger Library resources were each mentioned by two participants. One-time mentions by participants include adaptations, museums, inclusive music bibliographies, object reproductions, and scholar notes in classroom edition.



### Awareness and Use of Supplemental Materials Related to PCRS

When focus group participants were asked to describe where they found PCRS resources, they shared they often found out about PCRS information and new resources and materials from a variety of places. Two noted they have found information and materials by consulting blogs and announcements from professional organizations or societies. Others noted they find out about new PCRS resources and materials from Twitter, American Historical Association email blasts and webinars, podcasts, new fiction and non-fiction publications and visualizations, and by mining bibliographies in publications.

The sense of how many supplemental resources there are seemed to vary widely by field. For example, one English professor said, "I feel like there's **so much** out there" while an art history professor noted, "I actually **haven't seen that many**. Most of the ones I've used I've made myself." This sense held up across focus groups with those particularly in art history and music noting they feel they have much fewer PCRS resources to work with than those in literature.

Focus group participants were also asked to describe their awareness and use of supplemental teaching materials in their field that focus on PCRS scholarship. During some focus group discussions this led to a general discussion of their awareness and use, and in other discussions participants provided more specific details on which materials they use. The more specific discussions often led to resource sharing in the Zoom chat among participants, with many offering specific book titles, podcast titles, website and database names, video titles, and so on. Appendix A includes a list of

specific resources participants said they use in their classes and includes links to some resources participants shared in the focus group Zoom chat. Focus group participants also mentioned specific scholars when they were asked to describe their awareness of supplemental PCRS materials for their courses and where they look for resources related to PCRS. These scholars are listed in Appendix B.

Among the information shared, participants made it clear that they consult and use resources that get students to think more critically about race in the premodern era. For example, some focus group participants noted their use of primary text excerpts to help facilitate student thinking about race and identity. One participant, commenting on their use of open access primary sources, said they are inclined to use those that focus on "how groups are describing other groups, how they're using them to really comment on their own group" and added "the biggest challenge is getting [students] to start thinking about primary sources critically in the first place and then adding in that additional nuance." Another participant said they try to focus on primary texts from very specific periods to address "various notions of race and biological construction versus early modern notions of color and the ways in which they become tropes and culture." In another example, one participant who teaches at a predominantly white institution said they use a variety of primary and secondary resources that "get at the constructedness of whiteness" to help them reach their students. Other participants in this focus group nodded in agreement, noting that conversations about whiteness are also integral. During this discussion, one person noted the use of Seamus Heaney's translation of *Beowulf* and said it can aid in discussions of identity. This participant said, "Here's an Irish person who's looking at English language and its colonialist implications for himself." Finally, discussions as well as collaborative annotation applications ("apps") were mentioned by at least three participants as ways to encourage deeper student engagement with a primary text and with other students in the course.

Some of those who noted use of video and podcast resources mentioned that length can be important. Among the four participants addressing length, 5–15-minute videos were found to be helpful. One noted that students often have a difficult time paying attention after 10 minutes. For podcasts, time ranges expanded from 10 minutes to 30 minutes, often with these sources assigned outside of class. At least two participants noted that students can listen to them while commuting to campus. One art historian commenting on video and podcast use said,

I have used **shorter podcasts or short videos** put together especially by museums, where there's a kind of deep dive on to a single object – just to vary it up so that it's not always reading, **to give students the opportunity to listen to voices that aren't mine.** I like to include those other kinds of perspectives.

### **Challenges Locating Supplemental Materials on PCRS**

Focus group participants shared a wide array of challenges they face when locating supplemental PCRS materials. Most challenges were mentioned by just two participants, and some only by one participant. That said, the counts are conservative and do not capture head nodding or communication via emoji (e.g., thumbs up, clapping hands) during the Zoom sessions. Challenges that were

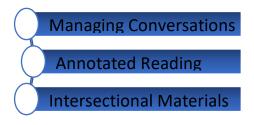
mentioned by multiple focus group participants are listed in the table below with representative illustrative quotes.

Theme	n	Illustrative Quote
Lack expertise to navigate which materials to use	5	<ul> <li>It can be really difficult, I think, when you're presented with this ever-growing body of research too and you're not an expert to figure out where to even begin and which scholarship is actually going to do the work you really want your students to get out of this and which is just going to kind of reiterate the same power structures and just with a slightly different more diverse face.</li> <li>I don't really know where to start so I've been flagging stuff that's kind of come right into my lap but, but I feel like I just have very little sense of things that I can use to assign to students or just things I can draw on in teaching, things I can point students toward I also don't have time in the summer to do all of this on my own nor do I think that's necessarily the best way because other people are doing this. I would just love to be able to find it so that I can used on it and really enrich my teaching in a way that I think the students want and need.</li> </ul>
Bibliographies without context, levels of students or skills students might learn	2	• Application [from a bibliography] becomes a challenge. I've got a list of stuff, but then I have to choose what's promising, how to actually use [it] in the classroom, especially in and undergraduate classroom Some kind of framing and contextualization of things that would be useful in particular situations for a particular audience.
Lack of PCRS resources in field of study	2	• There's very little [PCRS in my field], and so I end up saying, 'okay here's a great article on Othello.' Now, how can we use those principles to study Italy which kind of works, but isn't quite the same? I think that's often the challenge. There's not a lot of scholarship in PCRS in Italian Studies, so that's often my challenge. I have to sort of lean on and a subfield adjacent to my own and then sort of build it sort of on my own picking my own texts.
Library issues	2	• [In addition to library funding] our library is so focused on Asia Pacific and Oceania so everything I get comes in interlibrary loan.
Costs to students	2	• It's just <b>really hard to get materials</b> . I don't know if anyone else is wrestling with this, but our <b>university's emphasis on what they call textbook zero so that students aren't buying stuff</b> .
Source quality	2	<ul> <li>Black Central Europe is one [resource] that I've looked to, but I also sometimes struggle with that one because it doesn't have any bibliographic citation some of the research is a little out of date or just misrepresents what the scholarship says.</li> </ul>
Student comprehension of old translations	2	• My challenge specifically is that [sources are] not written at a level that my students can really comprehend. It's challenging enough to get them to figure out how to read primary sources and that a huge struggle for them, particularly when I'm using open-source 19th century translations.

In addition to the challenges described in the table above, focus group participants also noted challenges related to finding materials that undergraduates will understand, needing to be careful of comments posted on YouTube videos they have used in courses, finding the time it takes to piece together materials from different sources for various levels of learners, students needing tactile materials, the amount of new PCRS materials coming out, needing transcripts for audio and visual materials, out-of-date bibliographies, a lack of undergraduate accessible resources focusing on non-English Europe, and a lack of resources addressing Indigenous art and objects.

#### Participant Wishlist of PCRS Materials and Resources

Focus group participants were asked what resources they wished were available and whether they had any ideas about specific content areas or topics in their fields they would like to see. The top three topics of discussion included the desire for resources on managing classroom conversations, bibliographies or annotated reading lists, and intersectional PCRS resources. Additional needs included a variety of other pedagogical tools, text resources, media, and resources that can speak to modern day contexts.



#### Resources on Managing Conversations

At least eleven focus group participants verbally expressed their desire for pedagogical advice and resources on navigating difficult classroom conversations. Specifically, participants asked for resources for how to address students not using appropriate terminology, create collaborative ground rules in classrooms, manage disagreements and "uncomfortable" discussions, classroom conflict de-escalation, how to help students who need to be convinced race is worth discussing, create productive and respectful spaces for conversation that do not burden students of color, and how to confront PCRS-related issues in red states. One recommended creating classroom rules that link students to conversations about ignorant comments. One said it would be helpful if ACMRS created "curated the list of links, but more specifically on having difficult conversations." The participant asking for resources for those in red states noted they want these resources to be focused on confronting

Desired Conversation Resources: Teaching appropriate terminology and race as worth discussing De-escalation, managing disagreements tips Consideration of how to broaden debates issues "not just the ways to sort of navigate around them." One commenting on the need for resources to reach students who need "convincing" and said,

For these kinds of conversations in this kind of teaching to be successful, it needs to reach students who are not necessarily already thinking that white supremacy is a problem. In other words, it needs to it needs to expand the debate among white students especially about

the realities of this situation in a way that brings them into the conversation without making them feel like they're being asked to change their political views. ... The goal of this should be to involve a **broad spectrum of people in these discussions**, rather than just have this kind of thing where everyone gets together and says, 'Well, we all hate racism. Isn't this great?' I don't think that's very useful; 'the racism is bad' thing doesn't get you very far really.

#### Annotated Reading Lists

Annotated Reading Lists Need: Current and past PCRS scholarship To be searchable Contextualized sources To be organized by student level Annotated reading lists or bibliographies were a common desire among participants, with eight participants verbally mentioning wanting them. Focus group participants do not simply want lists of resources or lists that only include current scholarship. Participants noted wanting searchable lists or databases with tags, bibliographies that are kept current, lists that do not neglect the "long view" of scholarship, bibliographies that highlight work of scholars of color. One participant who noted wanting

attention given the "long view" of scholarship said the following:

I think if there is going to be kind of a curated list, you can think about **different levels** of the list. One could be kind of a very clearly delineated **introductory** list, but does some historiography so people aren't ignoring something that people were doing in the 70s, or the 80s. I think the speed at which this topic has been discussed and published on often neglects the long view, so if there could be a list [for] a starting point that they could look at historical European, the bigger contextual questions and then you could even have different category lists.

Three of the eight participants also noted wanting bibliographies that provide information on appropriateness of the resource by student level, inclusion of resources for a variety of student levels,

and context such as what is in the resource, why a certain chapter or article speaks to certain ideas or a certain field, and how one might apply or use the resource. Other participants in one focus group nodded in agreement that bibliographies need this type of contextual information, especially where student level is concerned. At least one participant noted that this would also help less seasoned instructors know where to start educating themselves as well.

#### Intersectional Resources

Intersectional materials that include race and at least one other dimension such as religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability were important to participants At least seven focus group participants said they wanted more intersectional PCRS materials capable of dealing with race along with at least one of the following: gender, sexual orientation, religion, and/or disability status. For example, one participant noted:

It would be great to have models that talk about the intersections between race and religion and race and disability among other things. Then it would be really helpful in addition to talking about premodern artifacts to talk about European religion and Islam, in the premodern period. I think it would be really helpful to have audio [materials] on that.

#### Another said,

We often teach race in a larger intersection of context but that premodern race often can't be separated from categories that today might seem strange to pair of with race, so the kind of the racialized treatment of religion, just to give one example right so. It's, not that I want a specific module on those sorts of things, but that all of these different modules would have to have these other threads going through on how [a] discussion of gender comes into [the] discussions of race, how [a] discussion of Judaism comes into [the] discussion of race. So all of these other topics that students might not expect to see in a discussion of race.

Another referenced the importance of intersectional PCRS materials that also include gender and disability remarked,

I find teaching the early period I find **students interested in these [intersectional] issues**... I think this is an opportunity, so not to kind of minimize critical race theory, but I think it needs to be more than that.

Similarly, another participant noted when talking about resources they would like to see, "**Premodern disability studies is a place that we need to bulk up teaching resources** specifically so that would be one area. For example, this morning I was looking for images of a disability that wasn't Richard the Third in Shakespeare, and [had] a hard time."

## Pedagogical Tools

Participants voiced desire for a variety of teaching ideas and teaching aides. Focus group participants asked for free visuals and objects to help with visual analysis (n=6), general resources addressing PCRS from a non-text specific standpoint (n=5), a teaching guide or handbook (n=3), online glossaries of terms so "people do not have an excuse to not get it right" (n=2), maps (n=2), essay and assignment ideas (n=2), ideas of what to talk about in classes, active engagement ideas (e.g., ideas for role playing and simulations), sample syllabi "that diversify the canon" (n=1), and ideas on how to introduce PCRS terminology (n=1). One participant who noted they felt they had enough resources said they would appreciate more space at conferences to share best practices and how to introduce primary sources while talking about race. Providing an example they said, "some kind of landing space where [if] I'm teaching *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, how do I talk about *The Changeling...* and *The Tempest*?"

Two participants discussed the importance of maps in scholarship and recommended creating collaborative map-making platforms to help students make maps, maps with embedded media, maps showing how borders in the ancient world were "fuzzy", and maps linked to readings to help students learn where a source was from.

One participant, discussing their need for free visuals to help student engagement and learning, cited that ArtStor and the Princeton Index are not accessible to students due to fees. Three focus group participants noted it would be useful to have object or artifact facsimiles to engage students. Among three art historians in one focus group was a consensus that images and art history need to be incorporated more but that it needed to be done properly by art history experts. One had this to say to which others in the group nodded in agreement:

I would love to see images and art history incorporated more, but I'd like to see it incorporated properly. I don't want to be snooty, but I would not go and write the kinds of things about medieval texts that people write about medieval images without a great deal more preparation. I'd like to see people think about what images can do and can't do historically to tell us about attitudes and culture in the Middle Ages, so I'd like to see art incorporated, I'd like to see art historians do it or people who have really done the hard work to develop the material.

Another raised issues with being able to find Indigenous art objects being investigated and noted more cohesive materials connecting texts and visuals in this area would be useful. They remarked,

Resources pertaining to Indigenous objects and art. I had a really hard time finding resources for my students this year. Most of the websites that deal with this kind of thing focus on European art or European literature. We wanted to talk about indigenous cultures in the 15th and 16th centuries in North America. We read John Smith texts about Virginia and then the students want to know, 'okay well, so he says, all this kind of ridiculous stuff but what was really going on?' There are little bits and pieces - you find a website that shows that there's this cloak here and there's a

scroll here - but there's no kind of... [trailed off]. I ended up using some essays written by anthropologists who have done some studies of Jamestown, but they don't really discuss objects. Yet I know that there are hundreds of objects in museums, but there doesn't seem to be a place where you can find out a lot of information about that.

Five participants voiced that having non-text-specific resources would be helpful. One of those requesting non-text-specific resources commented on their rationale by saying, "Having stuff that isn't text specific is very helpful to me because that lets me link and then bring it into whatever ancient texts we happen to be reading and whatever class we're doing so that I can include discussions of race and identity in classes that aren't necessarily about it." They gave an example of a video that might focus on giving insight into post-colonial literature and what it was like which they can translate across texts they use. Two others commenting on this theme said they would like "base modules on PCRS" to introduce the topic to students and provide explanations of what PCRS is and what premodern critical race theory is. Two of the other participants called for student accessible materials on the "process of racialization" in history and provided examples. Both noted issues with finding good resources in English to teach this topic. One said, they address this through discussions of German portrayals of Slavic peoples and the other said they address this topic through the Crusades. One of these participants said,

There's an enormous amount of discourse on the racialization of the Slavs and Germans have some horrible, horrible visualizations of Slavic peoples who my students tend to perceive as white. Having some kind of teachable texts about racialization as a process that's historically conditioned and which changes over time would be super useful to be able to apply [to the] context in which racialization was occurring in the Middle Ages, but which my undergraduate students don't perceive there to be racialization occurring now.

Another noted that while discussing racialization, self, and others in conjunction with Crusades and Greek and Roman ideals that there is a lot of content, but not all is good for various student levels and addressing issues related to "self" and "other." They noted that contrary to student beliefs, not all Romans were white, and people were learning to become Greek through language. They said, "it hasn't really been interrogated in a way that I think could be super fruitful and useful at that undergraduate level."

Three focus group participants expressed a desire for teaching guides or handbooks. One of these noted that it would be useful if these resources did not assume the level of instructor knowledge on modern or premodern issues related to race. They said,

[Teaching guides that do not assume] that the instructor really knows very much about this topic at all. ... I feel deeply unqualified [to design a new class on race], the more background I could get quickly, the better. Including the more modern theories and discussions [and the premodern] with which [it] is going to be in dialogue in ways that I can't really appreciate because I don't know either side of that dialogue. Another commented that if modules are developed by this project, then the modules should include guides that help instructors integrate content throughout the semester. They noted,

[Teaching guides] that can help teachers think through ways to make the module, not simply plug and play, not simply like the race section and then we're moving on to the feminist section or formalism. ... Ways to sort of push instructors to think about how to integrate parts of this module throughout the entire semester could be really proactive and useful.

#### Text Resources

Six focus group participants expressed a desire for better text resources, which include resources that are at an accessible reading level for undergraduates. Two of these participants said it would be useful to have more primary sources or collections of primary sources with introductions by scholars in critical race theory rather than those who occupy the "traditional white lens." One of these two participants also said it would help to have these introductions freely available online so students would not need to purchase more materials and so images could be incorporated. A third participant who addressed primary sources noted, "If I asked my students to read a modern English translation that's still old enough to be out of copyright, that's still a barrier. So, I would love more excerpts from medieval romances that are relevant to race." Another participant noted that a "synthesis of resources" to help undergraduate students understand the complexities of Mediterranean slavery, so they can understand slavery outside U.S. context would help "prime" students for primary sources. A fifth participant noted they would appreciate texts with a "transnational perspective" because while there are many English literature scholars, there is "not so much accessible material from other European countries." The final participant noted wanting more readings on performance and representation, especially as this relates to casting because what is available does not lead to "rigorous discussion."

#### Media

Podcasts, videos, and music were addressed by at least four participants. One noted wanting more music or video recordings of Crusade songs in Hebrew from 13<sup>th</sup> century France, one recommended podcasts of up to 20 minutes with experts, and two noted a general need for more video and podcast resources. One of these participants noted, "I think that the undergrads now struggle with reading anything, no matter what language it's in, and they process information much better if it's in audio or video format, so please do more of that."

### Modern Day Understanding

Some focus group participants want to know more about modern-day identity politics or how the past is misappropriated or appropriately used in the current political moment. At least three focus group participants mentioned that they lack the knowledge to integrate modern-day racial and identity politics in their courses where necessary, and five participants noted wanting resources that help instructors identify the connections and misappropriations of the premodern in our era. For example, one participant explained they would like "resources that help us connect the current political moment to aspects of our own discipline. So, talking about Black Lives Matter and Shakespeare or women's rights in early modern period or lack thereof." Another noted wanting resources that address specific parallels between the pre-modern and modern such as the so-called "witch's hat" being referred to as a "Jew's hat" and modern parallels to anti-Semitism and anti-feminism. Finally, two participants in one focus group gave opposing statements – one discussed wanting resources on misappropriation and misuse of the past in contemporary platforms while the other focused on wanting resources in recent positive uses of the premodern. Discussing misappropriation, one participant said:

Something that I would really love to have access to, although it may not be something that people need for teaching purposes on a frequent basis, is sort of flagging the premodern symbols, texts, things that are being misappropriated today. I think for many of us who are not super plugged into different types of contemporary culture we may be completely unaware that something we're talking about has this whole other existence. And so, we're not addressing it because we don't know it exists and whether or not we plan to actually engage with the modern incarnation of whatever it is, I think it's good that we know it exists and that also can give us another teaching topic if we want. Although as premodern scholars it's often daunting, to say the least, to venture into modern things. But if that's something we want to do, at least we would know where to start. Even if we don't want to do it, to know that it's there and our students may be aware of it, whether or not we are.

The other participant commenting on recent positive uses had the following to say:

Looking not just at contemporary misuse of the past, but contemporary positive uses of the past. I'm thinking of things like the medieval PLC Twitter. Things where people are not necessarily doing academic or scholarly work but are doing this kind of public-facing discussion of premodern race would be a nice thing to include so that it's not all just 'look at these white nationalists.'

### Packaging of PCRS Content

Teaching modules are desirable but what participants would like to see in them vary widely Focus group participants were asked to reflect on how they might want new PCRS content developed under this grant packaged for teaching. Eight verbally raised wanting modules in some capacity and multiple other participants non-verbally agreed using gestures or emojis during the Zoom focus group sessions. While some participants expressed interest in base modules that provide general insight into PCRS as described in a previous section of this report, two expressed desires for

methodology and theory modules to prepare students for PCRS, others voiced desires for customizable modules (n=2), or modules centered around a specific text or work of art or topic area (n=3).

One of those explaining the need for theory and methodology modules had this to say:

[M]odules on theory and method [would be] really helpful because there's a big difference between premodern race studies and premodern critical race studies and one of the biggest challenges is pushing students, for example, to reject the idea of races biological determinism. I often have to build that module myself and it's a lot of work to come up with the discussions ... that will be appropriate for undergraduates. So some kind of material that teaches students to delineate the difference between looking at race and critically studying race as a discursive process as it operated in the period we're talking about. I think especially for like students like mine ... first gens who have never really read in a critical way now all the sudden they're being forced to do this. It can be really challenging to get the students to engage. I think if there if there was a more sort of cohesive module specifically on method that could be used, regardless of whether you're [teaching] medieval history classes or an early modernist that allows you to do that it would be really, really helpful.

Another participant discussing how a module might be customizable yet focus on a particular topic area said,

I really find [a] customizable module idea quite interesting, particularly if it can speak to substitutions or additional inclusions. You know I'm thinking about stuff I have to teach like Gothic cathedrals there's really not anything at the undergraduate level talking about race and building Gothic cathedrals, or what that might look like for us and it can be really frustrating in a classroom setting to not have either some sort of like equivalent building. Like okay, maybe if we really can't find a way to talk about race and Gothic cathedrals, maybe here's a building and a similar time that you could talk about instead. And I don't think it would need to be you know fully fleshed out module but just talking points or something to give the instructor just like an inroad into an idea of a way to include in this kind of conversation. Especially when you're talking to someone who's like teaching a pretty set cannon, I think [that] is important.

Another, in a similar vein, commenting on how a module might be focused on a specific text and could be immediately plugged into a course said,

Grouped around [a] text you could have different approaches... reception and transmission of a text, its manuscript history, images associated with it, how [it] traveled. [went on to give examples of images of demons, demonic figures and colors associated with them or one specific Shakespeare play] And then you can network out from that base text. That would actually be something that people could embed in a course now and start using now without feeling like [they] have to completely go back to graduate school before [they] can teach this particular topic.

Plug-and-play modules overall seemed less favorable among some focus group participants than customizable options and text equivalents for media. One participant speaking to this noted,

I'm not interested in something that I'm plugging into my LMS. I'm interested in something that I'm curating and adapting to my teaching. The other thing that's super important to me is that when I give things in multimedia I always make sure that there's a text equivalent. So, having if it's a podcast having a text equivalent because I really do like to give my students that choice in terms of how they're interacting with the material.

Other participants had additional specific ideas. For example, one participant said a module starting with a 3–5-minute video introduction to a text, work of art, or play followed by a webinar, a list of primary and secondary texts that related to ideas raised in the module, and sample quizzes and essay topics would be useful. Another said,

As noted previously in this report, two desired teaching handbooks or guides, and one noted they would like to see these integrated within modules developed under this grant. They said,

[Teaching guides] that can help teachers think through ways to make the module, not simply plug and play, not simply like the race section and then we're moving on to the feminist section or formalism. ... Ways to sort of push instructors to think about how to integrate parts of this module throughout the entire semester could be really proactive and useful.

One participant referenced the National Humanities Center digital library modules as a potential model because "you can basically create a copy and edit it according to content that you wish to incorporate in your classroom, and they also do [this] with lesson plans as well. So, that would be extremely something like that would be always useful."

# Challenges

Participants were asked to address any challenges they feel exist to using PCRS content. The current political climate was a challenge according to at least 10 focus group participants who verbally shared their insights on this issue. For example, one participant raised the issue of "cancel culture" and conversations they have had with colleagues by stating the following:

Something that has come out from conversations with colleagues who feel like maybe they should be teaching this kind of material but are afraid to for one reason or another – they don't feel they have enough background in it, or they feel they might say the wrong thing and get canceled. These are not my words; these are other people.

Another participant addressed how the political climate impacts the institution's climate by saying:

We have a very active chapter of the first amendment rights group on campus, and professors are routinely reported and brought up for just venturing into this subject of race or gender in their courses. There's a really chilling effect on faculty members here with regard to the subject. It's not helped by the fact the legislature routinely passes bills or threatens bills that will threaten tenure or funding, and so the administration becomes pretty timid also. Those are some significant challenges here.

Three of those noting political challenges also suggested that this is purely a political issue, not a pedagogical one. One who understands there are political issues, does not believe they are a problem to be addressed. They remarked,

It's not a pedagogical problem. So beyond giving us answers, I mean I don't know of a problem where I'm teaching but giving answers to those who need them. For legislators and the public, I don't think that's your job or worry.

Another participant commenting on pushback and student desires said,

You know the modules that [this grant may] produce and distribute will have multiple audiences and one of those audiences will be people looking for fuel. I would say, forget it. Just do what we want to do. ... I think students do want this kind of discussion. They're eager to talk about all kinds of issues.

Four of the participants, while talking about political climate, offered insight into potential solutions. For example, one participant noted it may help to have student-led rather than instructor-imposed discussions in some states due to the political climate agreed students want to have these discussions. One noting how you can let students carry the conversation said,

I'll say first of all that there is **no problem with the students, the students are hungry for the material.** You can show them things that have nothing to do with race or indigenous [cultures] and **they're making those connections themselves**.

Another participant offered the advice of remaining purely factual and text driven. They gave the example of doing a close reading of *Othello* where students examine how lago talks about Othello so students can see the information for themselves. In this conversation, two participants recommended not using buzzwords in materials. One said,

It is contextual and I don't know how much the project can or should really do to accommodate that, of course. I do live in a red, progressively redder state where avoiding the buzzwords of critical race theory and related terms on the landing pages for students might be helpful because that may be an obstacle for some of them.

On a note somewhat related to politics, two also spoke about how the demographics of those taking medieval European history poses a challenge to being able to meaningfully incorporate PCRS. One of these participants, who noted students are often white males, said the following:

In classics, in particular, though I know this is a problem too in medieval studies, there's a significant portion of the population that has appropriated those themes as

**basically areas for white supremacists** only. That's been a big challenge when you get students who have those particular views in your classrooms.

Other challenges were one-time mentions. Additional challenges noted by participants included worrying about the amount of work falling onto scholars of color, antiquated views of medieval studies by colleagues in other fields and across the institution, limited knowledge, limited time to learn the material and incorporate it into classes, students' limited knowledge and limited instructional time to explain the intricacies.

# **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

# **Survey Findings**

Survey respondents were positioned well to address what they see as the value of PCRS in higher education courses, their familiarity with PCRS, barriers and challenges they face integrating PCRS into their courses, and their likelihood of adopting or adapting PCRS materials developed under this initiative. While most participants said they are moderately to very familiar with PCRS and close to 70% said they use PCRS in their courses, most said they only use PCRS in their courses sometimes, and most identified barriers or challenges to using PCRS in their courses. That said, most respondents said they would like to adopt or adapt new PCRS materials developed under this initiative into their courses.

For all materials in question, at least 45% of respondents who answered the questions on materials said they were somewhat or extremely likely to adopt or adapt them. The strongest perceived likelihood of adoption or adaption was for the annotated reading lists (85%), units of study (78%), and exemplar syllabi (69%).

The only statistically significant differences of respondent perceived likelihood of material adoption and role were found for the exemplar syllabus and for web-based annotated texts and primary documents, but the associations were small. As such, it is fair to conclude that academic role is not a helpful lens through which to understand the likelihood of material adoption. Similarly, responses from those at institutions with large proportions of students from underrepresented groups or economically disadvantaged students were not associated with likelihood of materials adoption.

# **Focus Group Findings**

Focus group participants reaffirmed findings from the needs assessment survey in terms of challenges, awareness and use of PCRS materials, concerns about learning and integrating PCRS into their classes, and what types of materials educators might seek to integrate into their courses.

During the analysis of focus group data, data were probed for possible differences between more and less seasoned educators (e.g., those newer to the field or those with lighter teaching loads). General differences did not emerge in the focus groups by types of materials desired among participants. One pattern that did emerge, however, was that junior faculty, graduate students, and post-docs overall tended to be more aware of web based PCRS resources (e.g., podcasts) and shared a greater

concern for more intersectional premodern studies materials that are accessible to their students. That said, all involved in these groups are eager to see PCRS move forward and desire more resources of a variety of types and more support for educators interested in further integrating PCRS into their classes.

While the focus groups confirmed insights from the survey, focus group participants also brought depth to the needs assessment by way of highlighting specific PCRS materials they use in their classes, specific deficiencies some perceive in terms of PCRS resources for undergraduate students, increased understanding of challenges locating PCRS materials they can use in their classes, insight into what they would like to see in new PCRS content developed under this grant, specific insight into different ways content packaged in modules might be structured to be useful, and improved understanding of some of the dynamic challenges faced by this subset of survey participants.

Materials development and marketing of these materials should seek to reach those in all types of teaching positions and the materials. Support should largely focus on pedagogical guides and help all teaching faculty address what they view as barriers to using these materials. Some of these materials and supports would help combat key barriers and challenges perceived by the survey participants such as time to locate materials and learn more about advances in PCRS, cost to students, and access to quality resources. Supports, if framed around addressing political and social pushback, could also help faculty navigate some of these pressing issues while not completely neglecting PCRS in their courses.

# APPENDIX A.

Below is a list of specific resources noted by participants during discussions of their awareness and use of PCRS resources. Hyperlinks are added to the list where participants in focus groups shared a specific link. Nearly all resources were one-time mentions. Counts should be interpreted with caution as they are verbal mentions and items mentioned within Zoom chats. Other participants may have agreed by head nodding or giving an emoji thumbs up, but these are hard to capture during focus groups. As such, the counts reflect a more conservative tally of the resources mentioned.

#### Specific Resources Mentioned by Focus Group Participants

#### Books:

- The Golden Rhinoceros: Histories of the African Middle Ages
- Whose Middle Ages? Teachable Moments for an Ill-Used Past
- Things of Darkness
- White Over Black
- White Rage
- The Crusades: An Epitome
- The Art of Ethnography: A Chinese "Miao Album"
- Ibn Fadlan and the Land of Darkness: Arab Travelers in the Far North
- The Routledge Handbook of Identity and the Environment in the Classical and Medieval Worlds
- A Cultural History of the Human Body in the Medieval Age
- Lieutenant Nun
- Staging Habla De Negros
- Global Lives: Britain and the World, 1550-1800
- Wie die Deutschen weiß wurden
- Seamus Haney's translation of *Beowulf*
- Jack Niles translation of Beowulf
- University of Toronto primary source readers
- Bedford Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism

Websites and Web-Based Interactive Materials:

- International Center of Medieval Art (n=2)
- Memos Orient
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Folger Shakespeare Library
- Perusal
- Hypothes.is
- Interactive Dante materials through Columbia University
- Black Central Europe
- <u>Tide Keywords Project</u>
- <u>An Incredibly Detailed Map of Medieval Trade Routes</u>
- The Mappa Mundi
- Whose Middle Ages companion site
- History Cartarum Mapping Mandeville Project
- Hannah Barker's site on medieval slavery

#### Databases:

- ArtStor (e.g., Section on Images of the Black in Western Art)
- Open Iberia America

#### Podcasts:

- <u>Seeing White</u> by John Biewen
- Multicultural Middle Ages
- BBC's History Extra (e.g., interviews with Ayanna Thompson and Miranda Kauffmann)
- History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps
- Byzantium and Friends
- Benjamin Franklin's World
- Footnoting History
- Infectious Historians

#### Shared Bibliographies:

- Colleague collaboration Example shared in chat
- Race and Visibility in Medieval Iberia bibliography through Journal La Coronica

#### **Bibliographies:**

• Medievalists of Color bibliography

#### Webinars & Lectures:

- Media Academy of America statements on Charlottesville
- Folger Shakespeare Library
- USC's Race/Solidarity Transpacific Conversations series
- Stuart Hall's "Race the Floating Signifier" lecture on Kanopy (n=2)
- Cord Whitaker's YouTube lecture

#### Video services:

- Kanopy
- YouTube

#### Videos/films:

- Orson Wells' Othello with Ayanna Thompson introduction
- Drunk History

#### Blogs:

- Rebecca Kennedy's prepublication blog
- Sara Bond's blog posts such as this one

#### Conferences:

• Spencer Stuart on Race at RSA 2019

#### Adaptations:

- Comic books
- TV shows
- BIPOC & LGBTQ artists and theorists responding to Shakespeare and others

# APPENDIX B.

Below is a list of specific scholar names noted by participants during discussions of their awareness and use of PCRS resources. Nearly all were one-time mentions. Counts should be interpreted with caution as they are verbal mentions and items mentioned within Zoom chats. Other participants may have agreed by head nodding or giving an emoji thumbs up, but these are difficult to capture during focus groups.

Scholars mentioned by focus group participants when discussing PCRS materials they use						
<ul> <li>Geraldine Heng (n=4)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Karen Cotton</li> </ul>	Rebecca Kennedy				
<ul> <li>Cord Whitaker (n=2)</li> </ul>	Kimberle Crenshaw	Lisa Lampert				
<ul> <li>Kim Hall (n=2)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Janet Edelman</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Jackie Murry</li> </ul>				
<ul> <li>Stuart Hall (n=2)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Louise Fradenburg</li> </ul>	Jack Niles				
<ul> <li>Ayanna Thompson (n=2)</li> </ul>	Imtiaz Habib	<ul> <li>Miles Ogborn</li> </ul>				
Carol Anderson	<ul> <li>Seamus Heaney</li> </ul>	Elaine Showalter				
<ul> <li>Elisheva Baumgarten</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Margo Hendricks</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Susanna Throop</li> </ul>				
Sara Bond	<ul> <li>Winthrop Jordan</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Mary Floyd Wilson</li> </ul>				
Michael Bristol	Miranda Kauffman	Shao-Yun Yang				