

ABSTRACT

Title of Document:

**WHEN THEY SEE US: NARRATIVES OF
BLACK MALE TEACHERS**

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This dissertation explores 10 Black male teachers' subjective understandings of their experiences in the teaching profession and the ways they understand their lives and roles within the profession. BlackCrit and Kanter's Theory of Tokenism were used to create the theoretical underpinning of this study. BlackCrit provided a lens to look at Black male teacher's racial conditions under specific formations of racial oppression. Kanter's Theory of Tokenism was used to provide additional focus, given Black male teachers' frequent positions as tokens in the profession. This framework provided a theoretical backdrop to help conceptualize how Black male teachers in the study were positioned in their profession. Across this study, the teachers shared that they find themselves playing many roles—those that they welcome and that inspire them, as well as those for which they lack interest or that cause undue burdens. Though they

often do not speak of it directly, these Black male teachers also acknowledge the stress and tension that come from playing too many roles and not always the ones they want to play, and the complicated relationship with the profession that results from these experiences. Despite the challenges, when navigating these relationships, the Black male teachers in this study continued to persist in the profession through their determination and dedication.