CRITICAL QUESTIONS IN EDUCATION

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** Our thanks to the cadre of scholars who serve as reviewers without whose services the journal could not exist.

Special Theme Issue: Critical Inquiry for the Social Good (Part 2)

The Academy for Educational Studies

March 15, 2017

Colleagues and Friends of the Academy:

Before moving onto a quick word about this special theme issue (part 2), we want to give several shout outs: to Steve Jones for once again putting on a great conference earlier this month on Bourbon Street! To Nel Noddings and Laurie Brooks for sharing their insights into the current state of affairs in education and their thoughts on teaching controversial issues. To Christopher Clark for once again participating, advising, smiling, and cajoling. And, to our dear friend John Petrovic for filling out our Monday evening community panel on all things schooling. And, lest you think Steve came home and rested—it ain't so. The call for proposals for our symposium in Pittsburgh at the end of October will soon be available. We hope all within earshot can join us in Pittsburgh.

As we mentioned back in September—when part I of this special theme issue was published—Aaron and Austin were so successful in garnering participation on these questions, that the quality articles submitted for the project could not be contained in a single issue of the journal. And so, as promised, part 2 is now available.

We also (last September) pondered aloud the following question: why a theme issue on Critical Inquiry? And, why one focusing on "research" as a means for aiding our never-ending pursuit of a good society? Our September answer has not changed: critically interrogating the state of current research and then providing suggestions for how research might be conducted with the social good in mind is, we believe, absolutely crucial to recovering some lost humanity in educational policy and practice. Part 2 of this special issue is an important extension of the discussion started back in September of last year.

And so, we leave you to your reading with as always, our wish that you are visited with a good dose of peace.

PAX,

Eric C. Sheffield, Managing Editor

Jessica A. Heybach, Associate Editor

Critical Questions in Education

Special Theme Issue:
Critical Inquiry for the Social Good (Part 2)

Austin Pickup & Aaron Kuntz, Guest Editors

Contents

Critical Inquiry, Truth-telling, and the Good: Problematization and Reconstruction for a Socially Just Education

Austin Pickup, Aurora University
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Abstract

This article extends the discussion of critical methodologies in education, arguing that critical work must exhibit both an explicit orientation toward truth and social justice and an engagement with how theoretical considerations of the good connect to material practices. More specifically, we center Colin Koopman's notion of genealogical pragmatism to suggest that critical work must focus on both problematization and reconstruction of the often dire circumstances that characterize our contemporary moment in education. We use this philosophical discussion as an introduction to the articles comprising this special issue on critical inquiry.

Keywords: *truth, parrhesia, critical, phronesis, genealogy, pragmatism*

Introduction

The continued interrogation and illustration of critical methodologies within educational contexts constitutes the focus of the second part of this special double issue of *Critical Questions in Education*. In the introduction to the first issue, we argued that the term *critical* has become fashionably overused within much academic scholarship, thus losing its overt and explicit connection to truth, social justice, and questions of the good. Our suggestion was that, in order to truly engage in critical methodological work, one cannot occupy the position of disinterested technical expert, but must intervene in the normative framings of the social and political with explicit orientations toward truth-telling and the good. Connecting this argument to our own areas of academic interest, we situated criticality within the frameworks of Foucauldian *parrhesia*, or truth-telling, and Aristotelian *phronesis*, or practical wisdom.[1]

We view these distinct frameworks as complementary and foundational to critical work as they possess important overlapping features. First, both contain explicit orientations toward truth and modes of ethical deliberation. Foucault's *parrhesiastes* takes risks to speak the truth in the continual work of care of the self and care for others. At the same time, Aristotle's *phronimos* possesses the intellectual virtue to deliberate about truth relative to praxis, or "what is good and bad for a human being."[2] Second, each exhibits a crucial convergence of theory and practice

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1. Aaron Kuntz and Austin Pickup, "Critical Inquiry for the Social Good: Methodological Work as a Means for Truth-telling in Education," *Critical Questions in Education* 7, no. 1 (2016): 171-177.
2. See Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson (Los Angeles: Semiotext€, 2001) and Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Roger Crisp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 107.

within the context of everyday living. Both *parrhesiastes* and *phronimos* must diagnose problems that exist within the practical realities of life along theoretical angles of ethical discourse. Importantly, however, the truth-teller and practically wise person do not simply stop at the conceptual level of analysis but *enact* understandings of truth and the good in one's own life; in short, the truths explicated critically relate to *praxis*, the practical world of action in view of some good end, and are materially ensconced in the lived practices of the everyday.

It is this second feature of criticality that we will use as a means of introduction to part II of this special issue. The meaningful connection between theory and practice is a perennial problem within philosophical and methodological work.[3] Contributing to this problem is the simplistic understanding taken from many "post" schools of philosophy that truth and meaning are situated determinedly within historical, social, cultural, etc. formations and thus relatively constructed. As such, in the first issue, we suggested that our postmodern moment presents a certain amount of hesitancy toward invoking truth claims, with scholars going to great lengths to avoid such language for fear of over-essentializing their focus of inquiry.[4] If the truth of the social world leans away from universalism and tends toward historical contingency, one might question whether or not it is appropriate to explicitly merge theoretical inquiry with practical life. Working from this conundrum, one might investigate the problems facing schools in our contemporary context purely from a theoretical level and avoid making claims about what we are to do in the specific instance of schooling itself. That is, this reductionist orientation unnecessarily distances theoretical claims—made on epistemological and ontological levels—from the localized contexts in which education occurs.

While certainly one should always be reflexive and accountable to truths posited, avoiding truth and practical notions of the good (for fear of essentializing one's position, for example, or infringing on the cultural claims of another) does not align with the features of critical methodology we find pivotal to the project of social justice. Critical work necessarily intervenes in the status quo *and* links to praxis by offering alternative modes of action from those we critique as problematic. Critical work involves taking a stand for change based on a vision for social justice, scary and challenging though that might be. Thus, we might ask how the historically contingent nature of truth in social contexts can be merged with the more forward-looking project of naming what we *should* do. This position deviates from a relativistic positioning that immobilizes the critic from engaging in theoretically informed social justice action. Instead, a relational ethic binds the critic to the very phenomena in which s/he seeks to intervene.[5]

Such a merger requires an expansive and, perhaps, more paradigmatically inclusive orientation toward criticality than is often seen in academic scholarship. This, at least, is the view taken by Colin Koopman in much of his work that seeks to productively connect continental philosophy with the traditions of pragmatism and critical theory. Koopman suggests that philosophical lines in the sand are unnecessary as they prevent scholars and practitioners from meaningful dialogue and the ability to put to productive use modes of inquiry that they would typically dismiss. The issue for Koopman is methodologically, rather than metaphysically, driven as he begins from the standpoint of the problematical situations in which we exist. To engage in critical

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3. And, we might add, this forced binary is misplaced. Theorizing *is* a practice. Conversely, all practices develop through some theoretical claim. It seems what people most often mean by the forced bifurcation of theory from practice is the question of whether some theory is *practical*. This is, of course, an entirely different question.

4. Kuntz and Pickup, 172.

5. For a more explicit discussion of relativistic and relational logic in critical methodologies, see Aaron Kuntz, *The Responsible Methodologist: Inquiry, Truth-Telling, and Social Justice* (New York: Routledge Press, 2015).

work requires both a deep understanding of the problem at hand and the potentialities for reconstruction of the problem, be they implicit or explicit. This, Koopman notes, is where traditional philosophical divisions (between analytic, continental, and pragmatist philosophy, for example) remain unproductive, particularly when set against the often-overwhelming array of social issues that collide in our present moment. He writes:

> All of these divisions are obstacles to productive philosophical work on the critical problems we face in the present, as a culture and society, as a discipline and profession, and as ethical matters we all feel the force of in intensely personal ways.[6]

Rather than focusing on the thematic connections and/or disconnections between disparate philosophical traditions, Koopman attempts to pull methodological tools from these traditions (and individual theorists within them) to assist in the development of a more general critical project; one that aims at both understanding problems and rectifying them. Thus, he sees productive linkages between figures such as Foucault, Deleuze, James, Dewey, Habermas and others who have traditionally been viewed as philosophically distant or even antagonistic. In particular, Koopman offers *genealogical pragmatism* as a historically-informed orientation to critical inquiry that makes productive use of both continental and pragmatist philosophies.[7] A brief analysis of genealogical pragmatism follows, which is meant to illustrate the (re)convergence of theory and practice that, we believe, is crucial for critical methodological work and is exemplified in the articles comprising these special issues.

Genealogical Pragmatism

Koopman describes genealogical pragmatism as an extended network of criticality that brings together distinct philosophical components as part of a methodological toolkit for engaging contemporary problems. He describes genealogy, emanating from the continental tradition, as "a historical backward-facing practice of philosophical critique that looks to articulate, so as to intensify, the problematizations which condition our possibilities for doing, thinking, and being in the present." In contrast, Koopman describes pragmatism as "a forward-facing practice of philosophical critique that looks toward the responsive reconstruction of problematic situations in which we sometimes find ourselves."[8] Despite the different directions faced by each tradition, Koopman suggests that, under the umbrella of critique, these lines of inquiry call for each other as reinforcing frameworks. He argues that the productive use of genealogy and pragmatism together offers a more potent orientation to critical work that may cover the weaknesses of each approach individually. In other words, while genealogy may be particularly effective at diagnosing and contributing to our understanding of problems, it is less effective at the future-oriented task of rectifying problems central to pragmatic inquiry, and vice versa.

Turning to Foucault, Koopman contends that the central feature of his genealogical project (importantly distinguished from the more subversive work of Nietzsche) is the concept of

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6. Colin Koopman, "Foucault and Pragmatism: Introductory Notes on Metaphilosophical Methodology," *Foucault Studies*, no. 11 (2011): 4.

7. Colin Koopman, "Genealogical Pragmatism: How History Matters for Foucault and Dewey," *Journal of the Philosophy of History*, no. 5 (2011): 531-559.

8. Koopman, "Foucault and Pragmatism," 6.

problematization.[9] The point of problematization for Foucault is to use historical analysis to up-root contemporary objects from their stable perch of inevitability and to offer them as contin-gently made. Foucault says that problematization is a particular "work of thought" that involves "the development of a given into a question".[10] Thus, Foucault *problematized* things such as discipline, power, and sexuality through his genealogical projects. This work opens up the pos-sibility for new responses to contemporary problems concerning these topics once they become displaced by historical inquiry that illustrates their contingent construction over time and space. It is such a project of denaturalizing contemporary phenomena through historical contextualiza-tion that provides critical inquirers with both the knowledge and tools to re-make the present.

On the other hand, Koopman centers *reconstruction* as the central feature of pragmatic inquiry, specifically looking to Dewey as an illustrative figure for this work. He writes that, for Dewey, reconstruction is the "purposive transforming of a situation for the sake of its improve-ment."[11] This intentional task of offering specific solutions to problems contrasts with the gene-alogical project of laying those problems in front of us and suggesting the possibility for thinking otherwise. Though perhaps contrasting in orientation, genealogical and pragmatic work comple-ment one another as the problem *setting* of problematization serves as a catalyst for the problem *solving* of reconstruction.[12]

What is important to take from this analysis is that genealogy and pragmatism, though accomplishing different and opposite tasks, are not in contradiction, but two sides of the same methodological coin of critical inquiry. This is not necessarily to say that all critical research must engage something specifically called genealogy or pragmatism, but rather that Koopman's description of genealogical pragmatism as an ensemble of critical inquiry illustrates the inter-ventionist character and theory/practice convergence that we argue is fundamental to this work. At a deeper level, critical methodologists should entangle in the messy work of problematization, or the theoretical inquiries necessary to help sufficiently understand the problems set before us. When such problematizations provide the tools for thinking otherwise, critical methodologists must engage in the practical work of reconstruction, or offering interventions in the social world to transform it for ends of truth, justice, and the good. Thus, critical methodology becomes nei-ther simply theoretical (as is often the criticism of practitioners) nor naively practical (which we might say characterizes much educational reform and practice), but rather merges theoretical problematization with practical reconstruction in the larger project of transforming the world for the better.

Further, this presentation of critical methodological work recognizes the imaginative ca-pacity required by such endeavors. One must problematize the normalizing logic that interprets the past in determined ways and search for another, yet to be recognized, sequencing of effects. At the same time, one must envision a possible future not wholly determined by the trappings of the normalized present. This is to work within the incomplete, yet to do so with a determination of what might yet be; dwelling in ambiguity the critical methodologist nonetheless points to the possible.

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9. Colin Koopman, *Genealogy as Critique: Foucault and the Problems of Modernity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013): 44-48.

10. Michel Foucault, "Polemics, Politics, and Problemizations: An Interview with Michel Foucault," in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), 388-389.

11. Koopman, "Genealogical Pragmatism," 544.

12. Ibid, 543.

If we turn these considerations to education, we would simply be honest to say that the current educational landscape is rife with problems. From the continual privatization, commodification, and economization of schools, to the mechanical reduction of teaching and learning, to the reproduction of social inequalities, educators need an appropriate critical framework to productively problematize and reconstruct these issues. It is important to note that critical work in this sense resolutely commits the inquirer to truth-telling, justice, and the good. In other words, the notion that a researcher approaches problems in a disinterested fashion, relying solely on the perceived veracity of research technique, is not the kind of critical inquiry we espouse; indeed, such distanced research practice is not critical at all, but rather reinvokes the very normalizing logic of distance that we find problematic. Further, research that invokes the mantle of criticality simply by saying something is wrong or bad (as though statements of value were all that were necessary to produce critical research), without something akin to problematization is similarly absent the critical necessity of requiring one to think otherwise or develop a reconstruction that offers meaningful alternatives. Indeed, we suggest that critical educational scholarship needs an intentional orientation toward truth, justice, and the good if it is to take seriously the myriad problems faced in education and the possibility of transforming them.

What has been explained here is an attempt at conceptualizing such a critical orientation and, simultaneously, providing a philosophical introduction to the articles comprising these special issues. It was our intention to devote the first issue to more theoretical considerations of the concept of critical methodology and the present issue to papers illustrating more empirical, or practically-oriented, representations of critical research. Having said that, there is an appropriate balance of theoretical and empirical articles in each issue that engage critical methodology across a diverse array of educational contexts. To our theme in this introduction, we hope that the collection of articles within the special issues of this journal productively problematize and offer implications for reconstruction of meaningful critical research in education.

Summary of Individual Articles

The first two articles set the theoretical tone for this second special issue. David Roof, Elena Polush, and Philip Boltz situate *parrhesia* (or, truth-telling) as a guiding approach to critical methodology, one that engages a sense of praxis through sustained action and dialogue. Importantly, *parrhesia* brings with it an ethical imperative to educational research, one that requires courage and risk from the inquirer. Through *parrhesia*, educational research is cultivated as a critical praxis, one missing from traditional forms of critical inquiry.

Ryan Gildersleeve, in turn, situates truth-telling within the predicament of ritual culture and critical inquiry. Grounding his cartographic work within higher education, Gildersleeve offers enactments of the Latino graduation ceremony as *parrhesia*-in-process. This important work results in the explication of the fundamental elements of both *critical inquiry* (as an intervention, as generative, and as materially constituted) and *global (inter)Action* (as producing the Anthropocene and simultaneously constituent of and constituting nature).

In a turn from a focus on *parrhesia* (rendered in the first two articles), critical multicultural educator Dilys Schoorman offers a "personal phronesis" of the scholarly life as curriculum. Taking on the historical question of, "what is a critical educator?" Schoorman enacts a critical perspective through an autoethnographic stance; one that leads to discussion of doctoral education as, itself, an undertaking of social justice. As such, Schoorman simultaneously makes a call

for and demonstrates critical research methodologies as a means to productively engage in our developing curriculum.

In a similar strategy of critical enactment, Garvey and Associates perform their critical work, though do so through engaging a critical dialogue on the challenge of social justice scholarship within academia. Their collective article thus takes the form of a dramaturgical engagement with critical theory with the intent of pushing (even exceeding) the boundaries of their normative field and research practice. Framed as a two-act play with no definitive resolution, the authors/actors invite readers to extend the dialogue they witness; they engage with(in) the very dialogue they initially encounter as the article.

Valerie Shirley engages critical methodology through the lens of Indigenous social justice pedagogy. In her article, she considers the role of this critical framework in a project of Indigenous nation-building with Diné youth. She foregrounds important features of criticality in the analysis of her study, such as risk-taking in teaching and deconstructing historical/social forces to develop student critical consciousness. As such, Shirley offers an important example of justice-oriented critical work in the context of teacher-student relationships.

Next, William Smith analyzes findings from a case study concerning racial narratives in the Obama era. Drawing upon critical race theory, visual research methods, and the work of Stuart Hall, Smith analyzes the responses of student participants within a photo elicitation study of a collection of images of Barack Obama. The responses of students created useful opportunities for critique of majority narratives within schools, such as silence, colorblindness, and post-racialism. Finally, Smith links the critical frameworks of race espoused by student responses to the images with Foucauldian *parrhesia,* as students took on personal and social risks to speak truthfully on race.

Another example of examinations of truth-telling in educational contexts, Brian Horn analyzes the experiences of pre-service teachers beginning student teaching during the 2012 Chicago Teachers Union strike. Horn uses particular cases of student teachers to examine their experiences of the strike, their general understandings of unions and school politics before and after the strike, and their feelings of preparation for activism and truth-telling. The study is connected to the larger educational context of weakened political activism, teacher unions, and organized labor nationwide. Horn concludes that engaging pre-service teacher experiences holds important implications for teacher educator programs in terms of preparing future teachers for the politics of schooling and developing as critical truth-tellers.

The next article, by Sally McMillan, Reese Todd, and Margaret Price, explores alternative spaces outside the academy to form a critical pedagogy that might reclaim critical work from often contradictory institutional objectives. Drawing upon a collaborative auto-ethnographic account, the authors offer *writing into* the wounds experienced by narrowly construed outcomes-based educational models developed within their institutions. Through this account, they suggest that collaborative work that is entangled with individual subjectivity, listening to both institutional scars and transformative possibilities, creates new venues for integrative critical pedagogy even while remaining in educational contexts contradictory to criticality. By centering *spaces*, both within and outside of institutions of higher education, the authors importantly center the material processes coinciding with critical engagement.

In the final article, Konstantine Kyriacoupolos and Marta Sánchez utilize a diverse array of critical frameworks to consider a critical methodology engaging community experiences of systemic injustice. These authors analyze potential sites of engagement for a critical methodological project in response to recent developments in North Carolina's educational landscape.

They offer this work as a collaborative community engagement that disrupts efforts to subvert the communal space of schools. Importantly, the authors center the critical work they envision as the moral action of a community aimed toward a just society.

Extending the focus of the first issue, we offer this collection of papers as a contribution to knowledge of the particular topics they examine and the more general conceptualization of what it means to engage in critical work on education. Within our contemporary moment, where the very notion of a public consciousness regarding education is consistently under threat, it seems pressing that scholars and practitioners committed to education for the social good take stock of their efforts to intervene in these normative discourses. We hope that this special issue can assist in some small way to this collective effort.

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The Ethics of Critical Inquiry:
Educational Research Informed by Parrhēsia

David J. Roof, Elena Polush, & Philip Boltz, Ball State University

Abstract

The intent of this paper is to examine the interplay of ethics and critical inquiry. We situate our thinking within a truth-telling philosophical position, specifically Foucault's analysis of parrhēsia (truth telling) and associated concerns. Central to our writing is a belief in educational research contributing to social good and positive change. The emphasis is on the ethical responsibilities of critical methodologists informed by the notion of parrhēsia. We argue that parrhēsia, as an alternative approach to critical inquiry reorients the subjectivity of the truth-teller. Critical inquiry guided by parrhēsia emphasizes the development of critical consciousness in that it requires praxis, one that involves actions and dialog. It elevates the commitment to engagement over self-interest, and is informed by principles of equity and justice through actions. This involves courage and risk taking, key commitments of parrhēsia. In our paper, we examine the implications of courage and risk taking in the context of educational research. We conclude with a discussion of the significance of an educational research framework informed by parrhēsia.

Keywords: *educational research, research framework, critical inquiry, Michael Foucault, parrhēsia, ethics, truth telling, subjectivity*

Introduction

> *My intention was not to deal with the problem of truth, but with the problem of the truth-teller, or of truth-telling as an activity: ...who is able to tell the truth, about what, with what consequences, and with what relations to power...[W]ith the question of the importance of telling the truth, knowing who is able to tell the truth, and knowing why we should tell the truth...[1]*

Research is a journey inspired by a researcher's willingness to look beyond obvious answers and commit to social change.[2] This journey demands sustained engagement and an awareness of the

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1. Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, Semiotext(E) Foreign Agents (Los Angeles, CA: MIT Press, 2001).
2. W. Newton Suter, Introduction to Educational Research: A Critical Thinking Approach, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2006).

consequential nature of the research process and findings.[3] Our focus is on educational research conceived within the tradition of critical inquiry. One that involves researchers going beyond theorizing, interrogating data points to engage with political discourses, advocating for public good and promoting a more socially-just democratic society.[4]

The intent of this paper is to examine the interplay of ethics and critical inquiry. We look at this point of intersection within a truth-telling philosophical position, specifically Foucault's analysis of *parrhēsia* (παρρησία) and associated concerns. The concept of *parrhēsia* has received some scholarly attention in the development of free speech arguments.[5] However, its potential role in and connection to education and educational research are limited to a few key works.[6] We seek to contribute to this emerging discussion.

We believe that the concept of *parrhēsia* is central to educational research oriented toward the quest for social good. We extend this perspective by examining the ethical and moral responsibilities of critical methodologists informed by *parrhēsia*. We argue for the need to re-examine critical inquiry that intervenes on axiological, ontological, epistemological and methodological levels. We explore the concept of *parrhēsia* to re-conceptualize critical inquiry in educational research. We conclude by reflecting on the potential significance of an educational research framework informed by *parrhēsia*. Before undertaking this analysis it's important to note why re-envisioning critical inquiry might be needed.

Most approaches to critical inquiry begin from a presumed position of ideological superiority. In other words, they present a system of beliefs in which the knowledge and political position(s) for which they advocate are superior to existing beliefs. These approaches often rely on an assertion that people (researchers and theorists) know the direction society should be taking socially and politically. An alternative approach to critique should engage the limits of knowledge, especially those devoid of a relational component and engage in a sustained critique of the "historical present."[7] Rethinking critical inquiry is also needed because the increasing proceduralization of ethics as a technocratic approach to methodology which has come to govern educational research.[8] This approach to knowledge has adverse consequences for truth-telling by silencing meaningful insights. Hence, the premise of our writing is that a new approach to value claims and critique is needed.

Further, critical approaches to inquiry that fail to embrace a diversity of perspectives allow the possibility for cynical manipulative approaches. These approaches often rely on empty notions of liberation and empowerment offering simplistic answers, dogmatic beliefs and exaggerated di-

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3. Sharon F. Rallis and Gretchen B. Rossman, *The Research Journey: Introduction to Inquiry* (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 2012).

4. Lois Weis and Michelle Fine, *Working Method: Research and Social Justice*, The Critical Social Thought Series; Variation (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), XV. And see: David E. Blockstein, "How to Lose Your Political Virginity While Keeping Your Scientific Credibility," *BioScience* 52, no. 1 (2002).

5. David Colclough, "Parrhesia: The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Early Modern England," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 17, no. 2 (1999).

6. Three notable key works are: Kerry Burch, "Parrhesia as a Principle of Democratic Pedagogy," *Philosophical Studies in Education* 40 (2009); Michael A. Peters, "Truth-Telling as an Educational Practice of the Self: Foucault, Parrhesia and the Ethics of Subjectivity," *Oxford Review of Education* 29, no. 2 (2003). And, Aaron M. Kuntz, *The Responsible Methodologist: Inquiry, Truth-Telling, and Social Justice* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, Inc., 2015).

7. *The Responsible Methodologist: Inquiry, Truth-Telling, and Social Justice*, 102.

8. Ibid., 12-33.

chotomies. Overly simplified dichotomies include those between oppressors and oppressed, victims and persecutors, or characteristically dominant and subordinate identities. These approaches to critical inquiry often rely on *naïve* populism and assumptions of an ideal society.

Some critical traditions, such as critical theory (mostly stemming from Marx), have attempted to envision the ideal political structure with related subjectivities, as seen with the discourses on liberation, freedom and so forth.[9] Foucault notes that historically these attempts have all ended in a form of bureaucratic terror (e.g., Stalinism).[10] In addition to the problematic aspect traditionally connected to critical theory the existence of challenges, obstacles and constraints that researchers encounter are often imposed by outside circumstance (e.g., political discourse, proceduralization and so forth), caused by *deficiencies* in thoughts and choices and the rise of expertise.[11] These factors are also a driving force of the desire to expand options and consider alternatives.[12]

We believe that in its essence educational research is to contribute to social good and bring about positive change. This belief requires critical understanding and engagement deeply rooted in concerns with ethics, moral commitments, awareness of relations with the self and others, and truth-telling as an activity. In our writing, as stated earlier, we consider the concept of *parrhēsia* as an alternative approach to traditional forms of critical inquiry. *Parrhēsia* is an attempt to foster a critical approach to subjectivity, an ethos of disrupting human subjectivities from within. It allows us to orient research toward a participatory or engaged democratic ethos that involves individuals cognizant of debilitating modes of subjectivity. *Parrhēsia* involves a set of exercises related to one's self, and therefore a means to critically examine subjectivities.[13] Douglas Kellner notes that traditionally for critical theory "to understand and explain social phenomena, one needs to contextualize one's topic of inquiry within a comprehensive theoretical framework for social analysis and critique in order to avoid illegitimate abstraction which would, for instance, analyze a political or cultural phenomenon apart from its constitution of socioeconomic processes."[14] In contrast to traditional approaches to critical inquiry, Foucault avoids the reduction of complex social phenomena to any single causality. Likewise, *Parrhēsia* is unique because there is no prescribed comprehensive theoretical framework.

In Foucault's consideration of human subjectivity we find a reworking of methodology breaking with the Cartesian perspective. Ontological harmony within *parrhēsia* is unique from the Cartesian system, in that the ethical conduct of the speaker using *parrhēsia* is linked to his or her beliefs and relevant to his or her capacity to convey the truth. As Foucault notes, Descartes is "not certain that what he in fact believes is, in fact, true."[15] In the Cartesian system the subject is endowed with access to knowledge and truth only through consciousness and reason.[16] With

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9. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977).

10. Pushkala Prasad, Crafting Qualitative Research: Working in the Postpositivist Traditions, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2005).

11. Greg Dimitriadis, *Critical Dispositions: Evidence and Expertise in Education* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012).

12. Maxine Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1988), 5.

13. Michel Foucault, *The Courage of Truth: The Government of Self and Others Ii: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1983-1984*, trans. Graham Burchell (Hampshire, UK: Picador, 2011), 309.

14. Douglas Kellner, "Critical Theory and the Crisis of Social Theory," *Sociological Perspectives* 33, no. 1 (1990): 23.

15. Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, 15.

16. René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method; and, Meditations on First Philosophy*, ed. David Weissman, trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane, Rethinking the Western Tradition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

parrhēsia the concept of engagement is critical. This engagement is with the self and others and with the self and truth. This orientation is consistent with the view of research in a dialogical space and with an ontological commitment: to intervene simultaneously on epistemological and methodological levels: to take up a specific relationship to the self through life: a commitment to truth telling "rather than a living being who is false to himself."[17] This connection between *parrhēsia*, discourse (games of truth) and ethics is explored in the following section with a return to the shift from the Cartesian system in a later section.

As a Concept of Truth-Telling: Parrhēsia, Games of Truth, & Ethics

Parrhēsia was well-known in ancient philosophy; yet, largely hidden in contemporary examinations of truth, ethics and knowledge.[18] The early meaning was to open one's heart and mind completely to other people through his or her discourse.[19] Over time the concept meant frankness, to be direct, to not hide one's intended meaning in rhetoric. *Parrhēsia* also came to signify the courage of truth-telling and became associated with transforming the soul of an individual. Most importantly the concept developed political dimensions indispensable to democracy.[20]*Parrhēsia* meant to engage socially and politically as a consequence of integrity of heart.[21] It required one to courageously say truthful things that are useful for all to hear.[22]

In a series of lectures near the end of his life Foucault began an examination of the ethical implications of how individuals establish a relationship with others.[23] Through this analysis he quickly began to see that his study of "care of self" couldn't be a spontaneous attitude or natural movement of subjectivity. *Parrhēsia* was, therefore, a necessary component as an intensifier of social relations. It required a type of logical relationship with others. It's not a "body of knowledge" but a "body of practices" without reference to any external order.[24] It educates rather than produces individuals.[25] It allows for the mediation between the ethos of an individual and the well-being of a society. In short, it is through *parrhēsia* that an individual constitutes him/herself as a moral subject in relation to others.[26]

Parrhēsia has a strong connection to democracy. Foucault explored this connection as he became increasingly concerned with the divide between the idea of constitutional equality and actual inequality stemming from concentrations of power.[27] He saw the notion of *parrhēsia* as

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17. Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, 17.

18. *The Courage of Truth: The Government of Self and Others Ii: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1983-1984*, 344.

19. *Fearless Speech*, 12.

20. *The Courage of Truth: The Government of Self and Others Ii: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1983-1984*, 65.

21. Ibid., 326.

22. Ibid.

23. *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the College De France, 1982-1983*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Graham Burchell (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); *The Courage of Truth: The Government of Self and Others Ii: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1983-1984*.

24. Nancy Luxon, "Ethics and Subjectivity: Practices of Self-Governance in the Late Lectures of Michel Foucault," *Political Theory* 36, no. 3 (2008): 379.

25. Ibid.

26. It's important to note that early Geek society did not include women in this domain of civic engagement. In his seminar, Foucault responded to a student's question indicating that women in Greek society were deprived of parrhesia.

27. Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the College De France, 1982-1983*, 382.

involved in the active confrontation with power and with the continuity between one's beliefs and the way one lives: between bios and logos.[28]

Foucault is not looking for a *true* philosophy of knowledge, politics, or morality. The idea that "epistemology, morality, and politics could ever constitute autonomous, juxtaposed domains, that each of them must be worked out methodically and separately, would mean leaving behind philosophy in its original inspiration."[29] Philosophical discourse is unique from political discourse in relation to defining and implementing conditions of truth-telling. Likewise, scientific discourse cannot help us to find compelling what forms its purpose, conditions and structures.[30] With *parrhēsia*, however, there is a possible link between the conditions for truth-telling, ethical practice and the discursive structure of science and methodology more generally. For Foucault, *parrhēsia* added a key component to his methodological orientation.

Foucault's Methodology

Foucault's work often examined the ways in which the western tradition of knowledge and truth were linked through tradition. Michael Peters, for example, notes that the early writings of Foucault influenced educational research as a set of practices focused on the epistemic cultural formations that shaped the potential for educational knowledge and the discursive rationale-underlying researcher's subjective awareness.[31] Foucault, however, eventually turned toward *parrhēsia* to build on this foundation by examining the ethical implications of speech in challenging one's subjective awareness. This examination was undertaken as a historical study of the relation between subjectivity and truth.[32] *Parrhēsia,* therefore, can be seen as an examination of the ethical and political dimensions of governmentality.[33] Foucault's archeology and genealogy are also methodologies – the differences represented by a perspective on truth.[34] Arnold Davidson argues, for example, that,

> truth is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for perfection, the regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statement…"Truth" is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of the power which induces it and which extends it. A "regime" of truth.[35]

With archaeology Foucault sought to identify the conditions for a production of discourse, for example the conditions under which one can speak about sexuality. Whereas genealogy might help the researcher expose sexuality as a positive product of power related techniques, including those of surveillance and examination. Both methodologies also interrogate human subjectivity.

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28. *Fearless Speech.*
29. *The Courage of Truth: The Government of Self and Others Ii: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1983-1984*, 346-47.
30. Ibid., 66-67.
31. Michael Peters and Tina Besley, *Why Foucault?: New Directions in Educational Research*, Counterpoints (New York: Peter Lang, 2007).
32. Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the College De France, 1982-1983*, 377.
33. Ibid.
34. Stephen J. Ball, *Foucault and Education: Disciplines and Knowledge* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1990), 13.
35. Ibid.

Discourses relate to meaning and social relationships, including those of the subject and power relations.[36] For Foucault, "The human subject is a basis upon which discourses are founded, and at the same time, the mode of objectification which transforms human beings and subjects."[37] The human sciences in nineteenth century, for example, re/produced formations of a social body, mediated through concepts of disorder and deviance that placed individuals in a new relation with themselves and others. Foucault's examination of these formations takes us from an analysis of representations to an analytics of power, and from an overt notion of violence to the microphysics of power; from institutional regularities to the arrangements of power.[38] Foucault notes that "Lacan tried to pose what historically is the specifically spiritual question: that of the price the subject must pay for saying the truth, and of the effect on the subject of the fact that he has said, that he can and has said the truth about himself."[39] This led Foucault to examine the historical formation between "subject" and "truth."[40] Initially, this began with the "care of the self," which later evolved into the focus on *parrhēsia*, which can be understood as a shift from "care of the self" to the "care of others." Put differently, "care of the self" was an essential component of individual freedom, whereas "care of the other" was an essential component of democracy.

Foucault's mid-career moved into the genealogy of *disciplinary power* to examine the *power of sovereignty*.[41] In this period, Foucault focused on scientific classification or how the discourses of life, language, or labor become structured into a discipline and achieve autonomy and coherence. The focus included how discursive formations achieve scientific status and how related disciplines inform policy, structure and authority.[42] Discursive formations are also central to how human beings are turned into objectified subjects.[43] There is a component of external authority involved in these processes of self-understanding and self-formation.[44]

According to the critics of Foucault these discursive formations seemed to rob humans of agency and offered little room for escape.[45] These critiques helped move Foucault toward an analysis of subjectivity and ethics. In this move Foucault realized that subjectivity is challenged through *parrhēsia* as it requires that we not obscure ourselves in identity.[46] It is our active identity from our positionality (such as our citizenship) that gives us a point to make claims, and our communities that provide us recognition and require us to speak to them. Foucault's shift to a focus on ethics and truth was central to his examination of power and subjectivity. Furthermore, it provided an ethical orientation from which one might problematize power relations. In the following section we examine *games of truth* as a mode to disrupt discursive structures. The concept of games of truth is central to understanding how truth is produced.

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36. Ibid., 2.
37. Ibid., 14.
38. Michel Foucault, *History of Madness*, ed. Jean Khalfa, trans. Jonathan Murphy and Jean Khal, 1st. ed. (New York: Routledge, 2009).
39. *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège De France 1981--1982*, ed. Frâedâeric Gros, Franðcois Ewald, and Alessandro Fontana, trans. Graham Burchell, 1st ed., Lectures at the College De France, 1981-1982 (New York, NY: Palgrave, 2005), 30.
40. Ibid., 2.
41. For example: *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.
42. *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1984).
43. Ibid., 8-11.
44. Ibid.
45. This idea is exemplified in the Habermas' critique of Foucault, and their subsequent debate. For more see: Michael Kelly, ed. *Critique and Power: Recasting the Foucault/Habermas Debate* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1994).
46. Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, 116-17.

Games of Truth (jeux de verite)

Subjectivity results from the effects of external representations and power relations. Power relations are constituent elements of knowledge and are mediated through discursive structures. Foucault notes, "*parrhēsia* is a discourse spoken from above, which comes from a source higher than a citizen, and which is different than the pure and simple exercise of power."[47] Foucault saw the production of truth as a component of a complex network of power, authority and domination. In his examination of the production of truth he transitioned his analysis from "regimes of truth" to the analysis of "games of truth."[48] Games of truth require consideration of the agency involved in the subject's relation to truth. With *parrhēsia* "being occupied with oneself and political activities are linked" and include acceptance of risk if the other person agrees to play the game.[49]

Foucault saw *parrhēsia* as a hinge point of ethical concerns and the political struggle for respect of rights, critical thought against abusive techniques of government and an ethics grounded in individual freedom. In the context of "exercises of conscience" Foucault noted that *parrhēsia* is always a game between the one who speaks the truth and the interlocutor. *Parrhēsia* is "not to demonstrate the truth to someone else, but has the function of criticism: criticism of the interlocutor or of the speaker himself."[50] This is the game being played around the context of truth. In addition, truth games provide a process by which individuals can know and master themselves.[51] This too is the process of a game between an individual and the interlocutor.

Truth games give us perspective on Foucault's earlier work.[52] For example, the transition to games of truth allowed him to examine aspects of subjectification that occurred when someone understood themselves as insane or sick, as a living, speaking, working being, as a criminal, or the subject of sexual desire.[53] The methodological relation of *parrhēsia* to subjectivity and truth is relevant to research as critical inquiry. As with "games of truth" action must be built into the research process, rather than potentially resulting from research. This orientation toward action then guides interactions with participants. Research is an inquiry into human experiences and an act in itself.[54]

A research framework informed by *parrhēsia* is independent of the utilitarian theory of ethics. Foucault argued against universal basis for ethics, and against ethics and morality that are regulated. Games of truth were conceived of exercises and not concerned with a foundation for ethics. For Foucault philosophical *parrhēsia* is associated with the theme of the care of oneself, *techne*, spiritual guidance and what the Greeks regarded as an education for the soul.

When exploring the notion of *parrhēsia* Foucault was concerned with a philosophical framework that would endow the individual with the moral equipment to fully confront the world in an ethical manner. In a related manner, a reflexive ethics should be infused throughout inquiry

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47. *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the College De France, 1982-1983*, 104.
48. Peters and Besley, *Why Foucault?: New Directions in Educational Research*, 188.
49. Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (Amherst: MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 26.
50. *Fearless Speech*, 17-18.
51. Thomas R. Flynn, "Truth and Subjectivation in the Later Foucault," *The Journal of Philosophy* 82, no. 10 (1985).
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Michael J. Crottty, *The Foundation of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998).

calling for the development of a critical consciousness.[55] *Parrhēsia* can support this inquiry elevating a commitment to engagement over self-interest. Critical inquiry informed by *parrhēsia* is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of drawing attention to familiar and unchallenged modes of thought. This mode of critique disrupts a priori frameworks and agendas. It enables us to become reflexive about various positions that undergird research[56] and to resist methodological simplification.[57] This kind of critical scrutiny helps negate forms of intellectual control that often accompany approaches to understanding issues in education.[58] Our world is always already emerging, changing, and methodologies always "becoming."[59]

A better understanding of the relation between ethics and critical engagement requires exploration of the connection between *parrhēsia*, education and critical inquiry.

Epistemological Claims: Education, Parrhēsia, & Critical Inquiry

Foucault's analysis of *parrhēsia* (as truth-telling) and related concerns, issues, tensions exist within an educational realm. However, in antiquity *parrhēsia* was initially distinct from the type of discourse associated with prophets and teachers. Initially, beliefs about the truth-telling of *parrhēsia* were different from that of teaching, prophecy and wisdom in that *parrhēsia* sought to transform the ethos of its interlocutor and involved risk for its speaker. It also belonged to a temporality of present reality. Foucault suggested in his lectures that,

> This idea of someone with knowledge of techne, someone who has received this knowledge and must pass it on, there is the principle of an obligation to speak which is not found in the sage but is found in the *parrhēsiast.* But clearly, this teacher, this man of techne, of expertise and teaching, does not take any risk in the truth telling people how to proceed with endless pass on, and this is what distinguishes him from the *parrhēsiast*.[60]

As noted, *parrhēsia* is connected to a specific mode of ethical discourse involving risk. In early antiquity the individual who spoke the truth in a manner consistent with *parrhēsia* was risking hostility and death, whereas the focus of a teacher was to ensure the survival of knowledge. The teacher's truth telling brings people together and binds, whereas the truth telling of *parrhēsia* risks hostility, hatred and death.

Overtime wisdom and truth-telling merged. This required an important shift in the concept of human nature. Studying Greek society Foucault concludes that, "taking care of the self does not presuppose the return to a lost origin, but the emergence of a distinct "nature," though one that is not originally given to us."[61] This requires a relationship with someone that guides our self-understanding. Foucault notes the following educational perspective in antiquity,

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55. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2013). 170.

56. Mirka Koro-Ljungberg, "Researchers of the World, Create!," *Qualitative Inquiry* 18, no. 9 (2012). Dimitriadis, *Critical Dispositions: Evidence and Expertise in Education*, 4.

57. Edward Said as cited in: *Critical Dispositions: Evidence and Expertise in Education*, VIII.

58. Ibid.

59. Koro-Ljungberg, "Researchers of the World, Create!," 808.

60. Foucault, *The Courage of Truth: The Government of Self and Others Ii: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1983-1984*, 24.

61. *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège De France 1981--1982*.

> Education is imposed against a backdrop of errors, distortions, bad habits and dependencies, which have been reified since the start of life. So that it is not even a matter of returning to a state of youth or infancy where there would still have been the human being; but rather of a referring to a "nature"…which has never had the opportunity to emerge in a life immediately seized by a defective system of education and belief. The objective of the practice of the self is to free the self, by making it coincide with a nature which has never had the opportunity to manifest itself in it.[62]

It's a relationship with the "other" that helps one take stock in one's self. This relationship became essential in Greek philosophy to the "care of the self." However, simply taking stock in one's self was ineffective to develop an ethical nature. This development is not "a requirement of solitude, but a real social practice."[63]

Over time the philosophical contours of *parrhēsia* and education converged. In the story of Dion it was philosophy and paideia (training, culture, education) and the interrelated function of doctrine (logos) and life (bios) that led to social acceptance.[64] In antiquity education is a social, political and institutional concern. Foucault notes the problem,

> if you are not well educated, how can you decide what constitutes a good education? And if people are to be educated, and they must receive the truth from a competent teacher. But how can we distinguish the good, truth-telling teachers from the bad or inessential ones?[65]

In time, this relation informs *parrhēsia*—or, it is only through education that one develops the capacity for *parrhēsia*. The pedagogic aspects of *parrhēsia* require the right type of education, one of praxis (knowledge and practice). It also connects "care of the self" with a pedagogic component related to ontological harmony (logos & bios).[66] Education and *parrhēsia*, therefore, are linked. Furthermore, *parrhēsia* is *techne*, a particular knowledge that takes shape in practice through theoretical knowledge and exercise.[67] However, *parrhēsia* like *phronēsis* is beyond *techne* in that it requires reflection and a connection to a life well lived.

Foucault linked Socrates to various domains, one of *parrhēsia* and to prophetic verdiction, the verdiction of wisdom (sage) and the technical verdiction of teaching.[68] The Socratic mode of inquiry linked the sage (wisdom), technical knowledge and the practical knowledge of the teacher. This question raised by Socrates was how to teach virtue and knowledge required to live well and for society to function properly. Subsequently, Foucault linked Socrates to a "truly ethical" *parrhēsia* as it was most directly concerned with life.[69]

In our contemporary society shaped by the Cartesian legacy, an ethical life and critical speech are not seen to have a valid relation to truth. Foucault saw the *parrhēsia* of antiquity as a

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62. Ibid., 536.
63. Ibid., 537.
64. *The Courage of Truth: The Government of Self and Others Ii: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1983-1984*, 61.
65. *Fearless Speech*, 93.
66. Ibid.
67. *The Courage of Truth: The Government of Self and Others Ii: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1983-1984*, 24.
68. Ibid., 27.
69. Ibid., 149.

potential way to explore a shift from institutionalized discursivity to the ethical domain of individuals. The following section examines critical inquiry and ethics.

Beyond Enlightenment Humanism & Universals

The work on *parrhēsia* has the potential to foster ethical resources and the epistemological stance that intellectuals should use to guide their work. These ethical resources begin with a drive toward self-understanding.[70] Individuals often unknowingly participate in systems that affect the conditions of their selfhood, such as with disciplinary techniques.[71] As an ethical framework concerned with the potential for political action, *parrhēsia* calls for relationships unstructured by their endpoint. This approach aligns with pragmatism and ethics in that it rejects instrumental approaches to human interaction. *Parrhēsia,* therefore, involves a commitment to relational modes of knowledge and critique about subject formation.[72] This critique begins with a suspicion of universal truths.[73]

Research frameworks developed through a Kantian approach (nonconsequentialist or deontological) employ categorical ethical principles. This approach operates from the basis of treating persons as ends in themselves and never solely as means.[74] However, as a result of the interpretive turn in educational and social research this ethical basis has become significantly complicated, as seen over the last several decades.[75] Foucault rejected the Kantian legacy of transcendental (universal) rules, but sought to retain the critical legacy where he situated himself methodologically.[76] This critical tradition examines our historical present.[77] In relation to this critical disposition, avoiding dogmatic universals of traditional humanism requires interpretive work to develop models that allow individuals to select among a variety of ethical models and relationships.[78] Between "facts" and "values" critical inquiry informed by *parrhēsia* disrupts the divergence in humanism.[79] This interpretive work includes the need for a relational component to develop formal principles upon which to act. Practices of ethical self-governance constitute a core aspect of *parrhēsia*.

Educational research informed by *parrhēsia* attempts to trace the development and use of common social perceptions and their impact. It stresses the importance of questioning belief systems from a historical perspective. Educational research must continually seek to uncover the theoretical assumptions that undergird its practices through the act of explication and critical reflection.[80] Subsequently, the disciplines of history, literary analysis, philosophy and so forth are equally significant if not a necessary means to interpret and describe belief systems.

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70. Luxon, "Ethics and Subjectivity: Practices of Self-Governance in the Late Lectures of Michel Foucault," 381.
71. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.
72. Luxon, "Ethics and Subjectivity: Practices of Self-Governance in the Late Lectures of Michel Foucault," 378.
73. Ball, *Foucault and Education: Disciplines and Knowledge*, 203.
74. Kenneth R. Howe and Michele S. Moses, "Ethics in Educational Research," *Review of Research in Education* 24 (1999).
75. Ibid., 21. Schram, Flyvbjerg, and Todd address the same issue within their examination of phronesis, see: Sanford F. Schram, Bent Flyvbjerg, and Todd Landman, "Political Political Science: A Phronetic Approach," *New Political Science* 35, no. 3 (2013).
76. Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the College De France, 1982-1983*, 379.
77. Kelly, *Critique and Power: Recasting the Foucault/Habermas Debate*, 148.
78. Luxon, "Ethics and Subjectivity: Practices of Self-Governance in the Late Lectures of Michel Foucault," 380.
79. Kuntz, *The Responsible Methodologist: Inquiry, Truth-Telling, and Social Justice*.
80. Crottty, *The Foundation of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*.

In the following section we explore educational research informed by critical perspectives. We focus on associated concerns, issues, and tensions within the current discourse in educational research.

Research, Ethics & Critical Inquiry

Research and inquiry often function in a heuristic manner. Educational research, for example, is argued to be interpretive only in its function of description, classification and explanation. Historically, its explanatory function has primarily been self-referential. The changes in our research in education models remain grounded in explanation and verification. It is the practice of forming discursive structures (frameworks) that provides a basis, rationale and meaning for the derived concepts. Subsequently, educational research is a complex set of contested values infused in a legacy of racism, colonization, imperialism and eugenics, to name just a few. Different positions on these issues are grounded in evidence supporting various claims. From this legacy, we can reasonably assert that a "disciplinary matrix" of political/social interests undergird qualitative factors, empirical traditions and theoretical models or perspectives.[81] This "disciplinary matrix" also frames and shapes predictions. Furthermore, it functions as more than just genuine insight. In terms of human knowledge, therefore, interpretation gives empirical knowledge its character and prescribes its form.[82]

Scientific inquiry attempts to demonstrate a naturalistic basis for social phenomena within the confines of a formalized system of knowledge. It performs both an evaluative and descriptive function. Although, it seemingly does not derive an identifiable basis from traditional rationalism (which dissolves the senses preceding knowledge formation), the epistemology of educational research often rests on the practice of abduction (reasoning from effect to a cause) or modes of inference. This is made possible through modes of representation and the organization of various standards and representations formed symbolically within schemas.

The aim is not to suggest that science is simply one more perspective, devoid of any elevated level of epistemic status. However, there is a need to consider it as a constructed and interactive basis for knowledge. Our world is becoming increasingly complex, intensely dynamic and networked. Educational research should seek no finality or static paradigm for reality, identity and truth. Furthermore, the examination of social phenomena cannot be assumed to stem from an inquiry that possesses a self-warranting logic or stands in any one particular relation to the world. In other words there is no pure science devoid of axiological and normative principles or values, which are self-evidently or unconditionally valid. This does not mean social practices cannot be deduced from empirical data, but we cannot reject elements of agency, power relations, or institutional and disciplinary roles in the production of knowledge. The individual's relation to science is part of a historically identifiable system of thought at an intersection of discourse, schemas of human nature and ontological beliefs that lay outside the confines of science.

As noted earlier, research is consequential in nature. That is, engagement with research processes centered in the notions of truth and public good is value driven. *Parrhēsia* involves speech acts as a mode of political engagement. Research, in general and critical inquiry more specifically are aimed at advancing a more socially just society. As Kuntz notes, critical engagement

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81. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

82. Ibid.

must be an attempt to confront an injustice.[83] Ethics, therefore, should be seen as the essence of critical inquiry for social good conceived with the notion of social justice.

Ethics is a construct shaped by the researchers' values. Ball notes that for Foucault, policy and research construct objects of knowledge and subjects of intervention.[84] Educational researchers often shy away from the notion of value. Instead, outcomes and benefits are used. Yet, value is central to reflexivity and ethics. The importance of values and the concept of *parrhēsia* (research framed within this notion) are linked. Further, values shape one's perspectives, which, in turn, (*in*)form a particular philosophical stance. Hence, research shaped by *parrhēsia* adheres to the premise that research is not value-free as Enlightenment epistemology argues. As Howe notes, "Educational research is always advocacy research inasmuch as it unavoidably advances some moral-political perspective."[85] Value claims within the human sciences must be treated with critical scrutiny, as these claims cannot be taken for granted.[86] For Foucault, these value claims are inherently connected to power/knowledge. Deconstructive criticism involves an approach that allows us to think about meaning, value and truth.[87]

Research informed by *parrhēsia* is consistent with an axiological framework in which ethics is the overarching component.[88] Researchers who, for example, suggest their work is ethically neutral and value-free, are only oriented toward discovering the most effective teaching strategy, are still taking an ethical stance and making a value claim. Positioning ethics as the overarching research framework constitutes a radical departure from current research trends, as most frameworks for educational research subordinate ethics, including reducing it to procedure.[89] Subsequently, many researchers feel uncomfortable going beyond the data point.[90] In today's world being responsible means taking action. This creates a need to examine our perceptions and extend the approach from data interpretation to questions of policy and engagement.[91] As members of the educational research communities our responsibility is to contribute to the political process.[92] It is not necessarily looking for a straightforward answer, or perhaps even a solution; but rather stances that we take reflective of personal values and ethics.

Educational Research: Frameworks, Parrhēsia and Critical Inquiry

Research is always guided by a researcher's assumptions. This involves "assumptions about human knowledge and assumption about realities encountered in our human world."[93] To challenge a particular approach is first to understand that mode of inquiry. It is to be responsible

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83. Kuntz, *The Responsible Methodologist: Inquiry, Truth-Telling, and Social Justice*, 24.

84. Stephen J. Ball, *Foucault, Power, and Education*, 1st ed., Key Ideas in Education Series (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013).

85. Howe and Moses, "Ethics in Educational Research," 56.

86. David M. Jones and Stephan Ball. *The Discourse of Education* in, Critical Theory and Educational Research, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995). 40.

87. Nicholas C. Burbules. *Forms of Ideology-Critique* in, ibid., 59.

88. Donna M. Mertens and Ginsberg Pauline E., The Handbook of Social Research Ethics, (Sage Publications, 2009).

89. Michael Crotty, The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd 1998).

90. Blockstein, "How to Lose Your Political Virginity While Keeping Your Scientific Credibility."

91. Ibid., 92.

92. Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership, (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2003). 92.

93. Crottty, *The Foundation of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*, 17.

in relation to *why* it could benefit from revisiting to generate new understandings. Further, this exploration needs to be grounded in possibilities and potentialities, because the act of re-conceptualizing does not apply rejecting what has been done thus far. It embraces the "organic" approach to inquiry within which understanding certain theoretical perspectives doesn't replace another; rather—coming to know how various theories contribute to and shape our understanding of research and its process to extend our thinking, to push the established boundaries and to problematize the existing discourse(s) driven by our quest for social good. The act of re-thinking is a process that requires stepping back to reflect and to re-strategize. It is a dialogical movement that creates opportunities and enables us to open ourselves to views that differ from our own and through such engagement new understandings emerge.[94] "Research cannot be conducted without conscious or unconscious use of underlying theoretical perspectives."[95] A research framework centered on *parrhēsia* nurtures the development of a "critical consciousness" in that it fosters reflexive ethics; enables ongoing refection on values that undergird perspectives; engages in a continuous critique and dialog elevates the moral commitment to engagement over self-interest, and requires commitment to equity and justice through actions.[96] Furthermore, as a research methodology, it represents a call to action.[97] A research framework informed by *parrhēsia* is consistent with a type of research in which relational modes of meaning formation are accepted.[98]

Subjects of Intervention: Parrhēsia & Critical inquiry

In this section we explore the essence of critical inquiry conducted in the quest for social good informed by the notion of *parrhēsia*. In the tradition of educational research, there was an emphasis on delineating the (moral-political) component of social research and the "descriptive" (scientific-methodological) component.[99]

Humankind has focused on creating explanations of human nature. There are a few aspects of this configuration for understanding the relation between knowledge and meaning. Perhaps, most importantly, various attempts to understand the mind's relationship to knowledge are themselves inscribed in systems of thought, which positions the mind as both object and subject of an interaction.[100] This orientation and positioning of the mind in relation to knowledge and meaning mark a point when human beings began to possess access to knowledge and truth. One of the primary aims of science is imposing conformity.[101] The human subject's relationship to knowledge positions the mind as both object and subject of an interaction that disassociates thought from an external reality.[102]

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94. Rebecca Luce-Kapler, *Writing with, through, and Beyond the Text: An Ecology of Language* (Mahwah, NJ Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004).

95. Ellen M. Broido and Kathleen Manning, "Philosophical Foundation and Current Theoretical Perspectives in Qualitative Research," *Journal of College Student Development* 43, no. 4 (2002): 434.

96. Cannella & Lincoln, Ethics, Research, Regulations, and Critical Social Science in: Denzin and Lincoln, *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*. 170.

97. Kuntz, *The Responsible Methodologist: Inquiry, Truth-Telling, and Social Justice*, 12.

98. Ibid., 76-77.

99. Howe and Moses, "Ethics in Educational Research," 21.

100. Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège De France 1981--1982*.

101. Gilles Deleuze and Fâelix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* , trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, European Perspectives (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1994), 202.

102. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 285-94.

The Cartesian Legacy

In the Cartesian system the subject is endowed with access to knowledge and truth primarily through consciousness and reason.[103] This is based on an interpretation of human knowledge and truth as subordinate to a spiritual belief in the mind's pre-reflexive *cogito* as the basis of knowledge.[104] Cartesian dualism is dissolved only through a radical skepticism and analytical reasoning.[105]

In the Cartesian system the intellectual foundations of certainty dissolve sensory foundations prior to meaning formation.[106] However, the general scientific inquiry onto intelligence attempts to demonstrate a naturalistic basis for intellectual phenomena within a formal system of knowledge. Subsequently, the scientific method has inverted the relation situating man within the context of observation. This interplay between knowledge and experience involves a framework conceptualized through modes of representation. With Descartes, the systemization of conscious thought over a domain of objects is emphasized over self-evidence and intuition.[107]

The development of knowledge in the West and the position of the subject's relation to meaning are drawn from various forms of representation. The fundamental issues raised relate to a *phenomenology of mind* in which perception, thought and experience remain grounded in a logical, analytical and referential transmission of information and meaning. According to Foucault,

> On the one hand, there are the internal conditions of the act of knowledge and of the rules it must obey to have access to the truth: formal conditions, objective conditions, formal rules of method, the structure of the object to be known…the conditions of the subject's access to the truth are defined within knowledge. [108]

Analyzing Descartes, Foucault noted the conditions by which individuals were "capable of truth" in relation to knowledge. The conditions are that "one must not be mad" (what Foucault calls "an important moment in Descartes").[109] He notes that there are also cultural conditions, in which after Descartes,

> to have access to the truth we must have studied, have an education, and operate within a certain scientific consensus. And there are moral conditions: to know the truth we must make an effort, we must not seek to deceive our world, and the interests of financial reward, career, and status must be combined in a way that is fully compatible with the norms of disinterested research, etcetera. with two reservations of conditions intrinsic to knowledge and conditions extrinsic to the individual, when the subject's being is not put in question by the necessity of having access to the truth, I think we have entered a different age of the history of relations between subjectivity and truth. And the consequence—or, if you like,

103. René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
104. Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège De France 1981--1982*, 25-28, 190, 294, 309.
105. See: Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*
106. See: "Cogito and the History of Madness" in Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 31-63.
107. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 285-94.
108. Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège De France 1981--1982*, 18.
109. Ibid.

the other aspect of this—is that access to truth, whose sole condition is henceforth knowledge, will find reward and fulfillment in nothing else but the indefinite development of knowledge.[110]

The Cartesian shift brings us to the point where the sole condition of truth is knowledge. Furthermore, the capacity for the human subject to know a truth that passes through, permeates, and transfigures his or her being can no longer exist.[111] It is only over time within the "institutional accumulation of bodies of knowledge" or through social benefit that truth is revealed, and this truth does not offer salvation for human subjectivity.[112] For Foucault, the point of enlightenment and fulfillment, the moment of the subject's transfiguration by the "rebound effect" on himself of the truth he knows can no longer exist.[113]

Science, research and culture are modes by which we organize meaning and therefore shape experience through representations formed symbolically within schemas. Educational research produces explanatory paradigms and axiological schema utilized in description (mimesis). Our concern is the manner in which research functions in relation to the standards of science, and whether a framework informed by *parrhēsia* has the potential to better illuminate social phenomena or can function as a useful method for explaining meaning formation through human interaction.

Researchers need to consider whether claims of validity (truth claims) are derived as much from empirical observation as opposed to the series of delineations and presuppositions imposed through preexisting norms. This raises the question of what function connoted meaning places over detonated meaning; and more generally what role the researcher plays in formalizing the interpretive and evaluative function of meaning. In educational research the researcher must draw distinctions, but at the same time reduce empirical data to a structural level with apparent ambivalence for the developmental or relational contingencies. What should be essential to relational contingencies is research conducted in the quest for the social good.

The question over the social good is one of the most persistent problems of philosophers throughout the ages. Moral perspectives inform the construction of the notion of "good" and its different meanings. As Ricoeur notes, "meaning is central to the quest for good where the construction of a definition of "good" is an on-going process that does not end with the completed temporality."[114] Social implies interactions with the "other." Disclosing more things to critical scrutiny; reflecting continuously on our positions, "what they allow us to see and to understand, what they blind us to do."[115] Speaking openly and truthfully without the use of rhetoric, manipulation, or generalization is essential to the ongoing processes of the construction of social good.[116]

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110. Ibid.
111. Ibid., 18-19.
112. Ibid., 19.
113. Ibid., 18.
114. Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth , TX: Texas Christian University Press, 1976).
115. Dimitriadis, *Critical Dispositions: Evidence and Expertise in Education*, 4.
116. Foucault, *Fearless Speech*.

Conclusion

It is common for perspectives to change overtime and to vary according to various influences, thus the need to study the function of scientific paradigms.[117] Educational research is a manifestation derived from social ideologies and beliefs. Therefore, it is important to examine the forms it has produced or promoted as well as those neglected or repressed. We should take these additional factors into account when considering models for educational research.

A research framework informed by *parrhēsia* offers an alternative perspective for evaluating the significance of self-directed, evaluative, and self-reflexive understanding that critiques underlying assumptions of human nature, reality, representation, systems of thought, political systems and notions of self. This framework also suggests the relevance of examining and reconsidering an ethos stemming from notions of thought in which meaning and knowledge are abstracted from the self.[118] It offers a means to examine the divide between the universal and the particular, the ability to conceptualize a complex reality and episteme.[119] This is similar to Aristotle's conception of the interaction between *nous* and *phronesis*.[120]

Incorporating *parrhēsia* into educational research is situated in the contemporary movement toward re-shaping critical work, in general and critical methodology, specifically with the focus on truth-telling. The application of *parrhesia* in critical methodologies and research practices within education is an ongoing process (or activity) using collaborative reflective critique to disrupt a priori frameworks and agendas. This includes methodologies in place as well as research direction, goals and applications. Our presented argument is that the concept of *parrhēsia* facilitates movement toward and emphasizes ethics as process; makes researchers cognizant of ethics, language and their roles within the research process. This is consistent with Christians' assertion that "qualitative research insists on starting over philosophically, without the Enlightenment dualism as its foundation. The result is an ethical-political framework that is multicultural, gender inclusive, pluralistic and international in scope."[121] This framework would include cultural sensitivity and mutivocality, those factors consistent with the notion of *parrhēsia*.[122]

At the heart of theoretical writing is answering the authors' "why"questions. In case of our writing the question is "why *parrhēsia*?" as a framework for critical inquiry for educational research. Our position is that we must not simply challenge the status quo only to find ourselves groundless. We must cultivate a critical praxis. We regard an approach to educational research informed by *parrhēsia* is to break with traditional forms of critical inquiry. Educational research informed by the notion of *parrhēsia* offers a framework to cultivate an ethical approach through critical praxis. It also presents a framework unique from previous approaches to critical inquiry as discussed in this paper.

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117. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

118. Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College De France 1975-1976*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey, 1 ed., Lectures at the College De France 1975-1976 (New York, NY: Picador, 2003).

119. As Deleuze and Guattari put it, "It is the brain that says I, but I is an other. It is not the same brain as the brain as the brain of connections and secondary integrations, although there is no transcendence here. And this I is not only the "I conceive" of the brain as philosophy, it is also the "I feel" of the brain as art." Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 211.

120. Joseph Dunne, *Back to the Rough Ground: "Phronesis" and "Techne" in Modern Philosophy and in Aristotle*, Revisions (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993).

121. From Christians, C. G. chapter *Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research* published in Denzin and Lincoln, *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*. 125.

122. Ibid.

We believe that critical inquiry informed by the notion of *parrhēsia* is significant as it relates to conducting educational research and to preparing a future generation of educational researchers as responsive and responsible methodologists.[123] A model for research informed by *parrhēsia* would be one that explores things such as school culture in relation to multiple frameworks or perspectives. The qualities of critical methodology, which the notion of *parrhēsia* embraces, are understanding the consequential nature of our work as researchers and being critically reflective. It involves risk taking, courage and emphasizes an overarching ethical framework orientated toward a democratic ethos. A framework informed by *parrhēsia* involves a relational approach to research, a shift from research subjects to participants. It has the potential to enable a critical engagement with various forms of subjectivity as an ongoing project "with the hope for progressive social change."[124]

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123. Kuntz, *The Responsible Methodologist: Inquiry, Truth-Telling, and Social Justice*.
124. Ibid., 12.

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Truth-Telling, Ritual Culture, and Latino College Graduates in the Anthropocene[1]

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Abstract

This article seeks to trace the cartography of truth-telling through a posthuamanist predicament of ritual culture in higher education and critical inquiry. Ritual culture in higher education such as graduation ceremony produces and reflects the realities of becoming subjects. These spaces are proliferating grounds for truth telling and practical wisdom. Using Latino graduation ceremonies as a backdrop, the ritual transforms the Latino college student into the Latino college graduate via the ritual practice of the Latino graduation ceremony represents parrhesia in the actual process. The cartography of truth-telling illustrates how critical methodology and methodologist can engage in parrhesia.

Keywords: *Anthropocene, Latino higher education, ritual culture, parrhesia*

In this essay, I seek to trace a cartography of truth-telling and practical wisdom through a posthumanist entanglement of ritual culture in higher education and critical inquiry. Every spring, thousands of Latinos gather with family and friends in celebration of educational achievements that are simultaneously normative and exceptional, mainstream and subaltern, positive and negative. These extreme dichotomies are insufficient to describe the intra-sections of each upon another. As such, I intend to describe some of the variable axes through which assemblages of Latino college graduates emerge.

The emplacement of Latinos in American higher education is significant to excavate as Latino families face historic discrimination along racialized, colonized, economic, and ethnic lines of flight. Erstwhile, American higher education has been propagated by design as an answer to inequality—the great equalizer and the confirmer of individual uplift for the meritorious. Yet, as social institutions, colleges and universities are as likely to reproduce the very inequality and inequity that its subjects might seek to mitigate. Ritual culture, such as a graduation ceremony, reflects and produces the realities of becoming-subjects and becoming-socialities. As will be illustrated, such spaces can be ripe and ravenous grounds for truth telling and practical wisdom as they engage the onto-epistemological work of posthumanist critical inquiry.

Practical Location Coordinates I: Division I Sports Arena on a Public University Campus in California during Commencement Weekend

Close to 200 graduates enter the arena. They are accompanied by almost 400 parents or grandparents who escort them from one end of the floor to the other, then students are ushered into their seats as *madres y padres y abuelas y abuelos* find their way back to family and friends in the stands. Parents and grandparents move across and betwixt the two worlds of college graduation and *la familia* today. They march to Edward Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* alongside their children. Their children's march represents the traditional transitory state between student and graduate. *Los Padres'* march represents the connection between sacrifice, struggle, achievement, and opportunity. Aztec dancers take to the floor of the arena, drumming and dancing ancestral performances of celebration. Latino graduation ceremony has begun, and *la familia* is at its center, even as they circumscribe the graduates in the arena.

Practical Location Coordinates II: Public Green Space on a California Community College Campus during Commencement Weekend

About 70 or so family members and friends sit sporadically around an outdoor amphitheater as 40 or so graduates line-up along the perimeter of the green space marking the amphitheater's center. Two tents dissect the green space with a podium and microphone standing on a single riser in between them. Edward Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* broadcasts from a simple stereo connected to a mobile outdoor audio amplifier. About 10 or so faculty members, administrators, and special guests enter the amphitheater first, marking the beginning of the ceremony with a traditional commencement processional. The 40 or so graduates follow. Each group finds their seats under one of the two tents. Two current students serve as the masters-of-ceremonies. They approach the podium and welcome the audience.

> *"¡Bienvenidos a Graduación de Latinos de Coastal Community College!"*
> "Welcome to Coastal Community College's Latino Graduation!"

The ceremony continues along a traditional line of flight, following a typical commencement ritual's agenda: greetings to family and friends, acknowledging the faculty, a few remarks from the College President, a keynote speech from a well-known member of the community (in this case, a member of the community college district board), the reading of the names of the graduates as they each walk across the stage and shake the President and the Keynote speaker's hands, and closing remarks from the two emcees. With only the President's and Keynote Speaker's remarks as exceptions, everything else is spoken in Spanish first, English translation second.

The ceremony overall strikes a tone of humility. The student organizers (representatives from two Latino-centric student organizations on campus) take responsibility for set-up, take-down, and the transition from ceremony to reception. The families and friends of graduates listen respectfully despite the piercing brightness of the sun beating down on them and the semi-humid conditions for mid-May along the California central coast. Most participants—graduates, family, friends, or speakers – are wearing nicer, but not quite fancy or flashy, clothes. It's what I might expect to find walking out of church tomorrow morning.

The Latino Caste and American Higher Education

It has long been established that Latinos are underrepresented in American higher education (MacDonald, Botti & Clark, 2007). While gains have been made in the gross number of Latinos attending a U.S. postsecondary institution (Hernandez & Lopez, 2004), these increases do not begin to reach parity with the Latino population nationwide (Oseguera, Locks, & Vega, 2009), nor does parity promise equity. Of the Latino students who begin postsecondary study, roughly 15% complete a bachelor's degree, and only 2.9% ever go on to complete a terminal degree (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Research also makes clear that systemic problems in policy (Nuñez, 2013), practice (Zarate & Burciaga, 2010), and research (Oseguera et al., 2009; Saunders & Serna, 2004) contribute to the perpetuation of Latino underrepresentation and differential achievement measurements attributed to Latino communities.

Research on college and university climates and cultures demonstrates that Latinos face historic hostilities on campus (Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solorzano, 2009). These hostile environments are instantiated by both explicitly racialized incidents such as thematic fraternity parties that parody Latino cultures (DeSantis, 2012; Jaschik, 2013) as well as subtle racial microaggressions (Solorzano, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005) such as repeated failure of a professor to pronounce Latino students' names correctly. However, the hostile campus environment is built by more than interpersonal relations. Systemic advantage to historically traditional "campus life" (e.g., fraternities/sororities, homecoming events, NCAA athletics, etc) means that Latinos must assimilate (Tinto, 1993) into a white normativity of college experience or assume an oppositional subject position (Gloria, Castellanos, Lopez, & Rosales, 2005). The racialization of college experiences can be found in the academic realm of institutions as well. Academically focused events on campus regularly reify the white normal and the Latino "other" (Gusa, 2010). For example, "Poetry Night" vs. "Latin American Poetry Night." Ethnic studies programs and departments regularly find themselves arguing for survival and/or status more-so than other scholarly traditions (Nicol, 2013).

Historic underrepresentation, systemic achievement differentials, and hostile campus cultures are reflections of how Latinos become emplaced in US postsecondary education. Latino students are not prominent in the nation's top tier research universities or liberal arts colleges (Lopez, 2005), law or medical schools (Kidder, 2003). Even in states with larger Latina/o populations, such as Arizona, California, and Texas, Latina/o students are underrepresented in the state flagship institutions in Tucson, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Austin (Almanac of Higher Education, 2015). These patterns become inverted when examining Latina/o enrollments at open access and less-selective institutions. Latina/os are overrepresented in America's community colleges (Martinez & Fernández, 2004; Kurlaender, 2006), often the most under-resourced institutions (Padron & Marx, 2013). Finally, Latino graduates are less likely to be persist through STEM majors and more likely to complete traditional social science and/or humanities courses of study (Dowd, Malcom, & Bensimon, 2009).

The point here is not that community colleges are bad for Latino students, nor that the humanities are less desirable than engineering. Rather, the point is to illustrate that as an artifact of becoming Latino college students, Latinos become emplaced in particularized academic positions, both interculturally on campus and intellectually in the academy. Some scholars have suggested that the Latina/o class in America gets configured into a Latina/o caste in education (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Gildersleeve, Cruz, Madriz, & Melendrez-Flores, 2015; Ogbu, 1978).

The Anthropocene as a Context for Inquiry

There is growing and widespread recognition that we now find ourselves in an epoch referred to as the Anthropocene. It recognizes that homo sapiens exert geologic force—that is, humankind has marked the Earth in recognizable and immutable ways. There are social consequences and implications from such science. The Anthropocene forces us to recognize that "human beings are transformed by, and transformative of, the world in which we find ourselves" (Graham & Roelvink, 2010, p. 320). The Earth is a requirement for us to be human. Therefore, if humans transform the world, and if humans exhibit forces as consequential as those we typically name "natural" (e.g., hurricanes, earthquakes, meteorites, etc.), then what we know as "nature" is only that which we invent. We make nature, discursively and materially. Put another way, the human-nature divide disintegrates. Onto-epistemologically speaking, the world might be understood as a situation of our becoming-nature.

Some philosophers suggest that the very core of human subjectivity has been rocked by the onset of the Anthropocene. Rosi Braidotti (2013) and Roberto Esposito (2004/2008) each theorize posthumanist subjectivity focusing on what they call *zoe*—the Greek term for "life" itself. In the social realm, wherein zoe intrasects[2] with material governmentalities (e.g., neoliberalism), zoe transforms into *bios*—a particularized population, or type of zoe. These are the effects of biopower (Foucault, 2008), a form of power exercised to manipulate and control biology, in a communitarian sense. Biopower is the government of life, and it contrasts with sovereign or disciplinary power, which sought to control death. According to Esposito (2004/2008), the bios that wielded *Anthropos*—the human subject of the modernist project, is no longer plausible. Anthropos marked the moment wherein life became human life—a posturing of life that was autonomous, exercised its own disciplinary power over itself (largely via sovereign power yet referred to as free will), and enjoyed *freedom* vis a vis the emerging democratic political paradigm.

In an interesting twist, the Anthropocene, and humankind's status of becoming-nature, marks an ontological situation wherein as the epoch centers the influence of humankind, we simultaneously witness the death of *anthropos*. As humankind now must recognize its participation *as nature* (rather than fighting, forecasting, responding, or relinquishing to nature), we also must contend with the truths proffered by the post-structural and postmodern theorists regarding human subjectivity – its fractured, temporary, mediated, mutable, and historical epistemologies (Foucault, 2008; Deleuze & Guatarri, 1987; Derrida, 1978; Baudrillard, 1981; Lyotard, 1984). Thus, an array of posthumanists point to divergent yet interconnected earth processes and systems as they intrasect with people. Braidotti (2013) summarizes three broad-yet-overlapping (and incomplete) lines of flight: becoming-earth, becoming-animal, and becoming-machine. Meanwhile, other posthumanist thinkers target the relationship between the emergent subject and late capitalism, arguing that humankind can only now be known as the valorizing subjectivation of capital accumulation (Lazzarato, 2013; Esposito, 2008; DeLanda, 2006/2013). Further, thinkers such as Jane Bennett (2010) argue that all constructs, as we know them, are merely (and complexly), assemblages of *things*. Thus, *things* matter and exert power in self-organizing ways (Bennett, 2010; Braidotti, 2013).

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2. The terms "*intra*sect" and "*intra*sectionality" stem from new materialist philosophies and post-qualitative research conversations to indicate that rather than layering *on* meaning, such as commonly denoted by the *inter*section of social processes, the engagement of multiple social processes builds new meaning—or at least the opportunity thereof—by threading through one another, social processes change each other. See Barad, 2007.

My point in describing the Anthropocene as a context for inquiry is to recognize that parrhesia, while grounded in an ethic of truth-telling, must be understood within this ontological turning point of the anthropocene, which begs researchers to recognize the non-anthoprocentric becomings of social processes, practices, and locations. Put simply, human perspective is not enough to capture the complexity of assemblage-building and assemblage-transformation. The deterritorialization/reterritorialization of society from racist, nativist, classist, and sexist paradigms into more emancipatory and democratic ethics of being and becoming must wrestle with the Anthropocene and its attendant social/political consequences.

Notes on Parrhesia: Politics of Truth Telling

According to Dyrberg (2014), "*Parrhesia* refers…to the politically engaged person who as an authority or as a critic of authorities is trustworthy and speaks truthfully" (p. 67). The political dimension should not be undermined. Parrhesia is a politics in itself; it can find expression in the transformation of the population, ontologically, in relation to self and other. This political parrhesia is not epistemological. As an ontological approach to knowing the population (e.g., knowing/becoming-Latino college graduate), *parrhesia* is "intertwined with the attitudes and decisions of individuals based on an assessment of their trustworthiness as well as their boldness and courage when it comes to deciding and acting" (Dyrberg, 2014, p. 67). Parrhesia then, is enacted in particularized situations. Truth, is enacted, rather than demonstrative. In this configuration, the *truth* in truth-telling is practiced, not known. It organizes ways of living and being, politically—it is produced as a way to govern and traverse Foucault's three axes of human activity: relation to things (knowledge), relation to others (power), and relation to self (ethics) (Dyrberg, 2014). The rituals that constitute the Latino graduation ceremony rely on a politics of truth and truth-telling in relation to education, to other Latinos and other graduates, and to the becoming college graduate.

Parrhesia and democracy are linked intextricably—parrhesia reveals the tension between the ideal of democracy, of constitutional equality, and the material experience of democratic power, with all the inequality produced from such an exercise. Democracy's messiness can be captured in *parrhesia*, and from capture, significant intervention or remediation can be generated. Parrhesia is an inside-out politic. It relies more heavily on the output of political decision-making, rather than the input—how to act on risk and possibility rather than how to build consensus or to cull the favors of the mainstream. It is a responsibility that counters the populist tendencies of democratic practice. Yet it simultaneously counters any totalitarian/authoritarian tendencies of those who are untrustworthy to tell dangerous truths. "It is a political approach to truth, for which frankness, timing, courage, personal integrity and indeed, the forming of the self as a citizen, a political being are defining features" (Dyrberg, 2014, p. 67). Thus, it must be culturally predisposed to believability yet willing to be discomforting in the same moment. Parrhesia, as a political approach, recognizes that culturally-relevant engagement need not be mutually exclusive to cultural (and especially political) critique.

As Foucault (2010) explained:

> It is a practice which rests its reality in its relationship to politics. It is a practice which finds its function of truth in the criticism of illusion, deception, trickery, and flattery. And finally, it is a practice which finds the exercise of its practice in the transformation of the subject by himself and of the subject by the other. (p. 353-354; as quoted in Dyrberg, 2014).

The Latino graduation ceremony, as a ritual practice, transforms the Latino college student into the Latino college graduate; the becoming-Latino Community transforms into the becoming-Latino celebration. Such transformation, via the ritual practice of the Latino graduation ceremony, constitute parrhesia in process and effect, simultaneously, both/and.

Parrhesia works to examine and call out institutional context directed by the various systems in which they reside, and also questions levels of individual autonomies that direct behavioral technologies employed by all institutions (Dyrberg, 2015). As a political approach, *parrhesia* affords opportunities to speak truth-to-power in ways that repressive power relations find difficult to avoid. Institutional structures, therefore, can be held accountable in a politics of truth whereby the population exceeds the organization. In illustration, the Latino graduation ceremony affords a cultural context from which truth-telling can emerge as a becoming-institution—the university becoming-Latino, even if temporally bound to the moment of the keynote address or the parent participating in the processional. As Dyrberg (2014) states:

> Parrhesia is a means to ensure and facilitate the autonomy of oneself and others…a form of power that is not geared to secure the other's submission but to enhance his or her capabilities—an argument that could also be applied to collective entities in the political community" (p. 80).

The becoming-community of Latino graduates and families and friends collectively secure autonomy of their selves as an academically accomplished community, without engaging in the zero-sum game of haves and have-nots. Put another way, the Latino graduation ceremony recognizes the historic achievement of Latinos in higher education without diminishing the achievements of others (i.e., white, upper-middle-class Americans).

Practical Location Coordinates I, Continued: Division I Sports Arena on a Public University Campus in California during Commencement Weekend

As per tradition in graduations, there are speakers and speeches. Today, these are each made in Spanish and translated into English. No one is really left out of the listening experience, but rather than privileging those who grew up learning in English-only environments, the ancestral (*and* colonial) language of Spanish sits in providence over the auditory realm. Speeches at graduations traverse inevitably predictable themes: hard work, opportunities to better their family and society, gratitude for the experience made possible by the University, and of course, a lot of congratulatory platitudes for the achievement of the graduates and whatever their next steps may become. These themes in and of themselves are fairly normative.

When spoken from the subject-position of Latino graduates, Latino leaders, and/or Latino faculty members, they transpose epistemologically into a resistant strain or new discursive riff on the old reliably institutionalized refrains.

You have worked harder to succeed in a system that was not designed for you.

Your hard work is only made possible by the hard work of your parents: in the fields, in the factories, in the office buildings after-hours.

> *The opportunities in front of you are not for you alone. They are for Latinidad. They are for those who came before you and those for whom you've cleared the path.*
>
> *You came to this institution seeking a degree. You leave with an education. Not just from the classroom, but from the survival strategies you developed to face those who didn't believe in you. To succeed where no one like you had succeeded before. To show them that no matter how you got here, you deserved your seat.*

From these epistemological renderings, the traditional discourses of hard work are transposed into struggle and sacrifice. Those of opportunity are transposed into responsibility. Discourses of gratitude can be reconfigured into resentment or spitefulness. Congratulations become benedictions. These discursive acts fracture the nicely rounded expectations of what an institution of higher education was built to provide. Jagged fractures emerge in the institutional narrative of what a college degree means, represents, and promises.

Unlike institutional commencements, where individual students' time walking across the stage is measured by their steps between shaking hands with administrators and the length of time it takes the announcer to say their names, at Latino graduation, every graduate is afforded 10 seconds at the microphone.

> *Gracias mi Madre y Padre. Mi Abuela y Abuelo. They were denied the chance to go to college. I share this with you.*
>
> *We are Chicanas marching on our homeland today. Today, we take back the lands that have always been ours.*
>
> *I can't wait to put my education to use as the only Latino out of only 5 recruits from this university to a Fortune 500 firm.*
>
> *For my daughter, who gives me the best gift everyday, her love. I stand here today to inspire her.*

These mini-speeches cultivate a space and flow that can carve deeper into the fracture of the normative graduation ceremony. So deep, perhaps that an ontological move can be made. These mini-speeches cut deeper than epistemological renderings of what it means to graduate; they build a new theory of being Latino as a college graduate. In effect, these mini-speeches decode the normative expression of the predictable graduation themes and contribute to a newly formed becoming…the Latino college graduate.

The Latino graduate is fashioned through the intra-section of the university, as designed and administered by faculty, staff, students, state policy, and broader market forces, and the cultural heritage of *la familia*, as designed and administered by parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, cousins, the *tienda* down the street, the *taqueria* around the corner, and the *Iglesia* on Sundays, and the broader socio-politico-economic interests of human capital. The Latino graduate, ontologically, becomes additive to the status quo. The Latino graduate, as produced through these intra-sections, does not disrupt the capitalist accumulation of the neoliberal academy.

Practical Location Coordinates II, Continued: Public Green Space on a California Community College Campus during Commencement Weekend

Coastal Community College meets the requirements for designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution by the federal government and therefore is eligible (and receives) Title V funding from the U.S. Department of Education. Such funding is meant to promote the access and retention of Latinos in degree-seeking programs at public colleges and universities. At Coastal Community College, these funds have increased the academic advising and tutoring services available to students. The College itself is 36% Latino, mirroring the surrounding county. The county-wide median income is around $53,000/year. However, a majority of Latinos in the College's geographic catchment area come from an historically Mexican migrant farmworking town, Berryville (a pseudonym), which is about 12 miles south of the main Coastal Community College campus and whose residents are approximately 85% latino.

The keynote speaker, Señora Ramos is a member of the College's board of directors. She is "of the community": a long-term city councilwoman from the migrant town south of campus, a native of the area, a member of the Latino leadership of the greater coastal area. Sra. Ramos also graduated from Coastal College some 30 years ago, and went on to the local state university for her bachelor's and master's degrees. Her speech, while inspirational, focuses on the ability of all Coastal College students' ability to raise up from their communities and therefore raise their communities up in the process.

> *Your families sacrificed so that you don't have to make the same sacrifice.*

> *Your struggle continues the struggle of your community.*

> *Your responsibility is to improve upon yourself and your families and your community.*

> *Your accomplishment is only as important as the difference you make in your life economically and in the economics of your family.*

These sentiments evoke a common refrain of the graduation narrative—particularly when addressing non-dominant communities. Pick yourself up. Abscond state responsibility for your conditions and circumstances. Take responsibility for making life better.

This narrative, while relatable via mass media representations of American life, does not reflect the realities of the Coastal College graduates. For most, the sacrifice of their families is their own sacrifice. The average age of Coastal College graduates is 30. It is common for students to be parents. It is normal for students to work multiple jobs while struggling to persist through their curriculum, whether seeking a two-year degree, a credential, or to transfer to a four-year baccalaureate institution. The struggle that Coastal College students continue is not a new chapter, but rather the same or the former chapter of migrant farmworkers in Central California. This keynote speaker's narrative emplaces the Latino Graduate of Coastal College squarely into a neoliberal agenda wherein the Latino Graduate must now ascend into the designated social class performance prescribed her.

Notes on Parrhesia: (Public) Pedagogy of the Self

As personal practice, *parrhesia* can be understood as an intra-section of the political and the praxis of the individual. Burck (2009) sees the use of parrhesia as a tool for democratic education principles, a form of praxis when used as a dialectical instrument. Burck sees possibility in parrhesia to transgress boundaries as truth-telling principles develop learners of democracy. Tamboukou (2012) argues that educational parrhesiastics are both truth speakers and part of the "powerful other" (p. 861), therefore they can shape the institution during times of academic, social, or political change. In this sense, parrhesia might be understood as teaching-and-learning principles for the self while taking action in the public. Put another way, the indvidiual parrhesiaste engages a public pedagogy of the self. Indeed, Peters (2003) focuses on parrhesia as the conduit to Foucault's technology of the self, and likens it as constitutive of a foundational standard for education. As a requirement for parrhesia, competence is assessed by the congruence between one's speech, thoughts, and actions. For Peters, parrhesia within educational contexts links directly to the progression of democratic imperatives. Educational parrhesiastes address biopolitics.

As a tool for securing democracy, parrhesia must engender effects. As a discursive tactic, parrhesia interrupts current dominant discourse, addressing social injustices and political arenas. (Kennedy, 1999). Yet, Huckaby (2007) points out that parrhesiastes' level of engagement in truth telling is always in direct proportion to the freedom of their relative roles/titles, particularly in institutional contexts. The Latino graduation ceremony, therefore, supplies a necessary, if liminal, space wherein the freedom of the Latino college graduate can manifest in parrhesiastic activity. For, parrhesia is a momentary cauldron wherein a metamorphism of political discourse happens. Catalytic, risky moments or situations where truth is sought become parrhesiastic acts when one harnesses her freedom or autonomy to speak truth (Tamboukou, 2012). To conceive of the Latino graduation ceremony as parrhesia – as a public pedagogy of the self—is to recognize the affordances of parrhesiastic actors not only tell the truth for the sake of their own self, but for the benefit of the greater public good.

The Latino Caste and American Higher Education, Refracted

Despite the warm, enthusiastic, and historic achievements celebrated in Latino graduation ceremonies, the Latino College Graduate is ensnared in the neoliberal project of American progress and higher education. Most Latinos in higher education attend open access institutions, like the community colleges, that reify the notion that their only plausible contribution to the biopolitical project of higher education—ostensibly individual uplift—requires them to target their own families and communities as part of the problem, rather than a source of the solution. While the Latino College Graduate can emerge, ontologically, and become reified—or valorized—via the ritual culture of the Latino Graduation, this becoming-subject compels a continuation of the neoliberal project through which the Latino College Graduate is only made possible by divorcing the *Latinidad*, by leaving *Aztlan*. In essence, the Latino Graduation Ceremony becomes as much a memorial for *Aztlan* as it is an annual renaissance.

Post-location Coordinates: a Capitalist Sports Complex Occupying Anthropocene of Aztlan in Springtime of the year of 2015 (Two Days before University Commencement)

The decor on the walls of the structure has been organized in such a way as to advertise a series of chain restaurants, big-box stores, military contractors, and the occasional consumer service-center, each of which are merely local instantiations of multi-national corporations. Banners hang or fly from various apparatus in the complex, each representing an athletic achievement attributed to the institution. The University's name, mascot, and major donors are well-represented in signs, photos, and displays throughout the complex. This is a place of winners—champions. The acoustics are such that loud noise gets louder and begets even louder noise. This is a space for celebration.

The celebrations that are normally held here are primarily for men. And usually white men, with the support of Black men, but rarely Black leadership. This is a sports complex after all. It is an extension of the National Collegiate Athletic Association and its nearly one billion dollars of annual revenue. This place is a cauldron of high-stakes D1 athletics. It is the storied space of campus leaders, icons, lore, and aspiration. This place represents the university not only to its students, faculty, and staff, but it's local neighbors, community, and broader constituents. This place *is* the university to the millions who tune in on cable networks like ESPN and ESPNU or watch sporting events live on local channels broadcasting in HD on a monthly, weekly, sometimes daily basis. This place is emblematic of global capital's flows through our social institutions. It is a space for capital accumulation.

Not so long ago, yet, prior to the Anthropocene, perhaps, this space did something else. Different materials were gathered here. Different people gathered them. Different kinds of noise were made. At one point in time, this space was not made from U.S. dollars. It was made from cultural practices that marked the space as *Mexican*. Or perhaps Chicano. Or perhaps Tongva. Not so long ago, yet so very far away.

Where the sports complex now stands as an ode erected in honor of the neoliberal capitalist regime that has taken over American Academe, the space remains contested. While occupied, the people of Aztlan have organized. Their ancestral materials have been gathered. Their contemporary materials have accumulated. While there now sits a giant structure dedicated to preserving the accumulation of capital on behalf of the University, the space becomes a colonized resistance in the form of Aztlan for one afternoon each year.

Reflective Summaries

At request of the guest editors, I have included a conceptual figure (next page) to illustrate the cartographic analysis I sought to undertake in this essay. *Aztlan* occupies a primacy of space, centered in the figure, yet emerging from the inter-mixing of the practical coordinates underneath the broader context of the Anthropocene.

While onto-epistemological processes might emerge through the smooth slides across slowly developed fractures, much like the flows of water over rock over time, the figure is arbitrarily, *rough*. It is rough both in its aesthetic sense of graphic design, as well as in its metaphoric use, for parrhesia in posthumanist inquiry can be less of a smooth ride down a rockslide that emerged from centuries of productive erosion, and more of a jagged, rocky, disturbance and displacement from what has become normative over time. Thus, practical coordinates can be traced to the rising *Aztlan* imaginary as well as the neoliberal American higher education enterprise (nee

institution). While neither exist in zoe (i.e., pure life), each somehow build into the *bios* of the posthuman and build out the emergent *anthropos* of the becoming-Latino Graduate.
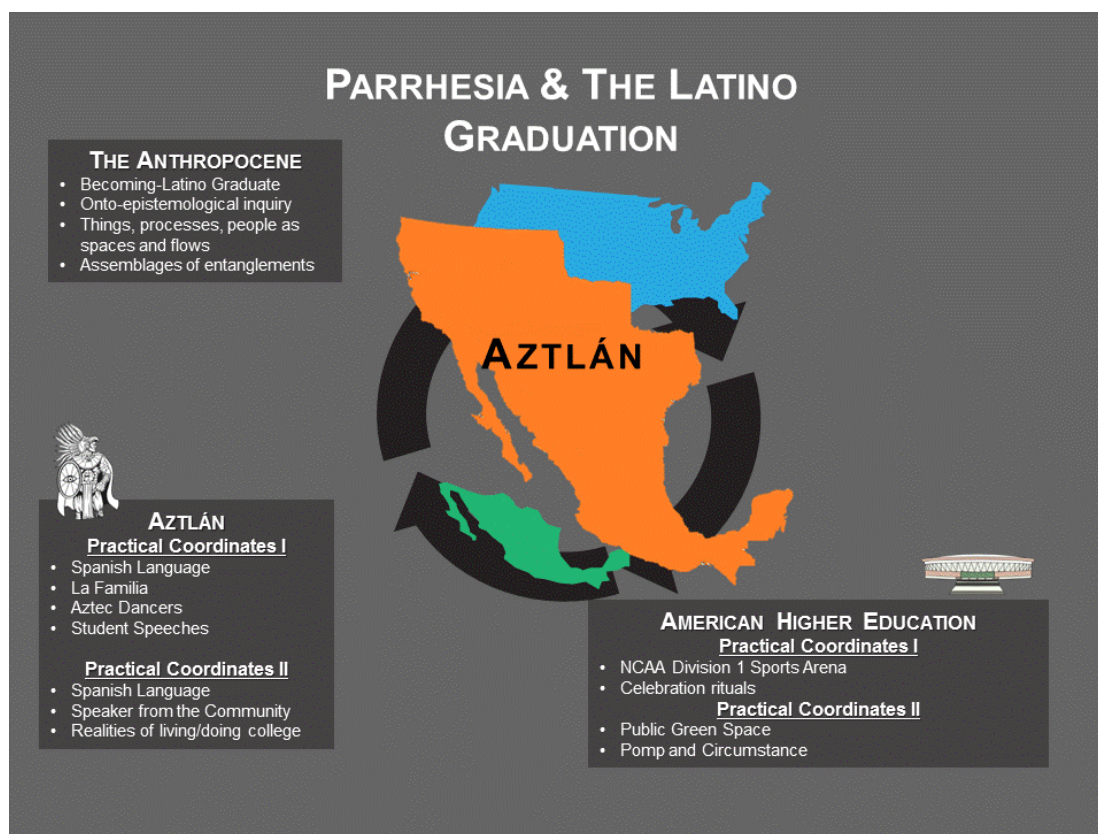
This paper sought to trace a cartography of truth-telling and practical wisdom through a posthumanist entanglement of ritual culture in higher education and critical inquiry. The cartographic goal was to trace the contours of a claim about staking claims—that claim-staking is generative critical activity to stem from inquiry focused on an analysis of power/knowledge and that such claims can provoke the very shocks to thought necessary to engender new configurations of plausibility in the everyday lives of the planet. Theoretically, the paper relied on my synthesis of posthumanist philosophy and the revival of Foucault's concepts of biopolitics represented largely in his lectures translated into English and published since 2008. More pragmatically, I used the backdrop of my critical inquiry into ritual culture and Latinos in American higher education (Gildersleeve, 2015) to illustrate subtle yet significant shifts from a more procedural notion of critical inquiry into a productively entangled critical engagement of truth-telling, consistent with the productions of parrhesia theorized by Foucault, yet reconfigured in recognition of the false human/non-human dichotomy of modern discourse.

Put simply, I used my current inquiry into Latino Graduation Ceremonies in Higher Education to illustratively work-through how critical methodology (and methodologists) might engage in parrhesia, taking my cue from its four pillars as synthesized by Kuntz (2015):

1. an engaged analysis of the past
2. a recognition of how historical ways of knowing and being implicate the present
3. a determination to point a way forward towards a more socially-just future
4. a contextually grounded sense of value rationality.

My cartographic presentation of parrhesia at work took as its departing coordinates three fundamental assumptions about critical methodological work, two underlying characterizations of contemporary global action, and the particular activities of ritual culture produced through Latino participation in American higher education:

Critical Inquiry:

1. Critical inquiry *intervenes*. Intervention is fundamental to the *critical* task of knowledge. Intervention occurs across and betwixt epistemological and ontological planes in order to engender disruptive knowings/becomings—work referred to as territorialization/deterritorialization by Deleuze and Guattari (1987).
2. Critical inquiry is generative. To be critical is to create anew concepts and plausible becomings from the deconstruction of normative, governing, grand narratives that shroud imminent possibilities (or fractures) from their interventive potential (Kuntz, 2015).
3. Critical inquiry is constituted in the intra-action of the material and discursive, obliterating the arbitrary dichotomy of these epistemic differences. Through materialization, discursive understandings are fashioned. Simultaneously, discursive (re)constructions disrupt any semblance of fixity or knowing-ness assumed in materiality. Through their intra-section, the universe is made knowable (Barad, 2007).

Global (inter)Action:

1. We live, work, and know the world as complicit producers of the Anthropocene. In a scientific sense, the anthropocene is our current geologic period—one in which humans are the primary agents of affect and effect on the planet—we have as much power over geologic change as anything else, if not more-so.
2. Such science forces us to socially grapple with the consequences of human agency not as separate from nature, but constituent *and simultaneously* constituting of nature. Put more simply, we invent nature, with every decision we make socially and politically regarding how we choose to understand it.

Ritual Culture and Latinos in Higher Education:

1. The narrative renderings presented in this essay were crafted using analyses from my inquiry focused on Latino graduation ceremonies in higher education (see Gildersleeve, 2015). Fieldwork included multiple visits to 11 campuses, interviews with 34 respondents, and participant-observation of 8 Latino graduation celebrations.
2. The Latino Graduation Ceremony, therefore, emerges from populist, yet dissident, subjectivities and can, in a sense, provide a biopolitical response to the dominant institu-

tional governmentality that precludes Latino participation in social life. Simultaneously, producing truth from such populist biopolitical resistance requires a keen attention to historical, contemporary, and plausible future contexts, as shaped by the conditions of understanding and know-ability construed through the practice and production of the Latino Graduation Ceremony itself.

Thus, my posthumanist analysis of ritual culture and Latinos in American higher education leads me to argue that the Latino Graduation Ceremony engenders parrhesia through the situated practice of its actants and actors. Parrhesia emerges from political assemblages of ritual practice, as well as from the individual assemblage of the becoming Latino graduate who produces the parrhesiastes positioning through a (public) pedagogy of the self.

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Reconceptualizing the Role of an Educational Researcher: A Critical Multicultural Educator's Perspective

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Abstract

Critical multicultural educators' concerns about the oppressive and/or emancipatory potentialities of curriculum extend to the preparation of educational researchers. By framing one's scholarly life as curriculum, this personal phronesis of the author's scholarly journey as a multicultural teacher and researcher, highlights the implications for the knowledge construction process in the preparation of researchers as leaders for social justice. A personal and collective agenda for re-conceptualizing research as a public good is offered.

Keywords: *critical multicultural education, educational research, doctoral education*

Critical multicultural educators have been particularly cognizant of the oppressive and/or emancipatory potentialities of education.[1] While these potentialities have been highlighted in educator preparation for primary and secondary educational contexts,[2] they also exist for tertiary education, particularly in the education of future educational researchers.[3] Based on the injunction of Kincheloe and McLaren (2005) to recognize the role of research in perpetuating hegemony, this paper draws on my insights as a critical multicultural educator to underscore crucial implications for the preparation and practice of educational researchers, especially in doctoral programs.

By and large, the field of multicultural education has focused on the roles of educators in the advancement of educational equity. Researchers and scholars in the field have engaged in research *about* these struggles, but these studies have less frequently focused on the role of researchers themselves. Drawing on previous work that asked, "What is a critical multicultural researcher?"[4] and the significant bodies of work that comprise multicultural education and critical approaches to research, the role of the educator and the researcher are integrated in this discussion of doctoral education as a social justice undertaking. An overview of what it means to be a multi-

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1. This idea was advanced by Freire (2000) in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. It has been central to the perspectives of critical multiculturalists such as Au (2014), May and Sleeter (2010), Spring (2013) and Vavrus (2015).
2. For example, Grant and Sleeter (2011) in teacher preparation and Marshall and Oliva (2006) in leadership preparation in the K-12 contexts.
3. See Denzin, Lincoln and Smith (2008), Tobin and Steinberg (2015) and Torres and Reyes (2011) for discussions of the oppressive v. emancipatory potentiality of educational research methodology.
4. Schoorman and Bogotch (2010).

cultural educator, particularly within the current context of neoliberal assaults on equity *and* education[5] sets the basis for how this role might be understood in the context of doctoral education and the preparation of researchers. Adopting an autoethnographic stance, embodied in the notion of our lives as curriculum, I explore my role as an educator and the insights that this analysis generates about teaching and research.

Framed as a personal phronesis, this article offers a critical reflection on my role as a critical multicultural educator and its particular implications for my work as a researcher and that of the students whom I mentor as instructor, advisor, dissertation chair and doctoral coordinator. It draws on Freire's (2000) principle of conscientization and Greene's (1978) exhortation to us to be "wide awake"—both morally and politically—to our own values and commitments, the conditions that frame/limit them, and to our own agency, as we navigate our roles and obligations as professionals—as teachers and researchers, as community members and, simply, as human beings. Consequently, conscientization operates on multiple levels in this analysis. First, it requires being aware of (and, consequently, being intellectually awake to) the underlying power dynamics in curriculum, pedagogy and research design and practices, who it is they serve and who is marginalized by our decisions in these contexts. Such conscientization is informed by the knowledge of the histories of marginalization in the arenas of education[6] and research.[7] The legacies of these histories are exacerbated by neoliberal economic values in contemporary contexts, where competition for scarce resources drives educational and research agendas.[8] Being "wide awake" in these contexts (i.e. being fully and critically aware) requires agentive action in minimizing or subverting these deleterious practices. The ability to do so will require a form of "double consciousness": seeing how hitherto marginalized epistemologies are framed by mainstream/traditional approaches, naming such marginalization and forging pathways for alternative, emancipatory epistemologies.

What does it Mean to be a Critical Multicultural Educator?

Although the field of multicultural education in the USA was formed in the context of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, its roots run much deeper in US history, drawing on centuries of daily intellectual, psychological, social and political struggle for equality and the role of education in that pursuit. Concerns about the structural injustices evident in this history distinguish critical multicultural education from other forms such as liberal multiculturalism that focuses primarily on cultural differences rather than on the structures grounded in white privilege that maintain unequal opportunities for particular groups.[9] Dedicated to the education and wellbeing of all student groups, critical multiculturalism is more than curriculum, pedagogy or the academic achievement of particular groups; it is a philosophy, an ideal and a way of being.

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5. Apple (2012; 2006) and Sleeter (2015; 2008) address how neoliberalism undermines education in general but particularly the concerns with equity.

6. For more on the history of marginalization in education, see Ladson Billings (2006); Spring (2013).

7. For discussions of marginalization through research practices, see Denzin, Lincoln and Smith (2008); Lopez and Parker (2003); Taylor, Gillborn, and Ladson Billings (2009).

8. See Giroux (2002; 2011a; 2011b) where the author raises concerns about rampant corporatization and its underlying values and logics particularly in higher education, and where faculty and members of society seem relatively oblivious to this trend and its impact.

9. May and Sleeter (2010) draw a distinction between liberal v. critical approaches to multicultural education.

Freire's (2000) classic text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* has etched into the consciousness of critical multicultural educators the grave consequences of traditional education practices and the need for the pursuit of education as emancipatory, rather than as oppressive. Central to Freire's principles of critical pedagogy is the process of humanization, grounded in concepts of radical love, faith and hope. This is achieved through praxis—reflection and action—that surfaces a process of conscientization based in dialogic and dialectical engagement. As Freire (2000) notes, "True dialogue cannot exist without critical thinking…For the critic, the important thing is continuing transformation of reality, in behalf of the continuing humanization of men [sic]…" (p. 92).

Freire's call for conscientization through praxis and the naming of oppression as a crucial starting point for emancipatory pedagogy, parallel the notions of phronesis and parrhesia deemed central to critical methods. Phronesis, a deliberative process grounded in moral action that yields practical wisdom on how to act, and its resultant parrhesia, truth telling that interrupts received hegemony[10] are evident in the commitment of the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) in the USA. They are embodied in the organization's logos that consist of the image of the Sankofa bird, a symbol representing learning from the past in order to build a future, and the inverted red triangle, the symbol assigned to educators and "wrong thinkers" who engaged in unpopular truth telling against the Nazis. Thus, my positionality as a multicultural educator in the USA, is one that engenders the need for border crossing and double consciousness. In the context of the subjugated and erased histories of groups, it is crucial that multicultural educators and researchers become cognizant of the patterns of marginalization that frame current knowledge, so that such intellectual oppression might be interrupted. We traverse not only temporal and cultural borders, but institutional and political ones as well. We must recognize harsh truths and the possibilities about education's role as potentially emancipatory on the one hand and, on the other, its propensity to be a tool of oppression in the form of colonization, stratification or assimilation.[11] In so doing, we act as outsiders within the "belly of the beast."[12] That means, rather than becoming socialized within what Lorde (1984) referred to as "the master's house" where hegemonic practices might be either deliberately or inadvertently enacted, we remain loyally critical (i.e. as critical friends) of such efforts. We frame our practices as genuine efforts to make the entire institution more egalitarian and inclusive. Our positions as outsiders within, interrogating and/or disrupting the very institutions that give us the legitimacy to do so, must be undertaken with responsible deliberation, care, reflexivity and transparency.

The curricular principles of critical multicultural education are deeply relevant in the education of future researchers. Similar to the curriculum critiques of K-12 or educator preparation curriculum, scholars grounded in indigenous epistemologies, critical race theory, feminist/womanist stances, queer theory or postcolonial perspectives (among others) have consistently critiqued the hegemonic stranglehold of dominant research epistemologies and methodologies in mainstream educational research courses and practices. Paradigm dialogues such as those advanced by Guba (1990) have highlighted the tensions between assumptions of researcher neutrality v. subjectivity, the social and intellectual purposes of research, and measures of validity in divergent approaches.[13]

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10. This definition draws on the work of Birmingham (2004); Freund (2009); Kristjansson (2014); Torres and Reyes (2011)

11. Spring (2013) addresses how colonization, stratification and assimilation were evident in the history of educational experiences of diverse groups in the USA.

12. Drawing on the story of the Biblical character, Jonah, who was swallowed by a whale, Bogotch (2007) used this term in the context of engaging in educational leadership praxis.

13. See also Lincoln, Lynham and Guba (2011)

More contemporaneously, neoliberal economics have begun to shape what has been accepted as "research," further demarcated in university settings as "grant funded," a framing that explicitly links the generation of new knowledge to fiduciary interests. This represents academia's experience of neocolonialism (i.e. the transfer of ownership/profits to those with the money). It raises concerns about intellectual property, patents, and researcher autonomy in the pursuit of large grants that often constrain research, delimiting it to large samples, generalizable findings and broad-based replicability (more 'bang for the buck'). Conversely, un-funded small-scale studies of particular contexts, often contextualized in and with marginalized populations are relegated to the title of "scholarship" instead. That is, of course, until those populations become the "draw" for funded research. As a multicultural educator involved in projects with marginalized groups, I have become sensitized to how these populations are preyed upon by large grant seekers, who use them largely for cosmetic purposes to attract funding. Often, grant seekers attempt to forge partnerships with communities of underserved backgrounds in order to appear multicultural and attract grant funding, although the goals and purposes of the projects may not address the structures that marginalize these populations. While diversity-conscious in their grant applications such projects often turn diversity-blind in their implementation. Researchers committed to multiculturalism will need to remain vigilant within these contexts to ensure that neither the goals nor the methodologies proposed in grant-funded research undermine the communities they ostensibly serve.

It is into this historic and contemporary arena that the multicultural educator steps, both as a teacher and as a researcher. I enter the inquiry process with a heightened awareness of a history of intellectual and institutional practice too long dominated by colonial White male supremacy, its impact on the present, and the imperatives for corrective action as we look to the future. Reflecting on my own institutional experiences and history, I foreground my efforts to extend the principles of critical pedagogy which have inspired my work as an instructor, to my work as a researcher. In re-framing the role of the educational researcher through this introspection, I seek to highlight the patterns of marginalization and privileging that have demarcated what is accepted as "research" and the role of the educational researcher. In so doing, my intent is to identify the interconnections between the principles and praxis of critical multicultural education and the imperatives for educational research for social justice. I seek to recast the role of the educational researcher away from compliant methodologist towards a purposeful and ethical advocate for social justice and the public good in all aspects of one's professional undertakings.

Foregrounded in this paper is a discussion typical in multicultural education with reference to curriculum and classroom settings—the political process of knowledge construction - extended to understanding the role of the researcher. Too often, these contexts are seen as separate and unrelated, where the critical consciousness employed within the classroom is turned off with respect to the protocols, assumptions and methodologies adopted in one's role as a researcher. As noted in a previous publication, "In order to be multicultural/ social justice practitioners, we can and should model the principles of critical multicultural education/ social justice in ***all*** aspects of our work. We need to continue to find ways to integrate the principles we teach in the classroom into our research and service work."[14] What follows are efforts to build this bridge between critical consciousness raising within the multicultural classroom setting and our roles as researchers. Doctoral education, which integrates both the classroom and the research contexts as we prepare students as future researchers, offers an appropriate site within which to forge this bridge building. In so doing, I hope to highlight ways in which the educator can work to constantly interrogate issues of power and possibilities for change in all roles that s/he inhabits.

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14. Schoorman and Bogotch (2010, p. 261).

Knowledge Construction as Contested

In early work that charted the course of multicultural education as a curricular field, Banks (2004) identified five dimensions of multicultural education that needed to be pursued within an education system. Among these was the knowledge construction process: understanding the biases in how knowledge was generated, what was accepted and what was not. The knowledge construction process was linked to three of the other dimensions identified: content integration (who was represented in the curriculum), equity pedagogy (how lessons were taught) and prejudice reduction (a crucial outcome of multicultural education in the 1960s and 1970s). Today, the aim of multicultural education has morphed to encompass broad-based social injustices, typically perpetuated in the education system.[15] The fifth dimension, an empowering school culture, requires us to move beyond merely addressing the more micro level of individual classes, teachers, or topics to examine the role of programs, schools, and colleges of education, at the meso level, as they interrogate the macro level concerns of social (in)justice and the public good evident in district, state and national policies and practices.

Educators of diverse backgrounds have long recognized education as spaces of contestation and the knowledge construction process as political. They have called on educators to identify the biases of what and whose knowledge is accepted as official knowledge.[16] Such critiques have highlighted the role of the privileged curriculum as cultural genocide,[17] intellectual colonization,[18] miseducation,[19] assimilationist and homogenizing. These concerns are echoed by critical researchers about "accepted" research paradigms within higher education institutions.[20] They also emerge in our own doctoral programs where future researchers are educated,[21] but are also shaped by norms and values undergirding promotion and tenure guidelines and deliberations, policies governing Institutional Review Board applications and approvals for Human Subjects Research. As a coordinator of a doctoral program, doctoral advisor, faculty member and a former doctoral student, I see doctoral programs as an important "frontier" for new and emerging critical work. I draw on my own experiences in this journey, as well as the insights developed in the implementation of multicultural education to consider approaches to disrupting monolithic and limiting approaches that obstruct critical research for the public good.

Knowledge Construction in Doctoral Programs

As a doctoral student, I was fortunate to be in the midst of a departmental paradigm shift marking a departure from a view of curriculum as a technology to questions about its politics and

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15. May and Sleeter (2010); McLaren (2007); Vavrus (2015) each calls for the need for a conceptualization of critical multiculturalism that addresses social injustices.

16. Zittleman and Sadker (2002) building on previous work, identified seven forms of curriculum biases, while Loewen (2008) in *Lies my Teacher Taught Me* identified examples of lies in US History textbooks. Apple (2014) raised consciousness about the myth of neutrality in the curriculum, where the "Official Curriculum" privileged particular, mainstream knowledge. Anyon (2006) noted similar biases in educational research calling for what *should* count in research.

17. Lomawaima and McCarty, 2002 ; Spring (2013).

18. Villenas (1996).

19. Woodson (1933).

20. See Ladson Billings and Tate (2006); Lather (1986); Lopez and Parker (2003); Tobin and Steinberg (2015); Winkle-Wagner, Hunter and Ortloff (2009).

21. See Berry (2015); Torres and Reyes (2011).

purposes. I experienced relative congruence between my own graduate coursework that introduced me to critical theorists (e.g. Freire, Giroux, McLaren, Aronowitz, Apple) and in the opportunities to explore these perspectives as a graduate teaching assistant in a recently developed undergraduate teacher preparation course in multicultural education. As an instructor in multicultural education for pre-service teachers, I was well-versed in critiquing the "dead white male" curriculum[22] of public schools; yet, while I valued the contribution of White men to my own conscientization about White male privilege, I was simultaneously struck by the paradox of the absence of scholars who were female and/or of color in my own education.

I also experienced the paradigm shift in methodology through the strong endorsement and support of the use of qualitative data. Required courses in both qualitative and quantitative data analysis sent clear messages about what was permissible in doctoral work. Progressive scholars who embraced ethnographic work, introduced us to new and fascinating concepts, exposed us to works of key scholars whose 'authority' became our guides, affirmed the value of purposefully selected small groups of research participants or case studies, and served as worthy bridge builders between competing paradigms. However, it was curious that those of us opting to use qualitative data were the only ones who tended to have to label the epistemological basis for our designs, whereas those who used solely quantitative data and operated from a positivist perspective appeared to enjoy the privilege of not having to clarify the paradigmatic bias of their study. Similarly, feminist perspectives or Black/Latino/Indigenous perspectives had to be acknowledged as such, whereas "mainstream" perspectives required no such announcements further "marking" critical scholarship as "different" or marginal vis-à-vis the range of "acceptable" or "typical" research paradigms and approaches.

This is a trend that continues in current scholarship where theoretical and epistemological assumptions of critical perspectives are typically explained with an underlying purpose of "justifying" their use and their validity, whereas similar critical reflexivity of epistemological bias is not typical of the scientism of dominant paradigms. This reality has required us, as critical scholars and educators, to develop for ourselves and within our students an epistemological double consciousness: being aware of the culture of power (or the canon) in accepted epistemologies and methodologies, while simultaneously facilitating culturally relevant approaches that constitute epistemological shifts away from frameworks that distort, towards those that are transformative and emancipatory, particularly for research grounded in concerns about/for historically marginalized communities.[23] Doctoral students need to be conversant in the language of multiple paradigms if they are to be successful in gaining acceptance for their more critically oriented designs. Epistemological double consciousness, like cross cultural competence, allows student researchers to understand and dialogue with committee members (or related audiences) who adopt positivist epistemological values and/or to recognize and circumvent such biases even in ostensibly critical or constructivist research designs. This double consciousness typically results in stronger conceptual work as students begin to link ideology, theory, standpoint, epistemology, design and methodology with meticulous conceptual care, simultaneously making explicit the knowledge construction process of their research.

The role and purpose of research methodology courses in doctoral programs (as required v. elective; present v. absent; regularly scheduled v. intermittently offered; well-enrolled v. under-enrolled) often lay the groundwork for the privileging of positivist research approaches, revealing

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22. Sadker (2001).
23. See also Carter (2003) and Tyson (2003).

institutional patterns of marginalization for critical approaches. Doctoral programs in education have traditionally privileged a culture of positivism where statistical analysis that supported researcher objectivity and neutrality, predictability, and generalizability but (initially) not any alternative research approaches was prescribed. Although over time, while courses in qualitative data analysis, action research and/or critical approaches to research have been integrated into programs, first as electives and then as requirements, Kincheloe and Tobin (2015) caution us about "crypto-positivism"—hidden values and assumptions grounded in positivism—that nevertheless undergird our discussions of what can be known.

Knowledge Construction in the Professoriate

Similar epistemological socialization occurs within the professoriate as well. As an assistant professor of color, initially one of few who used qualitative data in my research or explicitly critical perspectives in my teaching, I was advised in my annual evaluation by a department chair that I needed to "do more quantitative research" in order to be successful in promotion and tenure (P and T). It was advice that revealed a bias typical, if anachronistic, of many institutions. Consequently, rather than changing the trajectory of my work, I worked with the chair of the college P and T committee to issue a college-wide clarification that quantitative data was not privileged over qualitative data in P and T deliberations. A decade later, I found myself in a related discussion with the P and T committee, when questioned about my work being "advocacy" rather than "research" (a false dichotomy). This afforded me the opportunity to claim that we could not engage in effective advocacy without simultaneously pursuing research that was rigorous and meticulous (however one defined it). It was a response well received and paved the way for future critical work to be positively evaluated.

I mention these discussions for two reasons. The field of multicultural education had sensitized me to interrupting "business as usual" approaches to education that perpetuated one-sided perspectives of knowledge and knowing. Nevertheless, engaging in discussions of alternate perspectives with department chairs or P and T committees could also be risky. The intervention of senior advocates such as the chair of the P and T committee, and my knowledge, as an assistant professor, about needing to seek this out, interrupted a potentially vicious cycle of the silencing of alternate views in the perpetuation of the status quo. Although well-intended, what my chair was unable to do was to create the spaces for multiple research approaches to co-exist. This was what I attempted to forge a decade later as a tenured professor. Knowing that we had assistant professors and doctoral students who wished to engage in critical research it was crucial for me to be open and explicit about my own critical epistemologies so as to expand the spaces within which such investigations could occur. My own socialization as a doctoral student both as a multicultural educator engaged in advocacy and as a researcher had allowed me to understand the politics of knowledge construction and enabled me to create new paths (and critique those that were limited or limiting). These are crucial insights for doctoral students that will empower them in the context of future epistemological tensions.

Another site of such epistemological tension, especially in the framing of what "counts" as educational research within the academy, are Institutional Review Boards. Despite their crucial mission for supporting ethical research practices, especially among vulnerable populations, their grounding of research within a biological research paradigm and tests of generalizability renders much of the work of critical educators largely "non-scientific." Although committed to doing no

harm, the epistemological 'template' woven into research protocols fails to interrupt studies designed by those in the ivory tower and imposed on external subjects. They resurface the concerns of historically marginalized populations for whom externally derived research was offensive and oppressive. Inadvertently, such a monolithic epistemological template yields dialectical tensions in devising community-based research committed to the public good in the form of collaborative designs, such as participatory action research. Critical educators' call for collaborative research which, while is still possible within the current protocols, requires a keen epistemological double consciousness to recognize how one traverses the borders between established traditions of research hierarchies and more egalitarian, if non-mainstream approaches.

Most critical educators in the professoriate are deeply mindful of the macro contexts of social injustice in which our work is situated and work on the micro level as individuals and/or groups to address these concerns through our research and teaching. Either by design or default, however, we often pay less attention to our potentiality at a more meso level of agency: the analysis and transformation of programs of study, particularly at the doctoral level where increased specialization facilitates largely isolated (and isolating) work. Aided by the substantive work in curricular and program analysis in the field of multicultural education, integrated with multicultural critiques of mainstream research approaches and epistemologies, what follows is a discussion of how we might conceptualize a more systemic approach to supporting critical doctoral education.

A Typology of Educational Research Curriculum

Typologies of multicultural education curriculum[24] that have facilitated the critique of traditional domesticating curriculum allow for insightful analysis of the curriculum for educational researchers. Each of these typologies begins with models of curriculum that they wish to avoid and moves through a continuum that reaches the curriculum model of desired practice. Sleeter and Grant (2003) advocated against "business as usual" approaches that reflect and perpetuate the patterns of inequity in society. Nieto (1994) identified the undesired as a monocultural, popularly dubbed the "DWM" (dead white male) curriculum, that Grande (2004) termed "whitestream." Within the context of educational research, this would refer to programs where only dominant traditions of research were represented or required. Scholarly critiques focus on the monological ways of seeing the world and the dangers of its Eurocentric bias.[25] Scholars of color have typically found these approaches to be colonizing and alienating[26] serving as reminder of how the purposes and methods of research could perpetuate racism. Kincheloe and McLaren, (2005) concur that these mainstream research practices, are generally "implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression" (p. 304).

Tyson (2003) and Carter (2003) warn about the role that academia plays in conservatively maintaining this status quo that privileges the needs of the academy over those of the community and that confuses knowledge (e.g. the generation of information about communities) with understanding (e.g. perception of community perspectives). Carter (2003) cites Stanfield who notes, "The exclusionary practices of academic social sciences along racial lines have maintained a cultural hegemony that has monopolized the construction and legitimation of methodological perspectives" (p. 29). For Tyson (2003) such race-blind views have failed to legitimate perspectives

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24. For example, Banks (2004); Gorski (2009); Sleeter and Grant (2003).
25. Kincheloe and Tobin (2015).
26. Bishop (2005).

that are not beneficial to White society warranting a radical transformation of research practices within the academy.

On the other extreme of the typology lies the approach advocated by critical multicultural researchers. Very much like the desired approach to curriculum variously titled the social action approach,[27] social reconstructionism[28], curriculum for social justice,[29] or anti-racist,[30] the desired approach to educational research curriculum includes a conceptualization of research as rooted in concerns about democracy, social justice, structural equality and the public good. Programmatically, this entails a commitment to research that is grounded in social justice concerns of the community. Thus conceptualized, according to Hostetler (2005),

> Good education research is a matter not only of sound procedures but also of beneficial aims and results; our ultimate aim as researchers and educators is to serve people's well-being…Researchers must be able to articulate some sound connection between their work and a robust and justifiable conception of human well being. (p. 16)

Calling for emancipatory epistemologies, Tyson (2003) noted the importance of purpose and of methodology.

> If educational researchers are to operate from epistemologies of emancipation – with frameworks that are transformative (as opposed to accommodative) in nature – and engage in methodologies that encourage the participants to challenge and change the world, then the purpose of data collection in educational research would be fundamentally different. Rather than collect data for data's sake, research would become a conscious political, economic and personal conduit for empowerment. Educational research could then be a catalyst to support and complement larger struggles for liberation. (p. 24)

Research committed to the public good transforms the role of researchers to being the supporting actors with the researched as protagonists, moving from being the "object of my research" to "the subject of our research."[31] Torres and Reyes (2011) identified three principles underlying this conception of research as praxis: Radical participatory democracy; collective action for transformation towards a better world; and a commitment to work for social justice in solidarity with marginalized communities. Programs that represent this model in the typology would require that all students be exposed to this perspective of research to facilitate critical consciousness about the role of educational research in the perpetuation or interruption of hegemonic practices and for the democratizing of research practices, and decolonizing methodologies grounded in a commitment to social justice and the public good.[32]

In between these extremes lie (at least) two curriculum models, one of which multicultural educators identify as tokenistic, additive or tolerance.[33] This model is paralleled in educational research curriculum along two strands. One is where students (and faculty) are "allowed" to draw

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27. Banks (2004).
28. Sleeter and Grant (2003).
29. Peterson (2007).
30. Sleeter and Bernal (2004).
31. Torres and Reyes (2011, p. 54).
32. Schoorman (2014).
33. See: Sleeter and Grant (2003); Banks (2004); Nieto (1994).

on critical theoretical perspectives but are discouraged from integrating research designs (e.g. action research; autoethnography) and methodologies consistent with those views into their research. As such, emerging scholars have attempted studies theoretically grounded in critical race theory or Freirean pedagogy but forced-fitted into the very methodological approaches critiqued by those theories. This gives rise to Lorde's (1984) famous question about whether one can "use the master's tools" (traditional research methods) to "bring down the master's house" (to challenge received knowledge that perpetuates racial, gendered, classed etc. hierarchies.) The other strand that exemplifies a tokenized presence is offering elective classes or permitting scholarship in "alternative" forms of inquiry as long as they "conform" to the "standards of rigor" or theoretical models that pertain to the dominant paradigm exemplified in required classes. This curriculum model might also increasingly feature what Kincheloe (2015) noted as the backlash against critical approaches. Discussing the work of Kathleen Berry, Kincheloe points out,

> She has felt as if she were thrust back into the middle of the paradigmatic wars many thought were over. The rise of crypto-positivism in its evidence-based guise placed Berry and her students in situations where colleagues demanded a single methodology—rejecting in the process an effort to employ a more rigorous, more theoretically savvy mode of knowledge production, and the dominant power's ability to covertly infiltrate such process in a way that promotes its own interest. (p. xiv)

Grande (2004), a scholar who writes from an indigenous perspective, illustrates this by noting, "teachers, schools and western frames of intelligibility still desire to 'kill the Indian and save the man'" (p. 5). This is also exemplified when researchers engage with qualitative data in positivist terms, where interview protocols become rigid scripts, action research is rendered inflexible, and autoethnographic studies are designed to minimize the researcher's voice.

The third model included in extant typologies is termed in multicultural curriculum contexts "a transformation approach"[34] or a multicultural approach[35] that calls for the integration of divergent perspectives into the curriculum. Within the context of educational research curriculum and program requirements this would be analogous to exposing students to the range of available research paradigms and theoretical approaches pertinent to educational research and the contexts of their study. This is particularly salient to bricolage, a central construct in critical methodologies (the desired model). As explained by Berry (2015)

> Using bricolage to do research requires a wide and deep knowledge of multiple *theories* and *methodologie*s; multiple ways to collect, describe, construct, analyze and *interpret* the object of the research study; and finally multiple ways to *narrate* (tell the story about) the relationships, struggles, conflicts, and complex world of the study that maintains the reality and integrity of the subjects. (Italics in original; p. 83)

As critical educators try to make in-roads into the established curriculum, such paradigmatic co-existence that sparks intellectual debate and dialogue, is a worthy curricular goal. At times, mutually exclusive spaces are carved out for such existence (e.g. feminist studies) whereas

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34. Banks (2004).
35. Sleeter and Grant (2003).

in other contexts they reside within the same program (even if in pockets). Programs and curriculum that embrace knowledge of multiple traditions support the development of epistemological double consciousness (and for not only critical researchers) and enhance the opportunities for successful and effective bricolage in designing research.

Typologies of curriculum, such as this, are meant to stimulate analysis and critical reflection about the underlying purposes and biases of programs of study that prepare future researchers for meaningful and rigorous scholarship in diverse contexts. It is intended that readers consider how their programs reflect or deviate from the ideas presented and their own roles in the perpetuation or interruption of the approaches discussed. It is this process of personal phronesis that will provide insights for the ongoing epistemological dialectic that could serve to dislodge hegemonic research practices within the programs in which future researchers are prepared.

An (Individual and Collective) Agenda for Personal Phronesis and Parrhesia

A crucial facet in my own conscientization as a critical researcher has been the recognition of my own biography as central to my role as a researcher. Far from a "researcher-as-neutral" stance, awareness of one's own subjectivity and agency as a researcher moves towards addressing the claim that "to know is not enough" and that research should be used "to improve education and serve the public good."[36] What this means for us, then, is that our own lives become both "data" and "curriculum" to be examined in the pursuit of emancipatory frameworks in research. How do our own struggles reveal tensions and opportunities that yield an individual and/or collective agenda for critical research? What follows are insights that emerge from my own phronesis and ongoing conscientization, offered as a starting point for individual and collective agenda setting among colleagues and students engaged in critical scholarship in conservative contexts.

Our Lives as Curriculum: A Case for Research as Praxis

Multicultural scholars emphasize the importance of professors' lives serving as authentic exemplars of critical multicultural research praxis[37], highlighting the importance of our own lives as curriculum, as—together with our students and colleagues—we "read" our "world"[38] in a dialogic process of conscientization.[39] The purpose of doing so is not to place anyone on pedestals or to tear down practitioners struggling in difficult circumstances. Instead, in order to understand alternate ways of and contexts for doing critical work, we turn our lens on our own work. In so doing, we also provide voice to the struggles we encounter, while taking up Stovall's (2013) challenge to analyze our own practice to identify successes and failures in interrupting or perpetuating social injustice, thus making ourselves the object of study rather than constantly "doing" research on "others" within hegemonic and hierarchical research arrangements.

Analyzing our own practices facilitates the reflection entailed in the Freirean (2000) notion of praxis—the ongoing cycle of reflection and action in the pursuit of emancipatory and generative processes of education that affirm everyone's humanity. Praxis also underscores the need for consistent critical consciousness of our positions and actions in the multiple contexts of our work,

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36. Ball (2012, p. 198).
37. Kumashiro (2014); Prashad (2011); Stovall (2004; 2007; 2013).
38. Freire and Macedo (1987).
39. Freire (1970).

especially as teachers, researchers and community members. For me, this consciousness emerges over time. I will explore this process of conscientization through reference to three critical incidents that served as catalysts in my own phronesis. In this exploration I highlight two insights that have been particularly salient in my own work: the recognition a) that our lives and work are texts read by our communities of practice, and b) the institutional fragmentation of our lives and work.

"Reading" our Lives in Communities of Practice

Early in my career, at the end of an undergraduate class in multicultural education, a pre-service teacher who had experienced difficulty with the reading and writing assignments in English told me, "I may not be able to give you the perfect definition of critical pedagogy, but I know that if I just model what you have done in class, I will be OK." My instant reaction was to ask myself, "What *did* I model?" This question came up again when I volunteered in a family literacy program that served Guatemalan Maya immigrant families. The director welcomed me into the program with the words, "Welcome to the University of the Poor" and reassured me that "the Maya read people well." Contemplating the "gaze" of the Maya parents significantly re-framed my role as a critical ethnographer working with these families, especially in the context of the historic role of university-based research/ researchers in indigenous contexts. It allowed me a "bottom up" view of the school system, perceiving school policies and practices from the perspective of the families who were frequently recipients of, rather than participants in the decisions about their children.[40] These two incidents, in turn, allowed me to frame my own position as a faculty member who publicly opposed the university's acceptance of corporate sponsorship from a private prison company. I justified my opposition as recognition that, for the students "reading" us as faculty members, what we do, speaks louder than anything that we can say in class.

The acknowledgement that our lives are curriculum that can and will be read within our communities of practice have strengthened my roles as a teacher and as a scholar and have built crucial bridges among those roles. It has brought the community into my classrooms and allowed the community to be my own classroom. Conscious of the power of the hidden curriculum in potential readings of my own modeling as a teacher, I have become more intentional in connecting the experienced curriculum with the formal curriculum. Through explicit course objectives pertaining to emancipatory pedagogy (something that must be *experienced* by students not just taught to them), I view the facilitation of such experiences through modeling in teacher and researcher preparation as central to interrupting the academic genocide (the systematic eradication of a meaningful education for entire groups of people) hitherto experienced by many communities in our public school systems currently "under siege" (Katz and Rose, 2014).[41]

My work with the Maya has allowed me to re-read my own life, highlighting my own illiteracies and those of educators in general, as well as the multiple contexts of literacy/illiteracy that emerge within our life stories. For instance, how do we account for the trilingual communicative abilities of the Maya who have not had the privilege of formal schooling as compared with our own? Could I have escaped genocide and found my way from a rural village in Guatemala through Mexico and all the way to Florida on foot without the ability to read print? What does it mean that it is the supposedly "illiterate" immigrant Maya women who taught me crucial lessons needed to be able to lead a doctoral course on critical research? The opposition to the corporate sponsorship of the prison company yielded praxis at the grassroots level that worked its way

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40. Schoorman (2016).
41. Katz and Rose (2014).

through faculty governance systems. It taught us that individual and collective agency can reverse institutional decision making that had been framed as a "done deal."[42] The recognition that our lives (not just our words) are text to be "read" by those around us is a catalyst for authentic multicultural praxis. This praxis facilitates the integration of the often-fragmented aspects of teaching, research and service in our lives, and links micro level engagement with macro level concerns. Reflecting critically on our own actions as teachers, professors, researchers, community members and their necessary interconnectedness in our lives, offers us knowledge and insights that extend and deepen the "book" learning and/or methodological skills we acquired as we prepared to become teachers and researchers.

Moving Towards Ontological Authenticity

The notion of our lives as curriculum that many will "read" and from which they will learn (for better or worse) makes us constantly aware and committed to the importance of moving beyond methodology (in our teaching, research or service) to examining the axiology, ontology, and epistemological positions that give rise to our methods/actions. The pursuit of research as a public good acts against the fragmentation of our lives as professionals, prompting us to connect the tripartite facets of teaching, research and service in our professional commitment to social justice. When the public good becomes central to our lives as researchers, teachers and community members, such a pursuit becomes more integrated into our professional *raison e'tre*, and no longer is it 'just' something about which we teach or write. Kincheloe (2015) draws attention to this idea as ontological authenticity and Torres and Reyes (2011) refer to it as *vivencia*, "a philosophy of life and work" (p. 53). This parallels the definition of multicultural education as a personal ideology, an ongoing, multifaceted counter-hegemonic process, integrated into all aspects of professional practice.[43] However, as Torres and Reyes (2011) caution, this approach "clearly clashes with the academic establishment itself that calls for a separation of research, teaching and service activities, and most importantly with separation of reason from moral commitment and social responsibility as part of research activity" (pp. 53-54).

The pursuit of ontological authenticity thus described should not be undertaken in isolation. A significant insight about the fragmentation of our professional lives that has emerged in my own conscientization has been the need for professional integration to occur on a more systemic level within programs, departments and higher educational institutions in general. This became particularly evident in the discussions around the role of faculty, and academia in general, in the context of the corporate sponsorship decision at our university and the initial administrative resistance to faculty and student opposition. A senior level administrator central to this decision (from the natural sciences) noted that it was "only faculty in the social sciences who worried about these kinds of moral issues"; a perspective lent credence by subsequent faculty senate debate on the moral role of the academy. While it did surprise me that many faculty members appeared unperturbed by the moral implications of the prison sponsorship decision, it was not surprising (if disappointing) that others felt powerless and/or apathetic about reversing a course of action regardless of whether or not they agreed with the outcome. Furthermore, many were concerned with the sheer economic realities facing the university, while others (including the senior decision makers) were unaware of the deep concerns about the social injustices surrounding the actions of the sponsor.

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42. Schoorman (2013).
43. Banks(2011); Schoorman and Bogotch (2010).

The fragmentation of our knowledge bases and isolation of divergent perspectives, in this case, supported university decision making against the public interest. The opportunity to debate these issues and thereby integrate perspectives served to uphold the academy's commitment to the public good. These opportunities will not only raise the critical consciousness of individual faculty members/researchers at the micro levels but will also facilitate a collective consciousness at the meso level that will, ultimately be necessary to address social injustices at more macro levels. An important insight that has emerged for me has been my relative failure in the past to recognize my colleagues and administrators (not just my students) as vital constituents in critical consciousness raising. Moving beyond the isolated silos in which we engage in critical research towards coalition building among colleagues represents an important next step in the work of critical scholars.

Our Role as Researchers: Advocates and Leaders in Difficult Times

For too long, educational researchers have been socialized as dutiful followers of methodological prescriptions. However, the many concerns, both historical and contemporary, related to equity and social justice in education warrant that educational researchers review, renew and/or rethink their role as professionals vis-à-vis these troubling realities. As Kincheloe and Tobin (2015) observe:

> The last half of the first decade of the twenty-first century [was] a strange time for educators. Many of the gains many of us thought we had made twenty years ago are under assault and many of the epistemological fights for the benefits of multiple ways of doing research in which we were forced to engage in the 1980s are breaking out again…A re-education of the public to accept Eurocentric and often male ways of both being and seeing has shaped everything from the corporatization of the public space, the social positioning of poor people and people of color, the politics of public knowledge to the ways we reconceptualize and validate research about education. (p. 3)

Whether this reality is fueled among educational researchers by a lack of awareness and conscientization, apathy, fear, comfort in the habituation of professional "ivory tower" privilege, and/or discomfort in the conflation of morality and "science," we must question the social responsibility of such positioning and the raise the possibility that faculty members' insulation from broader community concerns may well undermine the very privilege of their current disengagement. In addition to the troubling legacies of race and gender-based exclusions in research, contemporary critical scholars face an added challenge in the guise of neoliberalism that has engulfed policy making at the national level and virulently attacked the public education system, including institutions of higher education.[44] This represents a new front on which all faculty members are called upon to act. How we, as professors/scholars, respond at multiple levels of the educational system has crucial consequences for the public good. As neoliberal market values, intellectually indefensible funding policies, de-professionalization of educators, standardization and assessment regimes subvert democratic education, it is imperative that educational researchers use their scholarship to safeguard democratic values and practices in education.

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44. See Giroux (2010; 2002).

Engaged Public Intellectuals or Academic Bystanders?

The analysis of my own experiences has helped me to recognize how my advocacy for the community was understood by colleagues. In addition to being questioned as appropriate research, such advocacy was often framed as "courageous" rather than merely being "normal"—i.e. part and parcel of how we are expected to engage in research. The "courageous" label is deceptively marginalizing, highlighting the fact that what one does is "unusual" and not to be expected. Such a label emerges when educational researchers, as a collective, fail to place the welfare of the public ahead of their individual research agendas and when doing so becomes the exception rather than the rule.

Redefining what is "normal" or the "expected" role of educational researchers will require that we acknowledge, at one level, our collective failure or inability to lead. Our work as scholars has had limited impact on the attack on K-12 public education in the guise of higher standards through high stakes testing and accountability. These practices have further exacerbated existing disparities, serving to profit mostly the private testing companies that undertake the assessments while deriding teachers for "failures" that were inevitable in the flawed system.[45] While many educators have raised the alarm and compiled the data to demonstrate their concerns, their warnings remain largely unheeded by educational decision makers. [46]

More recently however, we have seen evidence of school boards, superintendents and other school leaders advocate based on research. For instance, in 2014, a school board in one of our service districts whose student population is predominantly non-White, passed a resolution on accountability that acknowledged that "the over-reliance and lack of consistent data on high-stakes standardized testing in state and federal accountability systems is undermining educational quality and equity in U.S. public schools."[47] A year later, the Obama administration acknowledged that our children were being over-tested.[48] While some might applaud these leadership efforts as appropriate, we must also ask: What took the school board and the Obama administration this long? How do we justify the fact that so many were bystanders as the education of so many was eroded? And, as many schools and teacher preparation programs gear up to be evaluated (and paid) on Value Added Model (VAM) scores, to what extent have key decision makers paid attention to AERA's (2015) statement on concerns about VAM's scientific and technical limitations?

Multiculturalists aspire to an ongoing role as engaged public intellectuals, truth tellers, bridge leaders and scholar practitioners. Thus it is prudent that I raise questions about why educators like myself, in colleges of education around our nation, did not have more of an impact within our own institutions and communities with regard to the deleterious impact of standardized tests on children in our public schools? Where have we—and our institutions—been and how do we make up for the lost time, education and love of learning for the generations of students who went through this system and were scathed?

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45. Katz and Rose (2014); Watkins (2012).
46. American Educational Research Association (2000); Kohn (2000); Nichols and Berliner (2007); Ravitch (2010).
47. School Board of Palm Beach County (2014).
48. Zernike (2015).

Needed: A Collective Awakening and Accountability

Torres and Reyes (2011) begin their discussion of research as praxis for democratizing education epistemologies with a quotation from Marx and Engels that reads: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it" (p. 1). For Greene (1978), change requires being intellectually wide awake as a moral responsibility.

> The opposite of morality, it has often been said, is indifference a lack of care, an absence of concern. Lacking wide-awakeness, I want to argue, individuals are likely to drift, to act on impulses of expediency. They are unlikely to identify situations as moral ones or to set themselves to assessing their demands. (p. 43)

However, it is apparent that the change we desire - teaching and research for the public good as a matter of institutional policy and practice—remains seemingly light years away. Commitments to social justice, seem relegated to particular professors, programs or courses while the dominant trend favors the compliant support of the status quo, regardless of the ethical implications for doing so. How might change occur?

The call for educators to be engaged public intellectuals outside of the ivory tower, requires us to fulfill a similar role *within* our institutions where dialogue and bridge building must occur.[49] Our ability to effectively interrupt practices that subvert the public good, engaging in what Gay (2011) termed a pedagogy of resistance, will require moving out of our own disciplinary and professional silos. Separation undermines the development of collective agency that will be central to effectively challenging practices that are detrimental to students and teachers, particularly in historically underserved communities. What good is it that we might be well published if the focus of our scholarship is something about which our colleagues are largely oblivious, and by which our institutions are unaffected?

Having "awakened" our colleagues to the value of critical research, a vital step in transforming the epistemological biases of academic institutions and concomitant programs of study for educational researchers will require that critical approaches to research outgrow their current marginalized positions within the curriculum. Per the principles of critical multicultural education that frames our scholarship as a moral undertaking, the preparation of future researchers for critical scholarship will be as much about mindset as it is about methodological procedures.[50] Thus the role of research in addressing social injustices or the public good becomes foundational, rather than optional, to the research undertaking. Concomitantly, the curricular arrangements for achieving such a goal will need to be critically reviewed. While expanding curricular spaces through a review of "required" and "elective" courses in our graduate programs, it is also helpful to examine the "null" curriculum: what is not taught and why? How do our programs facilitate the critical and moral awakening of future researchers?

For those charged with the development of courses or programs of study it is important that we use the limited curricular opportunities we have to effectively engage students' critical consciousness, facilitate emancipatory epistemologies and develop well-conceived critical methodologies. My work in the community (real world experiences), combined with extant scholarship (book learning) has been invaluable in my own conceptualization of critical research summarized

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49. Giroux (2010); Tierney (2013).
50. See also Ladson Billings and Donner (2005).

as follows for students in the first doctoral class in critical research to be offered in our program, first as an elective, then as a requirement.

- A rationale for the study grounded in extant social injustices with the purpose of minimizing/ eliminating the injustices or the conditions that give rise to them;
- Research questions that emerge from the interests of the researched who are marginalized by injustices;
- An epistemological stance that reflects research *with* the researched not simply research *on* them;
- Research design and methodologies that reflect multiple loci of expertise (where the researchers are not perceived as the sole "experts", and where community members' value as co-researchers is recognized);
- Participation in the research process is viewed as beneficial or emancipatory by both the researcher and the researched.[51]

Our own accountability as individuals in this collective journey is pertinent. For instance, although I was fortunate to be introduced to critical perspectives as a graduate student, narrative research, autoethnography and the methodological implications of theory grounded in critical pedagogy were research experiences that I undertook more recently as a faculty member. In so doing I grew as a scholar, learning from others, as we collectively opened up spaces for more to pursue this work. This has facilitated of a wider range of scholarship among students, including dissertations considered for departmental and college-wide awards, as well as (if more gradually) in the criteria for promotion and tenure. Nevertheless, these epistemologies are still "othered" within the institution, with students and faculty still reluctant to engage with certain designs and methodologies, so there is considerable work yet to be done.

Critical consciousness and wide-awakeness about our collective role in the perpetuation of an inequitable status quo must be facilitated within the mainstream of our institutional culture. Critical multiculturalists have pursued this through ongoing critical questions about whose knowledge is central to our curriculum, who benefits, and what values underlie our curricular decisions. These questions are pertinent to our education of future researchers as well.

Conclusion

Drawing on the extensive curriculum development and analytical work in the field of multicultural education and on the critical perspectives of a range of race-based and gender-based researchers, this paper argued for the inclusion of critical approaches to research and scholarship in the education of future educational researchers. The justification and methodology of such an inclusion emerged from a critical reflective analysis of my own struggles as a scholar, educator and community member committed to the principles of social justice and the central role of education in achieving (or denying) such outcomes. At a time when racism is on the rise in national rhetoric, when the increasing diversity among our communities is accompanied by growing disparities in educational achievement and opportunity, and when rampant neoliberal policies con-

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51. Schoorman (2014).

strain democratic public education, multicultural researchers face both a challenge and an opportunity. Might educational researchers make a difference? Critical scholars argue that such is possible only through radical democratic praxis that significantly alters the current trajectory of research approaches and epistemologies. This could be achieved if a wide range of faculty, both current and future scholars, became critically conscious about the socio-political dynamics we face, their broad-based consequences and our role in perpetuating/ interrupting them. Although the status quo is currently challenged by a diverse range of committed individuals, professional and interpersonal bridges that will facilitate collaborative and collective response must be built. Ultimately, educational institutions, including colleges of education themselves, will need to address our own institutional responses to the challenges to equity, social justice and the public good. Will history attest to our role as by-standers or as active agents of social stratification and educational necrophily, as wide-awake or half asleep to our social responsibility to the challenges around us, or as a collective of professionals who used our profound knowledge in a concerted effort to address deep concerns about the public good?

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Performing Critical Work: The Challenges of Emancipatory Scholarship in the Academic Marketplace

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Abstract:

Critical scholarship in the social sciences usually focuses on the social sphere outside of the academy. However, for higher education researchers, critical research is often undertaken within and for the academy, which in turn may endanger one's career if the dominant power structures are threatened. How might we enact and perform critical research within the academy when the academy itself is our focus? In this piece, we script our dramaturgical relationship with critical theories, to question the meaning of these paradigms in our own work and in our field (of education) as well as to explore the potentials of and limits to the use of critical theories and paradigms that may move beyond critical.

Keywords: *critical theory, praxis, performance ethnography*

Characters:

We are eight scholars ranging from doctoral students to assistant, associate, and full professors of higher education. We come from a variety of epistemological and methodological worldviews, but the common threads that undergird our current work are the desires to advance theory, disrupt existing power dynamics, and find ways to free ourselves from the often oppressive and constraining spaces we occupy as academics.

Act I

Setting: Actors are on their respective campuses waiting to join a conference call.

(A dial tone crescendos as the lights come up. A chorus of key

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1. This manuscript represents a truly collaborative effort—as such, authors are listed in alphabetical order by last name rather than by level of contribution.

> tones is heard as the actors dial the conference line. The phone
> beeps and the call begins.)

<div align="center">JONATHAN</div>

Is everybody with us?

> (The phone beeps again.)

<div align="center">CHRISTIN</div>

Hi, all. This is Christin. Sorry for the delay, technology was acting up.

<div align="center">JONATHAN</div>

Can everybody hear ok?

> (A series of yeses floods the line. There's a brief pause.)

<div align="center">GARRETT</div>

Great! Let's begin. So, how will we approach our conference session? In our proposal we stated that our aim in this symposium is to have a dialogue about how critical scholars *do* critical work. Critical theory necessarily includes an element of liberatory practice, however should not be thought of as a monolithic canon under which all revolutionary or change-based research is situated.[2] We all agree that we are consumed in a world that seeks prescriptions for *how to* create justice and our goal is to more fully understand journeys and processes of critical knowing. Could we start with a question about how we engage in searches for liberatory cracks in the oppressive academy?

<div align="center">SUSAN</div>

Maybe instead of just telling attendees what I do for research, I could offer a metaphor that I use in my teaching that helps to differentiate what I do from alternative (paradigmatic) approaches. Stemming from an assignment in my doctoral work, in which I was assigned to identify a metaphor to represent different theoretical or paradigmatic frames, I offer the metaphor of chocolate chip cookies. First, imagine those pre-packaged Toll House cookies as positivism. They come in a log and you just slice them up, put them on a tray, and you have uniform Toll House cookies. Or better yet, you can now buy them pre-cut for you on a cardboard tray; the pre-scored dough is ready to break apart and bake. The cookie is standardized, objective, uniform. This does not reflect my approach to research (or to baking, for that matter). Capital "T" truth was not how I viewed the world. However, critical theory and particularly feminism resonated. I can find myself (extending the chocolate chip cookie metaphor), asking, Who privileged the chocolate chip (over, by example, the raisin)? Why is brown sugar called *brown* sugar and white sugar is not labeled as white? Why is white sugar privileged as the standard sugar? Such questions make visible what is taken-for-granted. We might also look for what's missing. Consider the story of Nestle capitalizing on the Toll House cookie recipe and the total erasure of Ruth Graves Wakefield from the history of the chocolate chip cookie.

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2. Joe Kincheloe and Peter McLaren, "Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research," in *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues,* ed. Norman K Denzin et al. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998).

A critical and feminist lens enables me to ask questions about power, and what constructs and sustains the status quo. Additionally, I draw upon poststructuralism, postmodernism, deconstruction, and particularly through Elizabeth Allan's policy discourse analysis, enabling a deeper interrogation; I am able to ask questions about what is embedded within and perhaps taken-for-granted.[3] Here, to further extend the metaphor, we may deconstruct the chocolate chip cookie to its dough; we ask questions about what's within and we then have the potential to then make something anew—such as (to keep with the metaphor) chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream. We illuminate the givenness of existing structures that have become taken-for-granted; recognizing that it hasn't "always been this way" affords me some possibilities for unthinking and rethinking.

<div align="center">JENI</div>

Critical spaces are opportunities and it's true, there are some possibilities, but we also exist in a constrained environment as academics, as scholars, however we want to identify. As a researcher, I have power.

<div align="center">SUSAN</div>

What kind of power?

<div align="center">JENI</div>

I choose the questions I am going to ask. I choose when the interview begins and when the interview ends and, while I'm hoping that there's an open conversation, that people feel that they have agency in the interview process, I still hold the power. I hold the power in terms of how those data are analyzed and while there are mechanisms I can use to mitigate the severity of the power differential, the differential is still there and I'm not sure what to do with that. I want to know how I can continue to be part of the academic structure as a feminist when I know the structure best serves those who already have the power and continues to disenfranchise those who don't.

> (Tania nods aggressively but silently from behind the phone
> wanting to signal agreement but not interrupt, hindered by the
> technology of the conference call.)

<div align="center">SUSAN</div>

I hear you struggling with different kinds of power. Power that is held, producing what Amy Allen refers to as "power over," is a dominant conceptualization of power. However, I also hear that your aim is to give and share that power, thus empowering your participants' voices in the research process—what Allen refers to as "power to." Yet, can we ever really achieve shared power (or power with)? We are "always already" bound "into structures of coercion or domination."[4] Thus, as we draw upon critical theory to empower and liberate, might agency and autonomy "be nothing more than illusions"?[5]

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3. Elizabeth J. Allan, "Constructing Women's Status: Policy Discourses of University women's Commission Reports," *Harvard Education Review* 73 (2003): 44-72.

4. Amy Allen, *The Power of Feminist Theory: Domination, Resistance, Solidarity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 1.

5. Allen, *Power,* 2.

<div align="center">JENI</div>

Indeed, I am reminded of Crotty who explains that "critical inquiry keeps the spotlight on power relationships within society so as to expose the forces of hegemony and injustice."[6] Thus, my search right now is for new frameworks in my scholarship. While I will always be a feminist and consider feminisms in my approach, I also need to consider complementary theories that push me to think differently and challenge existing power structures. I'm struggling with where to find those and how to adapt them into the work that I do. Theory should evolve. It's not static and should not go without challenge. I think I have been prone in my work to just accept the theory as it is and while I want to advance theory, I don't think I'm pushing as hard as I could. As a result, I find myself identifying similar outcomes and recommendations for policy and practice. I reinforce one truth rather than finding new truths to advance what is known and what could be known.

> (Christin leans back in her chair in relief, realizing that her mentors struggle with these questions, too. She starts to reflect upon the many times since becoming a faculty member when she's felt less than effective at pushing for change, especially through her teaching, constrained by her role as a non-tenured faculty member.)

<div align="center">TANIA</div>

I agree that advancing theory is necessary, and, for me, advancing critical theory is about moving towards critical practice. My use of critical theory is guided by an assumed responsibility for the public good and for truth-telling that disrupts the status quo. I want to move beyond the conversations theory generates and towards a praxis of engagement.

My research largely focuses on community engagement and service learning, and in the higher education context, service learning is the pedagogical practice of linking community service with classroom content. But the broader definition of community engagement extends to practices like internships and field experiences, co-curricular community based experiences as well as community based research. I came to the scholarship of engagement primarily because of a transformative experience in my own undergraduate education. This led me to believe that linking meaningful community work to the text and conversations of the classroom is a win-win. Meaning that good work happens in the community and that students learn more and better through the experience. While critical theory has given us the knowledge…

<div align="center">SUSAN (Interrupting)</div>

Wait a minute, theory doesn't "give" us knowledge. Instead, as Foucault suggests, I think we are "opening up the space for a possible transgression."[7]

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6. Michael Crotty, *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process* (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 1998), 157.

7. Amy Allen, *The Politics of Our Selves: Power, Autonomy, and Gender in Contemporary Critical Theory* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2008), 65.

TANIA (Continuing)

Yes, critical theory invites us to be bothered and affords language to critique; however, I do not feel it has generally offered the strategies to change practice fully. So I do believe in the philosophies regarding community practice, that higher education institutions have an obligation to do work that matters, and I also believe that we can do work from a place of authentic engagement that recognizes and honors the lived experience and the expertise of the local community, and allows them to dictate the terms of engagement. Charles Phillips talks about the opportunity of queer theory to positively, dynamically, and creatively destabilize norms, to flip the script.[8] And my hope for this project is that we'll lay bare the norms of service learning pedagogy and practice and destabilize the field. I hope that we'll create space to reimagine and revision a community engagement practice that seeks to, in the words of Cathy Cohen, "build a field of analysis and praxis that can help to transform the academy and perhaps the country."[9]

JONATHAN

This community engagement piece is particularly important for me as I work alongside undergraduate students to create queer inclusive spaces and serve as an educator on my campus. As a scholar practitioner, I often struggle with the integration of critical work within a system that historically excludes the LGBTQ community. My research has largely focused on campus climate in which I attempt to illuminate where and how institutions are continually marginalizing LGBTQ communities. Yet, my pursuit of implementing change in institutional policy and practice, while somewhat successful, still has me actively participating in and navigating the system that continues to marginalize these communities...

TANIA (Interrupting)

I really want you to unpack that.

JONATHAN (Continues)

I attempt to connect critical theory to practice through my role as a campus facilitator for queer oriented trainings and workshops. Joe Kincheloe suggests educators can subvert power through the advancement of marginalized voices in education.[10] In these spaces I can advocate for LGBTQ equity, centering issues of social justice, but I wonder if I am truly doing critical work, serving a greater public good, if I am continuing to participate in the power structures of higher education and therefore support the status quo. In my position, I feel the expectation to diplomatically represent our programs to campus and community constituents that may lead to potential financial support. I experience this tension of disrupting normative expectations of queer programs, but maintaining certain expectations.

CHRISTIN

This deeply resonates with me as a scholar practitioner as well. I use service-learning and community engagement as ways to introduce critical theory and reflexive practice into the classroom to disrupt the ways my profession (dietetics) historically marginalizes and "others" through our

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8. Charles Phillips, "Difference, Disagreement and the Thinking of Queerness," *Borderlands* 8 (2009): 2.
9. Cathy Cohen, "Death and Rebirth of a Movement: Queering Critical Ethnic Studies," *Social Justice 37* (2010): 132.
10. Joe L. Kincheloe, *Critical Pedagogy Primer* (New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, 2004).

work. Yet, the realities of working within academia, and within professional boundaries, often leaves me questioning how legitimate my efforts are as a critical scholar, as I bend to conform to the constraints these institutions place upon me. I came to sit within a critical/feminist space, as sociologist Dorothy Smith did, by noticing that "when I looked for where I was in my discipline I discovered that I was not there."[11] Thus, I take up critical work—both as a researcher and an educator—as an intentional act of resistance.

(Other actors express verbal agreement.)

JENI

Christin, what are you resisting? Professional boundaries?

CHRISTIN

In a way, I suppose, I'm resisting—and hopefully teaching my students to question—the highly medicalized notion that health care and public health practitioners have expertise that gives them "power over" those with whom we work. This does speak to professional boundaries, as it directly relates to who holds sanctioned knowledge, which helps to script what is considered possible in the work that we do.

SUSAN

The challenge that you infer and to which I relate is how to work both within and against. I am currently a faculty member; however, I was a student affairs administrator for more than a decade, and during that time authored many policies and protocols seeking to address the problem of interpersonal violence on university campuses. I often facilitated meetings with individuals representing various campus departments and community agencies. People were quick to identify as allies in the effort to combat interpersonal violence; they were open to partnerships—in concept—but cautious about making changes in their daily practice; old habits die hard. For instance, a surge of energy to facilitate cross-departmental collaborations would stagnate as assumptions about programs, services, and who is being (or will be) served are left unstated and/or uninterrogated. Similarly, the introduction of new protocols for responding to incidents of interpersonal violence were embraced in concept, but would encounter numerous challenges as departments continue to execute old protocols. Administrators may replace existing procedures with a new document in a training manual; however, this did not ensure that practitioners' habits and routines would be interrupted.

Still, in my daily practice, I strove to suspend a rush to judgment and instead remained at the threshold of certainty; in that buoyant moment we may reconsider how we operate, what we take-for-granted, examine embedded assumptions about our work and ourselves. It was in this space that I was working from within (the system) but also striving to push against and be critical of the status quo. Such "troubling" of (disciplinary) practices may generate a lot of anxiety, conflict, and even fear, and change may be more likely to emerge unexpectedly rather than be intentionally orchestrated. Further, to sustain these difficult dialogues demands time, emotional energy, and possibly money. It is then, instead, much easier to maintain reserve, terminate a difficult exchange,

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11. Dorothy E. Smith, "Institutional Ethnography: From a Sociology for Women to a Sociology for People," in *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Practice,* ed. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007), 410.

or facilitate consensus; the alternative—a liminality—involves risks that practitioners are typically unwilling to take. With these reflections, I acknowledge the dissonance between these theoretical ideas and the practice of, in this case, policy-making (and social change).

JENI

Like Susan, I worked in student affairs for about 10 years before I became a faculty member. As part of my last position, I was the chief judicial officer. While there were opportunities to push against and shape policy, I don't think I ever felt more constrained than in that role. I wanted to see myself as a socially just educator, and I tried to make every discussion about whether a student was responsible for a policy violation a learning opportunity. But I found it extremely difficult to move beyond binary thinking—it was a violation, or it wasn't. I played a positivist by day, finding it hard to perform as my feminist self.

Perhaps the most creative and subversive sanction I gave was to a student who made derogatory statements about women. I asked him to read *Only Words* by Catherine MacKinnon[12] and meet with me again to discuss it. However, in the end, I really was just a cog in the judicial machine and I have no idea whether MacKinnon and I made a difference for those marginalized by the student's behavior in the first place.

TANIA

I think about this a lot. So much of our work is purposely aimed towards communities that are marginalized or in need, and we partner to illuminate the conditions that create need and hopefully—and I need to stress hopefully—do some work that contributes to change. But, so often service learning and community engagement involves students (and other stakeholders) in work that doesn't truly address root causes of social problems.[13] Rather than advocate for or build accessible housing, we serve meals in soup kitchens. And we do that work in compressed timelines responsive to the academic calendar that limit opportunities to invest deeply. How do I critique a practice when I know my own practice falls short of the change I want to see happen?

(A chorus of knowing "um-hmms" are heard.)

GARRETT

(Scratches head.)

These comments make me wonder what we are asking critical theory to do for us. It seems to me that here, acting critically within the academy means finding a liminal place in which to exist—remembering what it can be while working with what is. Are we engaged in a process of transformation, then? And what does it mean that there might be an endpoint we can theoretically conceptualize?

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12. Catherine MacKinnon, *Only Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).
13. Susan Iverson and Jennifer H. James, *Feminist Community Engagement: Achieving Praxis* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014).

AMY

I do want to push a little bit on what critical and poststructural theories have given us. Increasingly, I feel that critical research is insufficient. By that, I mean that there seems to be an edge that we can never reach. It's not doing the things we thought it would do for us, and it's basically asking us to assert an interest and a claim towards the same thing that dominant groups already have. For example, first and second wave feminisms largely fought for parity, and yet we should ask ourselves, parity with what? We need to question the thresholds we aim to reach.

> (Tania from behind her computer opens a new document on her screen typing "We need to question the thresholds we aim to reach!!!")

AMY (Continues)

Our point of reference is often the capitalist, white settler, heteronormative, patriarchal baseline. How do we move beyond that? How do we express that we want more than that? We need to unmap the territories of oppression, as Sherene Razack discusses.[14] We need to unlearn the lies that have been told to us.

One way that I have been trying to unlearn and unmap in my research on higher education is to use visual methods as a new way of seeing. While it is popular among those using visual research methods, I am not very interested in replicating qualitative paradigms through visual means, such as the use of photo elicitation. Good work can be done that way, but I am more interested in an iconoclastic approach that breaks through our expectations of educational research and moves us toward new vision. The methods I have been working with, juxtaposition and repeat photography, create meaning in the spaces between images and ideas, to create something that hasn't existed before. I use the techniques of observation that are common to the research process, but I utilize them for generative purposes. In a way it is an artistic vision, using the seen world as a platform for its critique but envisioning something new in the process.

GARRETT

Yes!

> (Pumps fist in the air.)

I think we have to really interrogate what we mean by "education" or perhaps rather, the purposes of higher education. I do work surrounding the "achievement gap" and I believe that there is no way we are going to end educational disparities and gaps in access until academics allow ourselves as a field to be critical of the framework of higher education. When we say we are advocating for student "success" and "achievement," what do we mean? Who defines those terms? What possibilities are even available for students? How does our white supremacist, heterogendered, capitalist education system constrain what students can become, who students can become, and what they can achieve? Does acting critically mean, in part, engaging in the process of interrogating what could be?

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14. Sherene Razack, ed., *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2002).

SUSAN

Further, how do the physical and organizational structures limit how we are able to conceptualize critical work in our field? How are we regulated by each other even (or perhaps especially) at a place like this conference? I am reminded, Garrett, of Bensimon's article on the achievement gap, in which she delineates three cognitive frames: deficit, diversity, and equity.[15] Our challenge is to do equity-minded work.

GARRETT

Do we have more power to subvert because we will be at a conference with generally strict guidelines on what is and is not appropriate? Are we developing an active subjectivity, as Maria Lugones discusses? We are well aware we are—and will be—under the "gaze" and are intentionally pushing against what it expects of us.[16] To be sure, we're pushing enough to get noticed, but not enough to get thrown out of the conference, for example. Maybe we should disrupt the traditional seating and format of the conference session, but will people—conference attendees—be uncomfortable sitting among us?

JENI

I like that idea—literally sitting with discomfort. It is a metaphor for much of what we have discussed, I think.

CHRISTIN

Yes, I think this tension is important to highlight. However, I'm not sure my work isn't better described as trying to fly under the radar, rather than getting noticed. But the notion that we, as scholars, can trouble "a little bit" yet still feel that sense of caution that results in our "holding back" due to disciplinary/professional boundaries, that is the tenuousness of being a critical scholar.

GARRETT

Right, so here we are intending to create a liminal conference space, if we define liminal as something that can exist *within* individual people. We are able to occupy a liminal space in that we are straddling the world of the conference/academia as well as spaces outside of academia, outside of the "gaze" inside of ourselves. We *remember* what it's like outside and that remembering of being outside consciously informs our decisions within. To bring it back to Amy's discussion of unmapping, I think we are currently spatially mapping where we can and cannot go, attempting to chart new territory. This is careful subversion.

SUSAN

But, Garrett, are we getting noticed? We're on the conference program (though sometimes relegated to the final session of the conference, tucked down a corridor less traveled by attendees); however, I fear that I am the greater beneficiary of the "notice." I will get a line on my CV so I will get "noticed" by my review committee, to earn my hierarchical assent within the academy. I

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15. Estela M. Bensimon, "Closing the Achievement Gap in Higher Education: An Organizational Learning Perspective," in *Organizational Learning in Higher Education,* ed. Adrianna Kezar (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 2005)

16. Maria Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorizing Coalition Against Multiple Oppressions* (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

feel at times like I push on the walls in the maze, but I am still within the maze; I've simply changed the route.

> (Jay feels his chest tighten, emphatically agreeing with Susan
> while also acutely mindful of the need to obsess over CVs and
> tenure review.)

GARRETT

Perhaps all we can hope for is to make the maze bigger. What happens if we forge new routes? Denzin argues for a "social justice impact criteria" that would "celebrate resistance and engage radical critiques of social institutions."[17]

AMY

We too often forget that our normative spaces, such as peer review, are social constructions—powerful ones no doubt—but they are mutually agreed upon fabrications. We may need to "follow the rules" to achieve tenure and earn status, but then we must break things! Too often I think we try to work within the system without really tearing down the aspects of the system that we used to fight against. It is like we take our anger and pack it away because once we get to the high table, we don't want to lose our seat.

JENI

In this way, then, we are socialized to maintain our "power over"[18] those not at the high table, much like Susan was discussing earlier. We may critique those normative structures in private, but we are not truly being critical because we are not being autonomous and working toward emancipation for ourselves and our colleagues.[19]

CHRISTIN

Being in a non-tenure track (NTT) position, I have *no* protection to be able to save up that anger for later to then unleash it unto the world. Denzin observes that I am one of the "victims" in this system; that I write the "resistance texts that did not get published."[20] Knowing that is an uncomfortable space for me. At least if I had the hope of tenure, I could tell myself that I'll get to it (truly doing critical work) someday. Instead, there's just a defeated feeling—like there will never come a day when I will have that protection to be as feisty as I need (or want) to be to enact change. This makes me wonder how the erosion of tenure track jobs and the influx of NTTs is going to affect the *doing* of critical work!

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17. Norman K. Denzin, *The Qualitative Manifesto: A Call to Arm*s (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2010), 97.
18. Amy Allen, *The Power of Feminist Theory: Domination, Resistance, Solidarity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999).
19. Amy Allen, *The Politics of Our Selves: Power, Autonomy, and Gender in Contemporary Critical Theory* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2008).
20. Norman K. Denzin, *The Qualitative Manifesto: A Call to Arm*s (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2010), 97.

GARRETT

(Furrows brow.)

So does "being truly critical" then mean giving up our seat at the table? I'm trying to conceptualize holding positional power while simultaneously denouncing it. We can acknowledge the social construction of things like peer review but pretending like it is arbitrary when its enactment has consequences for everybody seems unethical. I guess my question is more about if we can be "truly critical" from our positions.

SUSAN

"We" need to not become "them."

TANIA

(Audibly sighs.)

I don't know. This is the place where I get really caught up, you know? My intention is to ask good questions, to encourage better practice, to do transformational work. Some days I recognize my power and privilege and question who is missing from the table that needs to be there. I wonder if and how I can do "truly critical" work in institutions that are so dependent on social stratification. At the same time, I feel like I'm claiming a space at the table that wasn't meant for me and that feels disruptive too! I feel really lucky to be a woman of color who has a voice that is recognized and heard in the community engagement field. Maybe I need—too much—to believe that my positionality also creates opportunity for me to be critical...

CHRISTIN

I don't know that you're saying this, Tania, but does one have to occupy marginalized identity categories in order to do critical work? I grapple with this. My field is comprised of 93% women and 96% white, predominantly middle class students. As a white woman, I do not "appear" to have an "underrepresented" affiliation status. This can diminish my credibility talking with students. Yet, I am aware that I don't get the "you're just angry because you're disenfranchised" comment either. An identity conflict that I do negotiate (since the birth of my son) is that I identify as a "fat dietitian" and I wrestle with the shift from a healthy body weight as a student to an unhealthy one as a practitioner. Does this positionality, as well as my contingency as a non-tenure track faculty member, align me with critical theory?

JONATHAN

Perhaps this mapping of identities, or careful subversion, still allows us to navigate within the historically oppressive system. Challenging and changing policy, reframing practice and engagement, or methodologically reconsidering how and what data we collect. To critically engage, we are not necessarily buying into these expectations, we are demonstrating our resistance. Utilizing our scholarly tools as mechanisms for truth-telling. Most of us are qualitative methodologists but how do we enact careful subversion using quantitative methods where there may be statistical constraints or, dare we say, the proliferation of more rigid ways of thinking?

JAY

As the quantitative methodologist in the group, I can try to tackle this question. What does it mean for me to problematize universal standards in education and question the regression of certain positionalities and subjectivities, while also standardizing truths and designing studies to optimize best-fit in a regression model?[21] I am in a constant in-between, feeling as both an insider and outsider to critical truth telling and the public importance placed on quantitative research. Quantitative scholarship is essential in advancing institutional, state, and national policies and practices in higher education, yet institutional advocacy, policy reform, and resource allocation are all hindered by quantitative designs that essentialize truth and view public goodness through a grand narrative of "best-fit."[22]

From an epistemological lens, quantitative designs are perceived to be grounded in positivism and diametrically opposed to critical techniques.[23] As a quantitative scholar, I am left wondering if critical theory can accommodate the restraints of quantitative methods rather than dismiss them entirely. In other words, are critical intentions and adaptive techniques enough for quantitative scholars to be included in conversations about truth and public good in education research?

JONATHAN

Jay, can you give us some examples of how these ideas manifest in your research?

JAY

Methodologically, certain techniques in quantitative designs challenge positivism and unearth emancipatory scholarship. One way is through continually encouraging scholars to reconceptualize quantitative analyses and the ways in which we collect demographic information so we can collectively advocate for systemic change in quantitative survey design. My work combines statistics and survey design with critical epistemological approaches, largely intersectionality and queer theory. The balance that I try to maintain is understanding the complex, fluid, and intersectional identities while also necessitating quantification of those identities in some way.

I am trying to consider ways in which we can understand identity besides static unidimensional constructs. For example, I strive to consider identity development, self-authorship or disclosure of identity, the saliency of identity and finding ways in which we can have a universal understanding of how to collect this information. Furthermore, I am interested in exploring the ways in which we ask demographic questions in surveys (e.g., "check all that apply;" "not listed, please describe") to understand how question format may influence how we interpret students' identities. Without reforming the ways in which survey methodologists include demographic variables, scholars will continue to perpetuate a culture of exclusion.

There are, however, some difficulties with criticalism in survey design from a methodological standpoint. First of all, there are politics and finances involved with survey design. For example,

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21. William F. Pinar, "Queer Theory in Education," *Journal of Homosexuality* 45 (2003): 57-360.

22. Frances K. Stage, "Answering Critical Questions Using Quantitative Data," *New Directions for Institutional Research* 13 (2007): 5-16.

23. Ryan S. Wells and Frances K. Stage, "Past, Present, and Future of Critical Quantitative Research in Higher Education," *New Directions for Institutional Research* 163 (2015): 103-112.

adding several branched questions to specify students' racial identities and saliences requires the deletion of other questions due to the need for parsimony and short survey completion time. Second, survey designers often adopt demographic questions from government surveys for federal and peer benchmarking, and government surveys do not quantify undocumented students, queer and trans* individuals, or other social identities in an adequate or consistent manner for critical researchers. And third, quantitative analyses utilizing critical paradigms are often difficult to perceive. When possible, I advocate for the categorical approach to intersectional research in survey design whereby researchers use demographic variables with main effects and interactions. If you have a complicated design, it gets quite messy and on the other end, if you have a small survey instrument with fewer than eight or ten thousand students, to be able to take an intersectional approach is decidedly difficult and we end up essentializing people to white and people of color or LGBQ and hetero, for example. And, there are other identity communities in terms of sampling where those analyses are not even possible, mainly for people with disabilities and trans* people.

I entered the field as a scholar because I wanted to enact social change to advocate with and for individuals across all social identities. I became immersed and obsessed with quantitative methods because I saw great potential for change in policy and practice. But questions that are coming up for me are: How does my work enact change? Am I too removed from the lived experiences of students by doing quant research? Might my work be more relevant and impactful in the policy sphere or in student affairs administration or for a nonprofit rather than as an academic? And is being a faculty member in higher education really a place for me to enact social change?

GARRETT
You bring up some difficult questions, Jay. I wonder, too, about the politics of quantification. Miranda Joseph questions the process of quantification and abstraction, arguing that these tactics make social problems impersonal and remove the material and social realities minoritized communities face, something your questions get at.[24] Foucault, in fact, argues that statistics allow governmentality, the production and management of populations.[25] As Joseph asks, how does quantification simultaneously create subjects and be used as a catalyst for transformation?[26]

JAY
Garrett, your inquiries are spot-on with regards to the juxtaposition for quantitative criticalism. In spring 2014, I had the opportunity to speak with Alexander Astin about his widely used Inputs-Environments-Outputs model for examining the impact of college on students.[27] In discussing the limitedness of survey designs, he remarked that if scholars do not include variables, they are essentially saying that these qualities are not important and do not exist. I agree with Astin's asser-

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24. Miranda Joseph, *Debt to Society: Accounting for Life Under Capitalism* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

25. Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College de France 1975-1976* (New York, NY: Picador, 1997).

26. Joseph, *Debt to Society*.

27. See Alexander Astin, "The Methodology of Research on College Impact (I)" *Sociology of Education* 43 (1970a); Alexander Astin, "The Methodology of Research on College Impact (II)" *Sociology of Education* 43 (1970b); Alexander Astin, *Assessment for Excellence: The Philosophy and Practice of Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1991).

tions that survey methodologists must be inclusive and detailed with students' identities and experiences; yet, I recognize the static unidimensionality of essentializing students' selves at one specific point of data collection.

Although this juxtaposition is most illustrative with demographic information collection in survey design, I challenge that quantification occurs across all research methods and subjects. For example, assessing environments via survey design innately assumes that colleges and universities are static experiences that remain constant across time. In essence, survey methodologists remove the temporal material and social realities, reducing students' lived experiences to a brief snapshot in time. However, the complexity of nested models and variable interactions enables quantitative scholars to qualify students' unique positionalities with the goal of advocating for more identity-conscious environments. Taking the issue of temporal quantification further, I purport that other methods exercise the same time-laden restrictions as quantitative designs. In the same way that survey design captures static moments of students in their environmental contexts, other data collection techniques (e.g., focus groups, interviews, document analyses) also capture a static moment in time that, although likely continually altered and shaped, create subjects set in one temporal narrative.

As such, I am again drawn to the epistemological considerations of research beyond the often-discussed (and wrongly conceived, in my opinion) dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative inquiry. As Dubrow discussed, researchers must stop wondering whether quantitative analyses are appropriate for utilizing critical paradigms in research and instead strengthen the bond between critical inquiry and quantitative techniques.[28]

JONATHAN

I think we are all engaging some great questions and it's clear that our field is doing some very important critical and deconstructive work and I think along with this critical work, we are asserting a politic, which sometimes seems scary. I want to, however, bring us back to a question that Jeni asked: How does your work enact change? Maria Lugones states "Politics is a commitment to act differently in the present, to think and act against the grain of oppression."[29] We all come to critical work with, necessarily, an anti-oppression framework. With this in mind, how do you see your own work, research or otherwise, as enacting your politics keeping in mind Visweswaran's call for a "commitment to thinking the political through its multiple guises?"[30]

GARRETT

Jonathan, thanks for bringing this back up. Perhaps this is the question with which we start at the conference.

> (As the lights fade, a series of beeps are heard as the actors hang
> up their phones.)

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28. Joshua Kjerulf Dubrow, "How Can We Account for Intersectionality in Quantitative Analysis of Survey Data? Empirical Illustration of Central and Eastern Europe," *ASK: Society, Research, Methods* 17 (2008): 85-102.

29. Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes,* 5.

30. Kamala Visweswaran, "Conclusion: Fragile Facts on Scholarship and Activism," *Cultural Dynamics* 23 (2011), 77.

INTERMISSION

Act 2

> (Lights are down. The silence is broken by the noise of an airplane flying overhead. The lights come up on the actors sitting at a breakfast table in a fancy hotel restaurant. Each actor's plate is full. The actors are thinking about the ways in which their critical methodologies have a responsibility to move toward assertions and/or questions of truth or contributing to the public good and how critical work shies away from questions/assertions of truth and/or the public good.)

SUSAN

I'm anxious to pick up where our symposium conversation left off, but I am also apprehensive. We had a dynamic conversation at the symposium and I am energized to enact the theoretical possibilities we entertained. Yet, I am also aware that I am sitting in a space (yesterday's session, this morning's breakfast) that is underwritten by my privilege. I am about to eat my Belgian waffle from a buffet breakfast in an upscale restaurant in a fancy DC hotel.

> (A waiter approaches the table and begins to refill coffee mugs. Momentary silence.)

WAITER

Everything okay here?

ALL

Yes!

> (Waiter walks away. Actors' eyes shift slowly back to Susan.)

SUSAN

> (Clears throat.)

To my point, my meals, accommodations, and travel are subsidized by my university (employer), while the people who clear the tables and clean my room were possibly picketing with their unionized co-workers to protest working without a contract for 2 years.[31] And these unionized hotel workers, who ultimately secured a new, 5-year contract, are the labor minority. Most service workers are unrepresented women, people of color, and immigrants who are being "nickel and dimed" by their hotel employers.[32] So as we initiate (potentially esoteric) post-symposium dialogue about

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31. Danielle Douglas, "Union Workers at Hotels Get a New Labor Contract," *Washington Post,* April 29, 2012, accessed November 7, 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/capitalbusiness/union-workers-at-hotels-get-a-new-labor-contract/2012/04/27/gIQAAb8FqT_story.html.

32. Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (New York, NY: Holt Paperbacks, 2001).

how critical work enacts the public good, I feel rather discouraged or disenchanted. How does my use of critical methodologies, intended to disrupt norms and critique the status quo, really *do* anything? I am not putting my body on the picket line—whether with these service workers or with my contingent peers (adjunct faculty). Where is the critical praxis in my research? What (public) good is this critical work?

<div align="center">JENI</div>

I am struggling with some of the same issues. I also come to this conversation with tremendous privilege. Among those privileges is that I am paid to produce "knowledge;" the workers Susan mentioned are producing knowledge too and have very real truths that deserve space. Yet, somehow within this academic place, my "truth" and "knowledge" are more legitimate.

Further, I write about feminist faculty activism and think about my own activist identity. I am primarily a professionalized activist, which means that I use tools of my profession (e.g., research, teaching, service) to critique the academy and disrupt the status quo.[33] It is within this context, that I am having theoretical, methodological, and epistemological conversations that are only salient for other academics. How is that transforming the larger social world and how can I even compare these strategies and goals to the efforts of the unionized workers about whom Susan spoke? I am trying to convince myself that by considering critical theories and methodologies, I am doing my part—but is that really social change? Do these conversations we are having even matter?

<div align="center">SUSAN</div>

(Reaching for the sugar bowl.)

I am mentally snagged on the notion of "transforming." A tenet of critical theory is to transform. Yet, in what ways might I unwittingly reify aspects of the world that I am seeking to trouble? Who determines what we are to transform into?

<div align="center">JONATHAN</div>

This is where I continue to struggle. Are my attempts toward criticality in a power driven bureaucratic system of higher education able to produce an impact toward equity? Should we be asking this from critical theory? Or will we get to a point where our ways of *doing* critical work reifies systems of privilege?

<div align="center">TANIA</div>

I appreciate what you are raising, and I too wonder, does my research enact my politics? A lot of my research exposes my politics, but I am not sure it enacts my politics? I am not always sure *how to* enact my politics through research. It usually comes through the opportunities I have after my research to work on individual campuses or with groups of faculty or administrators where I think that change might happen. The questions I ask and, sometimes, how I approach answering them reveal my commitments to *(uses her hands to gesture quotation marks)* "act against the grain of oppression," but journal articles and book chapters don't feel like taking action. When I actually

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33. Jeni Hart, "Activism among feminist academics: Professionalized activism and activist professionals," *Advancing Women in Leadership*, Accessed November 7, 2015, http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl/social_justice1/Hart.html.

feel like I am contributing to a movement for change is in workshop settings—coaching faculty, administrators, and community partners towards a more critical praxis that enacts their commitments to respond to and change systems and structures that create and sustain need.

JENI

I'm curious, does anyone feel like the classroom contributes to a movement for change? I definitely think it has the potential. I see teaching as one of many processes of knowledge production, just as research is. And, I hope that at the end of a semester, all of us are better equipped to act against oppression in our own ways.

CHRISTIN

I certainly see this in my work. I use the classroom as a space to create change—using critical theory to support the way I teach, what I teach, what I ask students to do with what I teach, and who/what I intentionally expose them to. Through the enactment of my teaching philosophy I aim to create a reflexive practitioner—one who is able to disrupt the status quo in their professional role.

SUSAN

It must be about more than just knowledge *production*, but also the development of skills to enact what one knows, and in particular, in the service of social change. Otherwise students possess knowledge that is reproductive of existing structures; they may have awareness of difference and inequities, but go about doing business-as-usual. To interrupt the routine, to stick a wrench in the machine, is a powerfully affective, embodied experience; one that few students have an opportunity to feel. While struggle in the classroom to cultivate both "safe and brave" spaces, I too often feel that this rationalist space, where the cognitive domain is privileged, undermines the potential for "feeling the subject."[34]

AMY

I hear what you are saying, Susan. I think at times it is my job to be *unproductive*, because that is more *useful*. I know that sounds ridiculous, but if I am always working toward producing "knowledge products," the kind that are recognized and rewarded by the academic profession and my employing university, then I may be too focused on research dissemination pathways that are of little use to most people. We are in a productivity paradox, but not the kind that most administrators and managers describe. In the neoliberal academy, we must do more with less, but we are evaluated on our ability to produce value for our institutions, either literally in terms of revenue or figuratively in terms of prestige. In so many ways, I feel that the academy has shifted toward a version of the public good that equates "useful knowledge" with "commodifiable knowledge." To make matters worse, we have affixed this new rationality on an arcane production cycle that is too often self-referential and self-serving.

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34. Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens, "From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces: A New Way to Frame Dialogue around Diversity and Social Justice," in *The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections from Social Justice Educators,* ed. Lisa Landreman (Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2013).

JAY

I aspire to use tenets of critical pedagogy to explore connections between ideology, power, culture, curriculum, and pedagogy.[35] In particular, the concept of power in academic spaces is continually at the forefront of my mind. For example, I have explicit pedagogical goals for deconstructing power imbalances between knower/learner, teacher/student, subject/scholar, and grader/gradee. I encourage a collaborative and critically conscious learning environment with hopes that students will connect their learning with social consciousness and community action. My curricular efforts allow for a re-shaping of classroom structures; yet, the impact often feels localized and to a limited contribution of the public good.

GARRETT

Jay, it sounds like you might be grappling with how to shift to a "power to" framework within a "power over" structure and it seems like "power over" is coded as "bad" or "undesirable" throughout our conversations. While I believe, to some extent, this is true, I'm wondering about how "power over" may actually be serving the public good.

> (Jay nods in agreement with Garrett as his mind spins exploring
> these possibilities.)

SUSAN

I too approach my teaching with aspiration that I will help students "to think critically, take risks, and resist dominant forms of oppression."[36] I think I nudge this in small ways through the equity action projects that students are assigned.[37] Yet, as students enact their projects "the institutional constraints and larger social formations that bear down on forms of resistance" slowly erode their confidence, efficacy, and commitment.[38] They will come to me as their projects progress and share that a supervisor has expressed concern or is hesitant about the student's efforts. The student, in turn, brainstorms with me what might be alternatives, safer routes to take, that could still "make a difference" (and earn the grade), but not be too disruptive. Thus, as the ripples move away from where the first splash occurred, they soften and slow, until they are no longer a ripple, but once more the placid surface. Yet, I must recall that "resistance is a multi-layered phenomenon" that "registers differently across different contexts and levels of political struggle."[39] More, bigger splashes and the possibilities for what critical approaches can contribute to the public good are renewed. I fight the "cynicism about the ability of ordinary people to take risks, fight for what they believe in, and become a force for social change."[40] Another semester, more students, ready to link their collective knowledge and social responsibility, I am revitalized.

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35. Tara J. Fenwick, *Learning Through Experience: Troubling Orthodoxies and Intersecting Questions* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 2003); Tom Nesbit, "Class and Teaching," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 102 (2004): 15-24.

36. Henry Giroux, *Theory and Resistance in Education: Towards a Pedagogy for the Opposition* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001), xxi.

37. Susan V. Iverson, "Multicultural Competence for Doing Social Justice: Expanding our Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills," *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis* 1 (2012).

38. Giroux, *Theory and Resistance*, xxiii.

39. Ibid., xxiv.

40. Ibid.*,* xxiv.

JENI

I also wonder whether doing critical work is an act of resistance, as Petersen challenges us to consider.[41] Doing this work, from Petersen's view, then is to start with understanding power, which is what I think we have been alluding to in our conversations. And aren't these conversations a methodological effort at questioning truth?

SUSAN

Of course, absolutely! But, as you noted previously, "I reinforce one truth rather than finding new truths." Critical work could risk reifying an alternate Truth.

JENI

At the same time, why are we questioning truth—in so doing, are we really contributing to critical practice and the public good? We are contributing to knowledge production in a very formalized sense, within the academic structure; it is the structure that we are also critiquing and challenging, but are we using critical theory to participate in an academic conference or to publish in an academic journal? While we may be pushing on the structures with notions of multiple truths and critical methodologies, they are still tools within the hegemonic structure that is not accessible to all. So, I am complicit; thus, am I really an activist?

TANIA

I think I am struggling with the distinctions between challenging and changing. I have always been motivated by the activist intentions of critical race theory. Delgado and Stefancic describe the work of critical race theorists as "not only [trying] to understand our social situation, but to change it...to transform it for the better."[42] Do we push structures or do we knock them down?

SUSAN

I think we wobble structures, with the goal that, over time, they will loosen and fall. Yet, I must be within the system to have access to the structures in order to try to topple them. What happens when I topple the structures that sustain my ability to topple them? Or maybe, as Audre Lorde reminds me, "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house;" thus, I will never do anything more than wobble these structures.[43]

TANIA

Right, so I will totally own my hypocrisy. There is so much to my question that is aspirational rather than actual. I do believe that some of my work shines a necessary light on the ways that community engagement in higher education serves to reify power rather than redistribute it, but my work also celebrates this practice for the impact and influence it has been shown to have on the lives of students. If I think about critique, challenge, and change on a continuum, I see the

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41. Eva B. Petersen, "Resistance and enrolment in the enterprise university: An ethno-drama in three acts, with appended reading," *Journal of Education Policy* 24 (2009): accessed November 7, 2015, doi: 10.1080/ 02680930802669953.

42. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An introduction* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2001), 3.

43. Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde* (Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press, 1984), 112.

critique and occasionally the challenge, but I want to figure out how to move the needle closer to change.

SUSAN

I sense that we are still grappling with various conceptualizations of power. The notion that we would "redistribute" power is rooted in a dominant assumption that power is held. And, central to critical theory is a distributive assumption of power, in order to empower and liberate. Yet, we then are complicit in the 'possession' of power. And, we are falling short in attention to the Foucauldian conceptions of power as circulating and thus available to be taken up.

JENI

Susan, is your point that we are complicit because we can never be completely outside of power, but still can critique it, resist it, and seek freedom from it? [44]

JAY

Considering my research efforts, I find small successes in combining my scholarship and teaching but there are procedural and cultural limitations for me as a pre-tenure assistant professor. My research and teaching pursuits are ideally meant to recenter truth and contribute to the public good, but my candidacy and marketability require me to center all of my efforts on my own self-promotion and singular contributions to the field. Quite literally for my tenure dossier, I must quantify my efforts via percentages to demonstrate my unique contributions to my scholarly field. In essence, I am required to regress my critical consciousness and reinforce my power as a faculty member in my scholarly and pedagogical pursuits. By being complicit to institutional and cultural dominance vis à vis my tenure reviews, am I promulgating exclusion in academia? *(Tania and Christin begin snapping their fingers as Jay is talking, to signal their support for all he is saying.)* Rather than quantifying my unique scholarly contributions, is there a way for me to demonstrate my shared push towards the public good? Of course as a quantitative scholar I must ask how to operationalize the quantity and quality of contributing to the public good and question whether academia should have a structure to demonstrate faculty advancement of the public good in addition to (or in replacement of) individual merit and contributions.

SUSAN

I look for the cracks and nooks in the structures, into which I might stuff something new, thus rebuilding from within. For instance, in the concluding recommendations of my dissertation—a policy discourse analysis of diversity action plans—I recommended that diversity policy-makers change the focus of their work from "diversity" to "equity." I acknowledged that this was not simply a matter of executing "find" and "replace," i.e., searching a policy for the word "marketplace" and replacing it with another (e.g., democracy) to produce different effects. [45] At my current institution, I had an opportunity to influence the construction of a Diversity Action Plan, and I suggested that this new plan foreground equity, rather than diversity. Such a focus (on equity)

44. Michel Foucault, "About the Beginnings of the Hermeneutics of the Self: Two Lectures at Dartmouth," *Political Theory* 21 (1993): 198-227.

45. Susan Iverson, *A Policy Discourse Analysis of US Land-Grant University Diversity Action Plans* (PhD diss., University of Maine, 2005).

would shift attention to institutional practices and the production of unequal educational out-comes.[46] The policy title was changed to Equity Action Plan. The content remained largely diversity-minded, but equity was "at the table;" we have had to keep fairness and justice at the forefront of our mind, even if it is to acknowledge the limitations of our work in achieving equity-minded outcomes. It is in this way that I believe critical approaches can arouse interest in socio-political problems and fuel collective action in the service of the public good.

GARRETT

It seems to me that the tension between the public good and individual contribution/self-promotion are characteristics of the neoliberal influence on higher education where masculinist culture, individuality, and competition reign.[47] We struggle against the system, to rebuild from within as Susan says, hoping that we can forge our own freedom in small ways. Who we are as academic subject depends on non-voluntary relationships to structures and conventions, although we do have agency to shape these structures. My hope is that through relationships, scholarly communities, and continued conversation we can continue these struggles.

JENI

I am filled with gratitude for this collaboration. Thank you for such an invigorating conversation. I must head out but I look forward to continuing this conversation with you all.

> (Feeling both energized and exhausted, Jeni pays for her meal
> and exits the restaurant. Tania and Jay follow closely behind.)

TANIA

I have been fueled by this generative dialogue. I'm so thankful for you all and am leaving with many questions that I will continue to engage. Much love!

JAY

Yes indeed, I look forward to connecting again with everyone. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help us move forward together. Safe travels getting home everyone!

CHRISTIN

You know, I better head out myself. Does anyone want to share a cab?

AMY

I'll join you. How do you feel about walking? I'd love some fresh air to decompress and process.

CHRISTIN

Sounds perfect, goodbye everyone!

> (Christin and Amy thank everyone, give farewells, and head out
> together. Jonathan, Susan, and Garrett are left at the table,
> sipping their coffees and teas. Feeling resolved in the unresolved,

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46. Bensimon, "Closing the Achievement Gap in Higher Education: An Organizational Learning Perspective," *New Directions for Higher Education* 131 (2005): 99.

47. Henry A. Giroux, *Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education* (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2014).

they enjoy each other's company in several minutes of silence
before leaving the restaurant.)

Director's Notes

This play was first performed in the planning for, and debrief after, a symposium at a scholarly conference in November of 2014. While our "experimental" format led to the disruption of the traditional conference format, the actors were still constrained by time, physical space, and modality. In the spirit of Denzin, we were "willing to take chances."[48] We hope that readers too will "dare to take chances"[49]—to interrogate other possibilities for the disruption of traditional academic spaces in their struggle for emancipation; that through "collaborative storytelling[50] and telling 'resistance stories,'"[51] marginalized voices will be centered and we will come closer to "the free and full participation of all members of a society in civic discourse."[52]

Our intention of this play is to uncover the limitations and potentiality of critical theory. We explore multiple meanings of power, autonomy, and agency within the struggle for emancipation, democracy, and the public good. We pose as many questions as we answer, recognizing that understanding is fluid and on-going. Further, we encourage readers to produce their own scripts regarding the use of critical theories in educational research that take up the questions the actors raise here. Act II stops at a point where readers can choose to continue the dialogue off script or re-script what already exists. Finally, we encourage the use of this article as a pedagogical tool and offer the following questions as a beginning point: Have we moved toward contributing to the public good? If so, which or whose "public?" Who is un/mis-represented? How are the actors re/presenting their own truths and what are the implications of this? What does the use of critical theory mean for critical methodologies and praxis? How critical is critical theory? Is being critical an identity? A descriptor? A category? An act (or series of acts)? All of the above? We hope that the issues the actors grappled with in their scholarship and the questions we posed can serve as a catalyst for continued conversations about moving from critical theory to critical praxis and the responsibilities we have as academics to advance particular, contextualized, notions of truth and the public good.

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48. Norman, K. Denzin, *The Qualitative Manifesto: A Call to Arm*s. (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2010), 99.
49. Ibid., 111.
50. Ibid., 99.
51. Ibid., 111.
52. Ibid., 113.

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Indigenous Social Justice Pedagogy: Teaching into the Risks and Cultivating the Heart

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Abstract

As Indigenous communities envision their future, it is without question that the Indigenous youth play a significant role in sustaining their Indigenous lifeways and communities. They will no doubt be faced with the responsibility to navigate socio-cultural, environmental, political and economic issues while simultaneously preserving their Indigenous knowledge systems. Educators have the capacity to prepare youth for the responsibility of understanding colonialism and to begin the process of helping youth understand such tactics to protect Indigenous land, people, languages, and culture. When Indigenous youth are provided with the necessary knowledge, skills and analytical tools to navigate this future undertaking, they will be prepared to be protectors and change agents for their Indigenous communities; which, in turn, reflects nation-building. In this article, I will provide an overview of Indigenous social justice pedagogy and explain its role in Indigenous nation-building efforts. In addition, I will draw on experiences of engaging Diné youth (ages 12-14) in a decolonizing process and discuss what it means to teach from an Indigenous social justice framework that invokes critical inquiry with individual and collective action.

Keywords: *social justice pedagogy, decolonization, indigenous education, nation-building*

> *Oak Flat is my home, it is where I come from as a young girl…Going there and praying to see the land, you see the life that it gives. But to corporations, they see it as nothing…I am proud to be Indigenous and I will continue to fight for Oak Flat. Oak Flat is a place of sacredness. It is a place of life. It's a place of who I am and our identity as Apache people. Who are we without Oak Flat? Who are we without these sacred places? (Naelyn Pike, San Carlos and Chiracahua Apache).[1]*

Introduction

The opening quote is from Naelyn Pike, a 16-year old San Carlos and Chiracahua Apache youth, speaking at the Natural Resource Committee in Washington, DC with a group of supporters (Apache Stronghold) advocating for the preservation and protection of Oak Flat, a sacred site to the Apache people, located in southeastern Arizona. Oak Flat is currently under threat of being

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1. See https://www.facebook.com/802193869856079/videos/924403060968492/?theater for video footage.

destroyed. In early 2015, lawmakers John McCain and Jeff Flake of Arizona insidiously slipped language into a "must pass" National Defense Authorization Act to give land (Oak Flat area) to a foreign mining company called Resolution Copper, "at the 11th hour…bypassing public scrutiny" (Revkin, 2015). Naelyn and her group, Apache Stronghold, have been protesting and raising awareness about this unjust land exchange and have gained massive support from government leaders, legislators, environmentalists, activists, and other Indigenous people across the globe. Although legislative bills have been introduced to protect Oak Flat, such unjust and inequitable situations continue to occur in Indigenous communities as Indigenous peoples' lands and resources remain under threat of destruction, theft and/or exploitation in various communities.

As Indigenous communities envision their future, it is without question that our[2] Indigenous youth play a significant role in sustaining our Indigenous lifeways and communities. Indigenous youth will be at the forefront in sustaining our Indigenous communities and they will no doubt be faced with the responsibility of navigating socio-cultural, environmental, political and economic issues while simultaneously preserving their Indigenous knowledge systems. Educators have the capacity to prepare youth for the responsibility of understanding colonialism and to begin the process of helping youth understand such tactics in order to safeguard Indigenous land, people, languages, and culture. When Indigenous youth are provided with the necessary knowledge, skills and analytical tools to navigate this future undertaking, they will be prepared to be protectors and change agents for their Indigenous communities; which, in turn, contributes to nation-building.

Understanding the historical context behind present-day social and community issues through truth-telling processes is important. Unfortunately for Indigenous people, this history is filled with trauma and injustices; consequently, when truth-telling practices activate stories of struggle and resistance, educators need to be conscious of the risks involved in telling such stories. Teaching into the risks involves the process of raising awareness in students by unveiling history from the perspective of those affected by injustice and requires educators to carefully ponder how to cultivate students' emotional responses and reactions. Consequently, teaching into the risks requires *cultivating the heart* and carefully navigating youth through their emotions in the process of critically engaging in sociocultural analyses of society. It is certainly not an easy task; however, truth-telling is necessary for any type of social change to occur. Educators serving as change agents have the capacity to transform educational experiences for young people by providing learning experiences that *engage the heart and mind* to address various issues and concerns so as to promote social change. In doing so, this type of teaching in Indigenous contexts asks educators to involve Indigenous youth in an emotional journey of uncovering the past in addition to engaging youth in the process of healing and empowerment by affirming Indigenous values and epistemology. Nonetheless, uncovering history from Indigenous perspectives is an important first step in becoming critically conscious and aware (Fanon, 1963/2004; Said, 1978/2003; Smith, 1999); therefore, in order for healing and social change to occur, cultivating the minds and hearts through Indigenous epistemologies is extremely important.

In this article, I will provide an overview of Indigenous social justice pedagogy (ISJP) and explain its role in Indigenous nation-building. The following question will be addressed: What does it mean to teach critically, and for social justice, from an Indigenous framework? I will draw on experiences of engaging Diné youth in a process that prompted a critical consciousness and discuss teaching from an Indigenous social justice framework that invokes critical inquiry with

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2. The author is a member of the Diné Nation, an Indigenous Native American group in the United States. Diné is also commonly known as Navajo. As a member of an Indigenous community, I include myself within this paper; using the pronouns *we*, *our*, and *us*.

individual and collective action for change. My goal is to extend the field of social justice education with specific attention to developing an Indigenous social justice pedagogical framework. ISJP involves decolonization, Indigenous epistemologies, and nation-building.

The Roots of Social Justice Pedagogy

> *Social justice education is…about the goal of transformation.*
> (Chapman & Hobbel, 2009, p. 4).

Social justice pedagogy is rooted in the educational frameworks of multicultural education and critical pedagogy (Cammarota, 2011; Chapman & Hobbel, 2009). Multicultural education includes multiple dimensions that aim to support the practical component of providing equitable learning opportunities for all students through the curriculum and affirming diverse student identities and experiences (Grant & Sleeter, 2007). Critical pedagogy critiques the dominant knowledge within curriculum, critically examines inequities in society, and focuses on the analytical tools to advance the development of a critical consciousness, agency, and empowerment through a problem-posing approach to teaching and learning (Freire, 1970/2002). Problem-posing education is a pedagogical approach that critically examines issues and concerns in a learning context. Within the educational context that cultivates a critical consciousness, students question and critique oppressive power structures in society and envision the potential for change. The analytical tools and methods of critical pedagogy include reflection, praxis, and dialogues. By drawing on critical pedagogical methods and tools, students begin to attain a critical consciousness to enact social change and transformation in their communities and schools. Therefore, social justice educators implement curriculum that aims to combat discrimination, prejudice, and oppression based on race, class, gender, sexuality, language, ability, etc. In this process, educators enact a problem-posing approach to engage young people in a critical examination of such injustices and inequities while facilitating pedagogical experiences and opportunities that promote "the goal of transformation" (Chapman & Hobbel, 2009, p. 4). In the next section, I contextualize social justice pedagogy within Indigenous settings.

Indigenous Social Justice Pedagogy

Indigenous social justice pedagogy is a framework for *rethinking* the process of schooling for Indigenous students. Its primary focus is on reframing curriculum and pedagogy that aims to preserve and privilege Indigenous epistemologies while promoting nation-building in Indigenous communities. When educators privilege these two aspects in the classroom (or in a specific learning context), they are intentional in building curriculum around Indigenous issues and concerns in hopes to bring about positive social change in Indigenous communities. Indigenous communities have been faced with various social, environmental, and political issues (which have strong ties to colonialism) that have affected the livelihood and well-being of Indigenous peoples today. If educators can integrate such issues into the curriculum for youth to investigate, they will be preparing students to not only envision alternative possibilities to sustain their communities, but also empowering them to protect their land, cultures, and people. Pedagogically, educators can draw on the framework of ISJP to facilitate the process of: 1) deconstructing and disrupting the cycle of colonization in Indigenous communities; 2) promoting, revitalizing, and protecting Indigenous

languages and knowledge systems; and 3) envisioning ways to inspire youth to employ transformative possibilities that contribute to nation-building. Thus, central to ISJP are decolonizing processes that foster empowerment and activism in youth. In what follows, I describe the central components of ISJP: decolonization, Indigenous epistemology, and nation-building.

Decolonization: Teaching into the Risks

Over the years, colonization has become endemic to Indigenous communities (Brayboy, 2005). The cycle of colonization, with its historical legacy and present-day infiltration, is entrenched in our Indigenous communities (mentally and structurally), and many of the social issues and concerns within Indigenous communities are linked to colonialism, which McCaslin and Breton characterize as "the root harm" (2008, p. 512). It becomes essential that educators begin to understand, deconstruct, and disrupt this cycle of colonization in the educational setting in order for social change to occur. As Mary Hermes (2015) posited, "Structures seem to influence what we do on a daily basis and…we need to build and act within structures that have their roots in Indigenous life" (p. 273). Schools, as a structure, has historically implemented colonial policies and practices that aimed to assimilate Indigenous peoples; and as a result such policies and practices have pushed our Indigenous knowledges, languages, cultures and identities to the margins in our own communities. In order to build schooling structures rooted in Indigenous life, schools would need to be restructured to center and promote Indigenous knowledge and values.

Decolonization becomes an essential component in the process of restructuring because it is the avenue by which we can challenge colonialism and begin to envision and create structures rooted in Indigenous life. The process of decolonization is worth noting at length:

> A large part of decolonization entails developing a critical consciousness about the cause(s) of our oppression, the distortion of history, our own collaboration, and the degrees to which we have internalized colonialist ideas and practices. Decolonization requires auto-criticism, self-reflection, and a rejection of victimage. Decolonization is about empowerment—a belief that situations can be transformed, a belief and trust in our own peoples' values and abilities, and a willingness to make change. It is about transforming negative reactionary energy into the more positive rebuilding energy needed in our communities. (Wheeler as cited in Wilson, 2004, p. 71)

An essential first step in decolonization requires the rediscovery of our histories (Laenui, 2000) in order to examine and uncover the project of colonization and reveal its effect on Indigenous peoples' histories, cultures, languages, identities, land and resources. Consequently, much of Indigenous histories is silenced and excluded in curriculum documents; therefore, educators would need to seek alternative resources that include the voices and perspectives of Indigenous peoples' around various historical events. Such truth-telling practices reveals stories of injustices and trauma within Indigenous histories and thus exposes how power and knowledge have worked to oppress Indigenous peoples. Truth-telling within decolonization initiates the development of a critical consciousness as it works to reveal the hidden histories and social realities of colonialism in our Indigenous communities. The practice of truth-telling, however, comes with the risks of students feeling angry, offended, and hurt by the stories of trauma and injustice experienced by their ancestors. When educators *teach into these risks* that move students into an emotional space where the stories of oppression stir up such emotions, it is crucial for educators to consider the

ways in which they can navigate youth through this emotional space. I propose that educators draw on Indigenous epistemologies to direct youth toward the process of healing. Within decolonization, there should also be emphasis on rejecting the notion of victimage and to move into a space of transformation and empowerment to change the oppressive circumstances in our communities; thus we must rely on our own Indigenous values, knowledge and abilities to initiate healing, (re)affirm our identities, and instill a commitment to improving our communities.

Cultivating the Heart: Promoting, Revitalizing, and Protecting Indigenous Epistemology

In ISJP, Indigenous epistemologies are purposefully infused in the daily structure of the learning environment—from curriculum and pedagogy to the classroom community—drawing on Indigenous knowledge systems to create an environment where young people begin to privilege, promote, revitalize and center their Indigenous ways of thinking and being. To build and create structures rooted in Indigenous life, the learning environment is essentially infused with Indigenous philosophies, values, language, songs, stories, histories, and respectful relationships. Considering that the deconstruction of colonialism engenders feelings of anger and frustration when truth-telling uncovers stories of injustice and trauma, I propose educators draw on aspects of Indigenous epistemology to *cultivate the heart* toward healing and empowerment. Cultivating the heart toward empowerment is an essential step that sets the stage for students to consider the ways in which they can contribute to the betterment of both their classroom community and their Indigenous community in general. For example, in the particular study that I describe below, I draw on the Diné epistemological concept of *hozhó*. Hozhó is a philosophical concept in Diné teachings that is essentially about maintaining balance and harmony in life. Diné scholar Herbert Benally defined *hozhó* as "the state of much good, leading to a peaceful, beautiful and harmonious life" (1994, p. 23). This philosophical aspect is contextualized within the highly complex Diné epistemology of *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón* and has many (*hozhóoji*) stories associated with it.[3] Many stories within our epistemology teach us about life and it is through these stories we gain the power of true Diné identity (Begay, 2002). Cultivating the heart through Indigenous epistemological aspects is necessary when educators teach into the risks by exposing the oppressive present-day conditions linked to colonialism (such as the exploitation of sacred sites like Oak Flat).

In ISJP, it is important to ensure the students' epistemologies are reflected in the curriculum as well as in the overall classroom community and interactions between the students. Fostering relationships built on Indigenous aspects of respect, reciprocity and responsibility offers a unique way to incorporate Indigenous epistemologies in learning environments. To illustrate this, I draw on the work I conducted with Diné youth. My interactions with the student participants in my study began with an initial introduction of ourselves through our clans. The purpose of starting with introducing ourselves with our clans was to establish *k'é* (kinship). Our clans are the core aspects of our Diné identity as our clan affiliations place us in context to the family from which we come (the first clan is the mother's clan, the second is the father's clan, the third is the maternal grandfather's clan, and the fourth clan is the paternal grandfather's clan) and places us in relationship to other Diné people. Once kinship was established, I began a discussion of the deep meaning of *k'é* by explaining the process of developing and maintaining respectful relationships with others and

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3. *Sa'ah Naaghai Bik'eh Hozhoon* is the journey toward living a balanced and harmonious life. According to Miranda Haskie (2002) it is "a system from which the Navajo people gain teachings and learn how to achieve a healthy well-being throughout life" (p. 32).

nature.[4] The ways in which we practice *k'é* is reflected in how we treat and interact with one another grounded in respect, care, and compassion for self and others. Developing explicit connections to *k'é* meant that in order to move forward in sharing our internal thoughts, ideas, and feelings, we needed to establish trust with one another to be able to express our deep and vulnerable thoughts and emotions. Establishing this foundation was a crucial step in our dialogues. By drawing upon the fundamental Diné value of *k'é*, I was able to create an environment where trust was established, respect was enacted, and taking care of one another became a priority. The relationships and values embedded within the practice of *k'é* were important in moving into deep conversations about identity, as "the deep caring and healing process rooted in kinship, family, compassion, respect and cooperation" (Lee, 2016, p. 102) was essential. Evident in Diné youths' interactions, they remind us that having healthy relations with others based on Indigenous notions of respect, compassion, empathy, and care is essential when engaging in dialogue and interacting with others.

Cultivating the heart with Indigenous epistemologies is a core component within a space of learning where social issues and concerns are discussed and is fundamental within the practice of nurturing and guiding students through the process of critically examining issues and effects of colonialism, exploitation, oppression, inequity, and injustice on students' lives and communities. In other words, colonialism has contributed to disrupting the lives, livelihood, and well-being of Indigenous peoples; it is Indigenous epistemologies that will contribute to the healing of our community members. By cultivating the heart through enacting decolonization in educational contexts, it provides youth with opportunities to examine core aspects of their Indigenous identity in addition to acquiring knowledge and skills required for protecting, promoting, and preserving Indigenous people, language, culture, and land. These processes contribute to rigorous academic work that are intellectually engaging and empowering as they provide young people with real opportunities to "reject victimage" and to begin working for social change and nation-building in their communities.

Nation-building

In ISJP, educators are fundamentally preparing young people to contribute to nation-building. Nation-building in Indigenous communities is about sustaining our sovereignty in ways that are beneficial to our own community needs and aspirations. This process requires "generations of Indigenous peoples to grow up intimately and strongly connected to our homelands, immersed in our languages and spiritualities and embodying our traditions of agency, leadership, decision making and diplomacy" (Simpson, 2014, p. 1). By drawing on sovereignty and self-determination rights, schools can engage in this process. As Brayboy, Fann, Castagno & Solyom state, however, "Indigenous nations cannot successfully engage in nation-building projects that are driven by sovereignty and self-determination unless they develop independence of the mind by taking action to restore pride in their traditions, languages, and knowledge" (2012, p. 15). Developing independence of the mind is linked to what Tiffany Lee (2006) refers to as critical Indigenous consciousness, which is the process of liberating the mind from dominant hegemony and cultivating the mind toward indigenization where individuals are guided by Indigenous epistemologies to transform Indigenous communities.

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4. See Kulago (2016) for an expanded explanation of *k'é*.

Understanding the impacts of colonialism, schools can be the site by which nation-building is rooted. When schools and educators restructure their curriculum and pedagogy to address nation-building, it raises unique and critical levels of responsibility and accountability. It requires educators to engage in a self-reflective process that recognizes teaching Indigenous students is not just about high stakes testing and standards; but embodies expectations of sustaining and privileging Indigenous knowledge as the source of decision making, leadership, advocacy, and agency. Educators are pressed to answer the question of how they will have prepared Indigenous youth, such as Naelyn, to be of service to their communities. Importantly, what dialogues and projects can educators facilitate that create opportunities for youth to begin contributing to notions of nation-building?

In ISJP, cultural regeneration through the curriculum and pedagogy must involve the incorporation of Indigenous values, stories, and language as the source for understanding nation-building. The next section is a case example of how aspects of ISJP (decolonization, Indigenous epistemology, and nation-building) come together in a tribal community school located on the Diné Nation.

Methodology

The context for this case example is based on a critical Indigenous qualitative research study that explored the Indigenous subjectivities of ten Diné youth. Utilizing the theoretical framework of Tribal Critical Race Theory (Brayboy, 2005), this study investigated how the youth interpreted and made meaning of their Diné identities as they engaged in critical analyses of colonial tactics of assimilation and in learning aspects of Diné epistemology. At the time of this study, the youth were enrolled in a tribal community school (K-8) located on the Diné Nation where the study took place. I worked with 10 Diné students, ages 12-14, over a course of 5 months. Within this time period, I conducted classroom observations, 2 semi-structured pre-/post-interviews and 4 focus group discussions. The topics of each focus group session were: 1) the Diné Long Walk Period; 2) the history of boarding schools; 3) the media construction of stereotypes and Native identities; and 4) the Diné stories and philosophy of life. In this section, I will share stories of the students' engagement with curriculum and pedagogy that gives meaning to the framework of Indigenous social justice pedagogy.

Indigenizing Curriculum Through Truth-Telling

In ISJP, the curriculum is built around Indigenous concerns and issues. Within this particular study, the concern was that the youth were losing their culture and language. The decline and shift in Diné culture and language among our youth has been a concern since early encounters with colonialism. Exposing students to these early encounters with colonialism was essential in the curriculum of this study as "Virtually every ill that Indigenous peoples suffer can be traced to colonization" (McCaslin & Breslin, 2008, p. 525). The purpose was to unpack the present-day issue of identity in relation to historical colonialism. As a result, the curriculum for this study started with an examination of colonialism by uncovering the history of the Diné Long Walk period and early boarding school experiences and ended with Diné stories and philosophy. Each of these aspects of the curriculum are examples and scenarios of truth-telling practices. What follows is a description of how students interacted and responded to specific aspects of the curriculum as truth-telling.

Truth-telling: The Diné Long Walk Period

In week five of the classroom observations of this research study, the classroom teacher (also Diné) wanted to discuss ideas for teaching her next unit. In the previous 4 weeks of classroom observations, she taught aspects of Diné seasons. Upon completing her unit, the teacher explained she wanted the next unit to focus on the Diné Long Walk experiences. The Diné Long Walk period (1860-1868) is the forced removal of the Diné off our ancestral homelands by being forced to walk approximately 450 miles (at gunpoint) to Fort Sumner in New Mexico. The Diné (men, women, children, and elders) were imprisoned for 4 years in harsh conditions within the camp at Fort Sumner, which is known to the Diné as *Hweéldi* ("a place of great suffering"). As the classroom teacher and I discussed the plans for developing the unit, we problematized the issue of textbooks reproducing dominant narratives about the Diné Long Walk period that excluded Diné perspectives; therefore, we agreed to focus on stories that were from Diné perspectives. We drew on the book *Diné Stories of the Long Walk Period* by Ruth Roessel (1973), which is a compilation of stories that were orally conveyed to the authors/storytellers in the book by their relatives who experienced the harsh conditions before, during, and after the Long Walk. Over the course of 2 months, the teacher implemented this unit by assigning short stories to each student to read and share with the class while I observed each lesson and the students' reactions and responses. One can imagine the emotions that might emerge within any individual when examining the harsh conditions and experiences during the Diné Long Walk period. One student shared her reaction to the story she read of a Diné woman on the Long Walk during our first focus group discussion. In this particular story, the Diné woman was pregnant and struggled to walk the 450-mile trek to Fort Sumner. She was exhausted, and her family pleaded with the US Army soldiers to let her rest. The student shared:

> It was really sad to see that she got shot just because she couldn't keep up. And she tried to say we could wait until I had it [the baby] and maybe I could keep up, but they [the soldiers] didn't want to do that. I was sad because a lot of us died during the Long Walk. I was mad at the same time too. Pissed off, angry. I still feel mad about it. I mean in our culture we just have to protect our people.

Another student expressed his discomfort with the dehumanizing experiences within the camp: "It was shocking because the [soldiers] kept our Navajo people inside a fence and they treated them like animals. Some of the feelings I had were mad, angry, shocked, scared, crazy, sad and hurtful." It is important for educators to be prepared for the emotional response from the students when engaging in truth-telling processes. One student shared her emotional state as she was reflecting on these stories during an ordinary day at school:

> When I'm walking all of a sudden I have these thoughts and I would begin to feel sorry for all the people that suffered [on the Long Walk] and I would just wish that never happened to the people and sometimes I would just start crying and I would say, "Don't cry, it happened a long time ago. So I shouldn't be crying."

In recognizing the risks in engaging youth in critical processes that expose the historical trauma of our ancestral experiences, the emotional response and reaction can become intense, especially within young people who need assistance in reasoning through such fragile states when

moving between classroom and community contexts. In making sense of such emotional responses within one's learning process, I drew on the notion of embodied learning, which posits that the mind and body are intricately connected in learning experiences. Manu Aluli Meyer explained that within Hawaiian epistemology there is no separation of mind and body (2008)—and this is also true within Diné epistemology. Meyer described this process as, "Our thinking body is not separated from our feeling mind. *Our mind is our body. Our body is our mind.* And both connect to the spiritual act of knowledge acquisition" (Meyer, 2008, p. 229). Likewise, Jo-ann Archibald (2008) describes the notion of embodied learning as "heart knowledge," which describes the emotional reaction to stories that transmit energy to the listener.

Knowledge acquisition was certainly prompted by such strong emotional responses within the students; however, the key was to *cultivate the heart* in order to move toward healing and empowerment. Thus, I connected to the Diné philosophical aspect of *hozhó* to move students toward healing. *Hozhó* is an ultimate state of being characterized by harmony, beauty, balance, well-being and goodness. *Hozhó* is a central aspect in Diné epistemology and is inherent in everyday life, prayers, ceremony, philosophy, and songs. Each focus group session with the students incorporated *hozhó*—for the purpose of reconciling intense emotions and understanding Diné philosophy of learning, which I describe later on. In the sessions that examined injustices, I intentionally strived to move students to a state of *hozhó* through dialogue that focused on the positives within our lives and the strength of our ancestors and people. I next turn to another key moment in the study that gives meaning to notions of truth-telling and teaching into the risks.

Truth-telling: Boarding School Experiences

The opening activity provided students the opportunity to not only realize and deconstruct the hegemonic forces that shape-shift their identities, but to also envision various possibilities for change. I find the experience of deconstructing history from Diné perspectives to be one of the most essential steps to engaging these students in decolonization. By critically reflecting on their identities in relation to the past, I also facilitated a self-reflective activity that encouraged the students to critically analyze the different aspects of Diné and Western cultures that influenced their identities. Upon reflecting on the discussion on the unfair educational policies and practices within the boarding schools, we can observe one student's emotional response to the ideological underpinnings of assimilation:

> I think it was hurtful because they treated our Navajos a different way…and by saying, "Kill the Indian and save the man," I think that was hurtful because that's like letting go of heritage and traditions and learning something else and forgetting about us and our ways.

As students continued to self-reflect on visuals that mapped out their time devoted to Diné cultural contexts in relation to Western cultural contexts, the students were astonished when they discovered they were more influenced by Western ways. One student commented about how he was more Westernized in his identity and thought process because he was more immersed in aspects of Western culture on a daily basis (i.e.., speaking English, going to church) and did not participate in aspects of Diné culture (i.e., speaking Diné language, participating in ceremonies, understanding the language). He expressed:

> I knew a little bit about the Navajo but when I wrote it down, I didn't really know I was more into the Western than the Navajo because usually we're supposed to be more of the Navajo and not that much Western. But I…was more influenced by the Western way. It made me feel no good. (Garcia & Shirley, 2012, p. 85)

In order to move the youth toward the state of *hozhó* within this discussion, I asked them to think about the ways in which they could take action in restoring the Diné epistemology and to reflect on the different opportunities they could potentially engage. Some of the youth, for example, took the initial steps of asking parents and relatives to teach them the language and stories so they had a stronger foundation and affiliation with a Diné identity. I now turn to the last scenario which speaks to the significance of cultivating the heart through Indigenous knowledge.

Truth-telling: Diné Stories and Philosophy of Life

With the intent of restoring balance in the students' thoughts and emotions, the topic of the last focus group session was traditional Diné stories and the philosophy of learning. According to Archibald (2008), stories have the power to educate the heart, mind, body and spirit. She expands, "Stories have the ability to soothe…and to heal the emotions and spirit" (p. 98-99). In addition to helping the youth recover aspects of Diné epistemology that had been marginalized in their lives, engaging the youth in a healing process to soothe the emotions and spirit was the intent of this last focus group session. When explaining the Diné philosophy of life, I used the shape of our traditional home, *hooghan*, to share stories about the journey through life, the different stages of life (childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and elderly) and the role of *hozhó* (to maintain holistic well-being and balance) within our journey. The students were instructed to draw a picture of aspects of the stories that resonated with them. One student drew a picture of Changing Woman (a deity) by her side during her *kinaaldá*, which is a ceremony for adolescent girls. Another explained that she felt protected within the 4 sacred mountains.[5] The students then began to reflect on *hozhó* in relation to their past behaviors and actions. A student expressed, "It made me think about not making any bad choices." Another elaborated:

> It made me think about my life and how it is because if you get sad, you kind of go off the path and you're not in the right state of mind. So I was thinking about it and I was thinking about how many times I went off and I was like, it would've been a whole bunch if I actually counted it. Just a couple days ago, I was starting to misbehave and my mom got mad and I started thinking about the philosophy and the stories and how people used to act and I thought back about it and I started behaving more.

Overall, the philosophy and stories became prominent in their thought processes. As the students reflected on their identities throughout the entire research journey, majority reported that learning the philosophy of life was the most beneficial part of reconstructing their thoughts and actions toward being more conscious and taking pride in their Diné culture and identity, as the Diné philosophy played a huge role in their own healing process. It was at this point in the decolonization process that launched a sense of empowerment within them to facilitate the process of individual action in their personal lives.

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5. The traditional homeland of the Diné is within the 4 sacred mountains of the San Francisco Peaks in Arizona, Mount Taylor in New Mexico, Blanca Peak in Colorado and Hesperus Mountain in Colorado.

T'áá hwó ají t'éego*: Transformative Possibilities Toward Nation-building

It is important within Indigenous social justice pedagogy to transform the emotional reactions of anger and sadness and move toward transformative and constructive ways of thinking and acting. By connecting on such an emotional level within each phase of the research process, the students developed a sense of empowerment that motivated them to take proactive steps toward positive changes in their personal lives. Upon analyzing colonial tactics of assimilation that uncovered the process of changing and shifting Diné identities away from our values and ways of being, the youth concluded that reclaiming the Diné language and stories was the essential first step in addressing the issue of culture and language loss; therefore, this reclamation became a priority for this group. Students explained the different ways they took individual and immediate action within their personal lives. Nearly all of the students (9 of the 10)[6] shared that they asked parents and grandparents to teach them the language and stories as they recognized that fluency in the language gave them access to the traditional stories and knowledge within the Diné epistemology. Each personal story was unique; one student asked her mother to speak *Diné bizaad* (language) to her as she conducted daily chores at home, another shared how she asked her father to teach her the language and chuckled at his way of doing so through total immersion and the entertaining experiences that emerged through their interactions, and another asked her mother to devote time to helping her pronounce various words and phrases. In addition, several of the students shared their interactions with specific individuals about the Diné stories and concepts. One student saw her former Kindergarten teacher at a local grocery store and asked if she could borrow her film collection of some of the Diné stories. Another was helping her grandfather clean the *hooghan* when she started reflecting on the stories, which prompted a conversation with him about *hozhó* and the different phases of life. All in all, the students found solutions in their own ways.

Youth have the intellectual capacity to deeply engage in decolonizing and indigenizing processes. By examining history and present-day issues, engaging students in the process of critical self-reflection, drawing on Indigenous philosophy (such as Diné concepts of *k'é* and *hozhó*), and engaging students in dialogue, educators can move students toward facilitating individual and collective action. For example, the sense of urgency in disrupting the cycle of cultural and linguistic decline of our Diné people had one student envisioning possibilities for enacting transformative possibilities. In the final interview with this student, he shared his idea for seeking action beyond individual and personal changes that would transcend improvement within Diné communities. He stated that he considered the notion of proposing "storytelling nights" at the local chapter house in the community.[7] Educators facilitating the process of navigating youth in taking action based on ideas such as these are important in helping students understand positive ways of addressing social concerns. This student's idea for change motivated him to address the cultural and linguistic decline in Diné people—in the Diné epistemology, this sense of empowerment is known as *t'áá hwó ají t'éego*, which essentially translates to "it is up to you to do it" and describes the internal drive and motivation to take action.

The findings from this study suggest that the youth uncovered multiple layers of colonization that led to the decline in the Diné language, culture, and identity within themselves and the Diné communities. Although the youth engaged in an emotional journey about the knowledge they

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6. One student claimed he was fluent in the language.

7. A chapter house is a community center. Every community on the Diné Nation has a chapter house where politics and local concerns are discussed and addressed. These chapter houses are also social spaces where community gathers for various activities and events.

deconstructed and gained through the rediscovery of their history and contemporary forms of colonialism, by the end of the process they were brainstorming various action steps they could possibly take to transform their situations and conditions among themselves and their people. Deconstructing identity through decolonizing and indigenizing processes developed a critical Indigenous consciousness within the youth which in turn prepares them to contribute to nation-building.

Concluding Thoughts and Implications

Teaching into the risks while cultivating the heart asks educators working with Indigenous youth to draw on Indigenous social justice pedagogy to carefully and intentionally engage youth in examining issues and concerns in Indigenous communities. Unfortunately, such present-day issues contain a history filled with trauma and injustices. In working with Indigenous youth, it is important to consider the vulnerabilities and emotional reaction that might emerge within them to facilitate a process through which they transcend those fragile emotions and move toward more positive and constructive ways of activating agency to make change.

The emotional journey of the youth in this study is one from which we can draw implications for teaching into the risks. Risks can be revealed through the emotional outcomes that might emerge when uncovering histories from Indigenous perspectives that expose historical injustices; therefore, educators need to be prepared to help youth navigate the intense emotions that accompany such histories. Cultivating the heart by integrating aspects of Indigenous epistemology is an important strategy. No educator should intentionally leave youth in a state of anger and sadness; therefore, educators must skillfully teach into the risks and cultivate the heart by relying on Indigenous values and knowledge to move toward the "positive rebuilding energy needed in our communities" (Wheeler cited in Wilson, 2004, p. 71). For example, by engaging youth in the process of analysis that examines why and how the current conditions, issues, or circumstances exist, youth can begin to understand how to envision themselves as *protectors* of Indigenous people, land, languages and cultures. In essence, knowing the historical context may inform their future actions that develop capacity for nation-building. In doing so, educators serving Indigenous youth would be expected to liberate their minds from the traditional settler colonialist methods of school and begin rethinking curriculum, pedagogy and classroom interactions that center Indigenous epistemologies. This reconceptualization of schooling is essential if we wish to reinforce sovereignty for nation-building.

Furthermore, it is vital to create an environment that features a deep level of trust and respect in order for youth to share their innermost thoughts and feelings. I am reminded of the notion of the "dialogical spiral" (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014), a process that occurs during an exchange of communication where deep levels of trust and respect emerge within the in-between space of listening and speaking. In such an exchange of communication, it is important to draw on Indigenous knowledge and values to reinforce trust and respect. Every Indigenous group has its own conceptualization for relating to one another based on the fundamental notion of respect. For example, Kulago described *k'é* as relationships based on the values of respect, "compassion, cooperation, love kinship, clanship, friendliness, kindness, unselfishness, peacefulness and thoughtfulness" (as cited in Lee, 2016, p. 99). Imagine a classroom environment based on such values!

Creating spaces of learning through Indigenous social justice pedagogy enables students to critically examine and deconstruct history, colonialism and socializing forces, which leads to the development of a critical Indigenous consciousness (Lee, 2006). Within these determined efforts by educators, Indigenous youth will begin to critically reflect on how socializing forces contribute

to the internalization, oppression, and construction of their identities. Thus the space of learning contextualized within ISJP can become an avenue where analytical skills, knowledge and emotional dispositions can be developed and cultivated. In addition, if educators were to create curriculum around other issues of oppression, such as racism, classism, sexism, or discrimination inherent in our Indigenous communities, how might one begin this process? What are the risks inherent within the process? What Indigenous values and epistemologies can be drawn on? And how can educators facilitate change with the youth so we can maintain strong, healthy, and vibrant communities? Indeed, engaging young people in such critical examinations and dialogues will raise their consciousness around such issues and inspire a sense of empowerment that will facilitate individual and communal change.

Consider the issue of Oak Flat, for example. How could educators draw on Indigenous social justice pedagogy to integrate this social issue of the mining company destroying land that is sacred to Apache people into the classroom curriculum? How might aspects of colonialism, Indigenous knowledge, and social change contribute to the development of the curriculum? Upon learning about Naelyn's efforts to save and protect Oak Flat, I repeatedly pondered what experiences led to the development of a political, critical, and spiritual consciousness within her. How was she prepared for such advocacy? Both examples of Naelyn and the Diné youth in this study lead us to develop pressing questions regarding pedagogical implications and curriculum development for Indigenous communities. Likewise, Naelyn and the Diné youth also remind us that youth have the strength and capability to be leaders within an Indigenous structure of nation-building. When educators evoke critical methodologies like ISJP in education, they are preparing students to contribute to and promote the social, political, and cultural goals of nation-building in Indigenous communities.

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Picturing Obama: Race, High School Students and a Critical Methodology of the Visual

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Abstract

I draw on methodological findings from a case study on how high school students of color make sense of dominant narratives of race and politics in the Obama American Era. Incorporating literature from critical race theory, visual research methods, and the writings of cultural scholar Stuart Hall, I draw conclusions from this inquiry project as a means for offering a practical instantiation of critical race research through the use of visuals and a new avenue for considering Foucault's notion of parrhesia in qualitative inquiry.

Objectives

I draw on methodological findings from a case study on how high school students of color make sense of dominant narratives of race and politics in the Obama American Era. Incorporating literature from critical race theory, visual research methods, and the writings of cultural scholar Stuart Hall, I draw conclusions from this inquiry project as a means for offering a practical instantiation of critical race research through the use of visuals and a new avenue for considering Foucault's notion of *parrhesia* in qualitative inquiry.

Context

In 2013, *New York* magazine published a photograph of President Obama standing in a doorway at the infamous House of Slaves on Goreé Island in Senegal, gazing across the Atlantic (Amira, 2013). This photograph ran beneath the headline, "Photo of President Obama Perfectly Encapsulates Two Centuries of Racial Progress." Such an image, I would argue, exemplifies the prevalent narratives of racial progress and post-racialism that surrounded Obama and the 2008 election. In the months leading up to that election, and in the plethora of analyses after, public discourse on President Obama often centered on the historic nature of his election and the possibility of a resulting post-racial American age (Adjei & Gill, 2013; Bell, 2009; Tesler & Sears, 2010). Bobo (2011) described this post-racial ethos as one in which American society has "genuinely moved beyond race, so much so that we as a nation are now ready to transcend the disabling racial divisions of the past. From this perspective, nothing symbolizes better the moment of transcendence than Obama's election as president" (p. 14). For many, Barack Obama's election came

to represent a tale in which an exceptional individual heroically carried the nation beyond the ugly racial divisions of its past (Nelson, 2009; Vaughn & Mercieca, 2014).

An interesting corollary to the heroic undertones to the Obama campaign and early presidency was the role of visuals in aiding, and at times critiquing, that narrative. Beginning with Shepard Fairey's iconic red and blue image of Obama that came to symbolize hope and change for the Obama campaign (Forman, 2010), the American public was inundated with images of Obama to a degree likely unparalleled in U.S. presidential history. Barack Obama picture books (Nel, 2010), comics (Weiner & Barba, 2012; Yanes, 2012), album covers (Forman, 2010), and graffiti street art (Schneider, 2012) helped define Barack Obama as what Kellner (2009) called "a master of the spectacle and global celebrity of the first rank" (p. 717), a celebrity status which his political opponents also sought to use against him (Heileman & Halperin, 2010). This saturation of media and popular culture with Obama's likeness contributed to a mythology around his significance and symbolic importance for the nation.

Critical Race Theory

These intersecting notions of racialization and representation, colorblindness and racial progress in the post-Civil-Rights Era all touch on various aspects of a broad critical race paradigm in the social sciences (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2006). Deriving from legal studies, critical race theory (CRT) centers race and ethnicity as constructs for examining a range of social phenomena and has been used widely to examine the centrality of race in ordering educational opportunities for students in schools (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998).[1] Concerned with the slow pace of racial progress in the U.S. in the mid-1970s, legal scholars like Derek Bell and Alan Freeman began to develop an approach to legal work that eschewed traditional approaches, preferring more pointed, radical critiques (Ladson-Billings, 1999). From this early work, a small cadre of legal scholars developed CRT as a method for centering race in research on legal studies (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado & Crenshaw, 1993). As originally defined by these authors, six elements characterize the CRT framework:

1. CRT recognizes that racism is endemic to American life.
2. CRT expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, color blindness, and meritocracy.
3. CRT challenges ahistoricism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of the law.
4. CRT insists on the recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color …
5. CRT is interdisciplinary and eclectic.
6. CRT works toward the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression. (p. 6)

While others have presented variations on these tenets of CRT, such as in Solórzano and Yosso's (2002) naming a social justice commitment as a central theme, or Allen's (2006) inclusion of greater emphasis on White supremacy and global contexts, the literature on CRT has broadly ascribed to Matsuda et al.'s (1993) original call for new methodologies and new priorities to work toward eliminating racism in the post-Civil-Rights Era. And while the theory had primarily been

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1. I generally refer only to critical race theory and omit references to other group-specific critical theories like LatCrit and AsianCrit in an effort to maintain a more general approach to how race operates in the lives of a racially diverse group of students.

applied to research involving the experiences of African Americans, recent decades have seen an expansion of the use of CRT beyond the Black-White racial binary. A range of critical theories has arisen to address the particular experiences of other traditionally-marginalized populations, including AsianCrit (Teranishi, 2002), Native American-centered TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2005), and LatCrit (Delgado Bernal, 2002).

In all cases, a central feature of CRT research is the notion of counterstorytelling, whereby those from traditionally marginalized groups offer personal narratives that aim to subvert harmful stories held by the majority (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The majoritarian narratives in the U.S., such as meritocracy and post-racialism, act as powerful discursive tools for maintaining the superiority of the dominant racial group (Bonilla-Silva, 2010), in part by portraying racial hierarchies as natural or as a product of cultural deficiencies among those in the "outgroup" (Delgado, 1989).

As a final, methodological note on this framework, CRT and other race critical theories do not prescribe a defined set of research methods (Sandlin, 2002); they orient the researcher to work that empowers the participants toward awareness, voice, and resistance of racism and oppression (Dunbar, 2008; Fernández, 2002; Smith-Maddux & Solórzano, 2002). As I argue below, the use of visuals provided a practical method for employing CRT towards this goal of participant empowerment and Foucault's notion of *parrhesia* (Foucault & Pearson, 2001). A critical visual research methodology, I contend, creates space for participant truth-telling, despite the inherent dangers of such discourse in the context of their predominantly White high school.

Stuart Hall

The work of cultural theorist Stuart Hall, though generally not associated with CRT per se, nonetheless provides an apt conceptual addendum to a CRT study of race, politics, and youth. As Hall (1997) notes, events are given meaning only through (re)presentation, with the visual image serving as "the saturating medium of mankind." For Hall (1997), visuals have no inherent meaning but rather reflect the ways in which people and society integrate those images into everyday life. He writes, "Representation is conceived as entering in the very constitution of things; and thus culture is conceptualized as a primary or 'constitutive' process…not merely a reflection of the world after the event" (p. 5-6). With the postmodern turn in social science research came this critique of the image and its narrative as socially constructed, with the production and interpretation of images working in concert to affix meanings (Spencer, 2011).

Hall was particularly concerned with the ways in which images and meanings connected to notions of power and difference. As Spencer (2011) argues, images have historically been associated with maintaining institutionalized hierarchies, with social science research playing a significant role in using visuals to establish categories and hierarchies of racial groups. Consider, for example, Gould's (1996) work on Morton's *Crania Americana* and the associated drawings of "Negro" skulls. In more contemporary contexts, Hall argues that images of marginalized groups, such as racial minorities, often portray binaries of representation—good/bad, civilized/primitive, ugly/attractive and exotic. These binaries, he argues, contribute to a system of imagery that defines difference and otherness, a system Hall terms a "regime of representation" (p. 232).

Despite the use of these "racial regimes of representation" (p. 249) as tools for oppression and marginalization, Hall's writings offer a glimmer of hope precisely in the constructed nature of images and their connection to power. Drawing on Foucault, Hall suggests that having a powerful claim to truth can be constitutive, can make itself true. Thus, reimagining Truth may lie in the infusion of counter-images—just like counternarratives—that offer substantially new meanings of

marginalized groups. Hall offers three mechanisms for such counterstorytelling, including images that reverse stereotypes (what he calls "revenge images"), images that substitute positive representations for negative ones, and finally acts that call into question the limits of visual representation in general. Responding to harmful "regimes of representation," then, lies in the visual itself and the mutability of its meanings.

To return to the introduction, images such as the photo of President Obama on Goreé Island have no fixed meaning, Hall would contend, beyond those meanings that are negotiated through political and ideological power. Obama's election represented, at the very least, a momentous occasion that necessitates the re-thinking of majoritarian narratives (Delgado, 1989) of race and racial politics in the U.S. (Glaude, 2010, Powell, 2009), with the visual playing a powerful role in shaping the meaning of race and the "endless process of being constantly re-signified" (Hall, 1997, p. 8). Drawing on both the power of images as a cultural and sociological force (Hall, 1997), as well as the importance of imagery to Obama's own campaign and presidency (Schneider, 2012), I employed the visual as a methodological component in my inquiry into Obama's significance for young people of color in the U.S.

Visual Research Methods

As part of a broad case study (Yin, 2014) into how high school students of color make sense of these shifting (or not) racial tides in U.S. society, I incorporated elements of visual research methods into the counterstorytelling process (Harper, 2002) of critical race research. In following the lead of other prominent researchers concerned with how students construct personal and historical narratives (Epstein, 2009; Schmidt, 2013; Wineburg, 2001), I included visuals in the process of data collection, akin to what Harper (2002) describes as *visual sociology*. The participants—Ella (African American female), Adam (Palestinian American male), Ana and Yareli (Latina), and Ronald (African American male)—were all high school seniors at the time of data collection.[2] Despite living in low-income areas of the mid-sized Texas city where the study took place, the students attended Winston High School, a predominantly White institution in a suburban area of this urban district. As I describe in *The School Environment* section below, my participants' experiences at this predominantly White institution mirrored the writings about other students of color in similar settings, including stories of social and academic marginalization, racial microaggressions, and a pronounced silence on direct conversation about race-related issues at school (Chapman, 2013; Diamond, 2006; Kohli & Solórzano, 2012; Lewis, 2003).

During one of my interviews with each participant, I used a strategy called *photo elicitation* to spur students' thinking and discussion on these topics of race and Obama (Banks, 2001; Spencer, 2011). Prosser and Schwartz (1998) describe photo elicitation as the use of "a single or sets of photographs assembled by the researcher on the basis of prior analysis and selected with the assumption that the chosen images will have some significance for interviewees." These authors also note that such images can be strategically chosen by the researcher/educator with the hope of inspiring responses or particular feelings. They write that this approach "does not draw on the ambiguous nature of an image but is purposefully provocative and disruptive and is intended to elicit suppressed views" (p. 124).

Visual research also aims to upend some of the researcher-participant hierarchies present in traditional social science research (Banks, 1998; Chilisa, 2012) by placing greater control into the hands of the storyteller/participants. As Banks and Zeitlyn (2015) write,

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2. All names are pseudonyms.

Research subjects are not treated (or refuse to act) merely as containers of information that is extracted by the research investigator and then analyzed and assembled elsewhere. Rather, the introduction of photographs effectively exercise agency, causing people to do and think things they had forgotten, or to see things they had always known in a new way. (p. 93)

Thomas and O'Kane (1998) similarly argue that a number of the ethical concerns with conducting research with children can be mitigated through the use of hands-on, participatory methods, including production and analysis of data. Waldron (2006), writes, "Acknowledging children's capacity to generate worthwhile and meaningful data through participative research methodologies is, perhaps, the least challenging and most generally accepted aspect of democratizing research with children" (p. 90). While my participants may dispute the "children" label, Cannella and Lincoln (2007) discuss the historical commonality of experiences as researched "Others" among women, children, people of color, and other formerly colonized and marginalized communities. Thus, while a number of scholars within social science have argued that visuals hold the potential for unlocking otherwise withheld opinions and beliefs (Barton, 2015, Prosser & Schwartz, 1998), here I seek to demonstrate this possibility empirically and offer the method as an avenue for conducting critical race research with students from traditionally marginalized backgrounds.

Study Design

As part of this case study into public racial narratives in the Obama American Era, I introduced an element of photo elicitation into the inquiry process with student participants. Specifically, I gathered a collection of 35 images of Barack Obama, representing a diverse set of time periods, contexts, perspectives and media. The images ranged from portraits of a young Barack with his family members to President Obama alongside heads of state. The list included more candid photos, such as one of then-candidate Obama playing basketball, and cartoon drawings, like the famed *New Yorker* cover portraying Barack in Arab Muslim garb and Michelle Obama as a militant Black Power fighter. There were also more laudatory images, as with *Jet Magazine's* cover photo of a dark-sunglasses-wearing President Obama emerging from a limousine under the title, "Black Cool: The 25 Coolest Brothers of All Time." Finally, I included in the roster a sampling of the many artist-manipulated images to be found online, such as a drawing that melded the portraits of Barack Obama and Abraham Lincoln to create a single face with characteristics of each man.

I selected these images to provide a wide range of available visual portrayals of Obama with the hope of capturing as many elements of his identity as possible. Some images, such as the Obama-Lincoln mash-up and *New Yorker* cover cartoon, were chosen to be "purposefully provocative and disruptive" (Prosser & Schwartz, 1998, p. 124) for my student participants. As an example of this last point, after showing one student, Ella, the *New Yorker* cover image depicting the Obamas as militant figures, she reacted with, "That's awful! I've never seen that before. I don't know what to think about it" (personal communication, 4/16/15). Another student responded to the same image by asking, "Wasn't there a point where, like, is he American?" (Yareli, personal communication, 4/2/15). Both responses demonstrate the provocative nature of the image. Ella had an immediate, emotional reaction to the cartoon and struggled to make sense of what it signified. The second response similarly provoked an association for the participant—a lingering question about Barack Obama's American-ness—that may otherwise not have surfaced had she not seen

this cartoon image of the president in Arab Muslim garb. In this way, the image allowed for a starting point for deeper conversations about race and identity.

During the image-selection process, I had the sense that certain images would have this "provocative" effect, such as with the *New Yorker* cartoon. However, some images failed to lead to much substantive conversation despite my expectations, as was the case with an artistic mash-up depicting Barack Obama wearing a sideways-tilted San Francisco Giants baseball cap. Others, however, sparked unforeseen reactions. When shown an image of a young Barack standing along-side his mother, most of the participants reacted as Ana did, "It's not his mom…She's White!" (personal communication 4/2/14). This image allowed for a discussion of Obama's mixed racial identity, something most participants had previously not known but were eager to discuss. As a researcher, I was unable to plan with certainty which images would cause particular participant responses, though I ultimately embraced this unexpectedness as an opening for unforeseen areas of conversation.

Practically speaking, I showed the students these images one by one, allowing time in between for the students to ask and answer questions and to make judgments about representation (Clark-Ibañez, 2007). We viewed the images slowly and methodically, pausing when participants had observations or comments, and toggling back and forth between the photos as needed. As I describe in more depth below, photo elicitation provided a common text through which students may have felt more comfortable discussing and attaching personal anecdotes or reflections. As such, I considered the dialogue around the images less in terms of the students' specific interpretations of particular images and more towards sparking discussion and bringing to the fore subtler or suppressed opinions. In other words, my analyses did not focus on whether or not students "correctly" identified the message behind a political cartoon of Obama, for example, but rather on the stories and insights that the cartoon elicited. In each of these image-viewing sessions, after looking at and discussing each image in turn, I then asked the students to choose one of the images that best represented their own, personal impression or image of Barack Obama. I recount the responses to this exercise, as well as our other image-based discussions, in the *Arguments/Findings* section.

The School Environment

It became clear almost immediately that the setting for the study, Winston High School, offered an unwelcoming, and at times inhospitable, environment for students of color and those outside the White, upper-middle-class norm. My questions about times that the students had discussed issues of race and politics in their social studies courses were generally met with blank stares. Ronald summed up the nature of his social studies course content as, "It's all just old politics and Texas history." One African American student, Ella, noted how the subject of race was "not really stressed a whole lot," and the only times race did come up in class were when a teacher asked her to provide insight on the subject. She said, "I don't want to say I'm offended, but I don't feel too comfortable with the fact that they expect me to just know all this Black history, and I'm only 17" (personal communication, 2/28/15). From a curricular standpoint, students came to internalize the school's silence on race-related issues and were at times placed in the potentially risky position of speaking on behalf of their racial group, as Ella described.

One experience suggested that the teachers' silence on race may have resulted from the school culture itself more so than individual teacher decisions. While waiting for an interview with

a student participant, I spent time with a handful of teachers who were eating lunch in the class-room. Unrelated to my own project, the teachers talked about race and their courses, specifically venting about the challenge of addressing race issues with their majority-White student population. The three teachers present agreed that they curbed some of their curricula regarding the Civil Rights Movement and issues like affirmative action for fear of the backlash they would face from resistant White students. These students' collective unwillingness to accept the notion of White privilege also came up frequently in that conversation, further evidence to the teachers that race was a subject that had to be addressed delicately, if at all, at Winston (research journal, 4/30/14).

Despite the absence of race in formal curricular settings, the participants all recounted the myriad ways in which they felt excluded or marginalized by the Winston High School community. Adam, the half-Palestinian student who self-identified as a minority (his term), pointed out what became a common refrain among the conversations with participants: the heightened sense of racial otherness in advanced and AP courses.

> In my IB History class, it's me, you [points at another student], and that's about the only minority you can see. Like that's about it. It's actually quite sad if you think about it: one of us in each corner. (personal communication, 3/28/14)

Along these lines of racial othering at the hands (or mouths) of teachers, students also recounted stories, both personal and from their peer groups, of receiving "level change" forms from teachers, a less-than-subtle suggestion that the students should drop down from their honors or AP course to the "on-level" course. Students at Winston did not need teacher permission to take advanced courses, but receiving a level change form conveyed a powerful message to the students about the teachers' expectations for their success in the advanced course. Adam recalled a more extreme experience of receiving such a level change form in which the teacher added a direct message: "She said, yeah, 'You're not going to amount to anything…if you keep acting like this, keep talking.' I mean, it was the first day of school and we were freshmen!" (personal communication, 4/17/14). In another case, a teacher responded to a White student's outright racist comment to Yareli and a friend by saying, "Guys, calm down," but failed to further address the racist remark (personal communication, 4/2/2014). Adam noted at one point how the school's recently published list of exceptional "Who's Who" seniors did not contain a single student of color, as had also been the case with the Senior Prom Court. Each of these instances—both the overt racist acts and subtler instances of turning a blind eye to racial hierarchies—contributed to a climate of racial exclusion, particularly in the context of academic achievement.

In addition to adverse interactions with school faculty, acts of marginalization stemmed from interactions with other students as well. As part of a written reflection on her experiences at Winston, Yareli wrote:

> Coming from a family with a low economic status and who isn't able to have all the nice things most of the kids at [Winston] have made me feel like my self-worth meant nothing compared to the White kids I'd share the halls with. I never considered myself being smart nor capable of going to college. (written communication, 2/11/14)

Similarly, Ronald reflected,

> Being a minority at [Winston] probably means automatically at first glance your [sic] not a 3.0 student or something in that manner, or the whole you don't act black thing, or "you're not a true Mexican" and things like that sometimes are said. (written communication, 2/11/14)

The students generally did not share stories of outright racism involving their White peers, but they all felt a pronounced sense of subsisting at the bottom of an unspoken racial, socio-economic, and academic hierarchy. This fraught school environment, characterized by both racial silence and racial marginalization, formed the backdrop of my study and provided the opportunities for students to share their views on race in the Obama American Era, discussed in detail below.

Arguments/Findings

As a research technique, photo elicitation, and the use of visuals in general, created powerful opportunities for critical race research in three ways. Below, I describe those three findings and provide illustrative examples for each.

Common Text

First, the examination of visuals provided a common text through which students felt more comfortable discussing and attaching personal anecdotes or reflections. The Obama images facilitated a safe environment in which to broach the subjects of race and racism, topics that had been tacitly constructed as taboo in the students' predominantly White high school. In a previously mentioned example, I showed the students a photo of a young-adult Barack standing with his mother, Ann Dunham. This photo, and the information that Obama had a White mother, led to a number of different reactions from students. Their responses to the image ranged from the confirming, "I knew one of his parents were African American," (Adam, personal communication, 4/17/14) to the surprised, "She's White!" (Ana, personal communication, 4/2/14) to the incredulous, "I thought he was just straight Black" (Ronald, personal communication, 4/30/14).

In each case, though, the image allowed for a starting point for deeper examinations of race and race politics. Ella, for example, said of the photo of Barack and his mother, "I kinda figured that his mom would be the one who is White, just because in most interracial Black-and-White relationships, it's usually the chick that's White and the dude that's Black. That's just kind of how that goes" (personal communication, 4/16/14). In this case, the use of a common image allowed for a discussion of Ella's views on interracial relationships that likely would have otherwise remained hidden or suppressed (Prosser & Schwartz, 1998). My interview protocol did not include questions on how the students made sense of interracial marriage, but in this case, the image of Barack Obama and Ann Dunham facilitated that conversation. Ella later shared her own challenges in having social and romantic relationships at Winston High School, a theme she attributed to the unspoken racial divisions in the school that proscribed students' social lives.

Lived Experience

Second, visuals drew upon the student-participants' own lived experiences, as all demonstrated significant prior experience interacting with Obama-related images, particularly in online spaces. For instance, in conversations with Adam, the Palestinian American student, the images I

introduced allowed him to recall other, similar visuals he had come across online. I showed Adam an artist's rendering which depicted the president's face with a slightly askew San Francisco Giants baseball cap on top of his head. Adam had not seen the image before, but he did recall coming across other, similar images on the Internet. "I've seen one where they dress him up in like a Nazi uniform and you see him, oh, he's a Nazi. Stuff like that. Like, they really dress him up in different things" (personal communication, 4/17/14).

In this case, the exact image I put in front of Adam—Barack Obama in a Giants hat—became less salient than the prior experiences and associated beliefs it elicited. After the above statement, Adam continued on to discuss how the images in which Obama was "dress[ed] up" in different ways connected to a general trend of hate-speech and ire directed at the president online. He recalled, too, conversations he had had with his father about accusations that Obama was secretly Muslim and/or that he had ties to religious terrorist groups. Further discussing the conversations with his Palestinian father, Adam said, "And every time there's something bad, like for example, the whole Malaysian flight disappearing, whenever [my dad] found out they're Muslim, he was like, oh, here we go…" (personal communication, 4/17/14). In a similar case, the *New Yorker* cover drawing that depicted President Obama in traditional Arab Muslim garb led one participant, Yareli, to ask if Barack Obama was, in fact, American. When asked to explain her question a bit, Yareli went on to describe magazine covers she had seen in the checkout line in a grocery store that had questioned Obama's American-ness. Though Yareli had a sense that the U.S. Presidency required American citizenship, the issue had never been fully resolved for her (personal communication, 4/2/14).

In these conversations, my offering up a single image to students allowed them to associate with other experiences that they felt related. For Adam, the trajectory of his line of dialogue was clearly not linear in the way I had originally expected—from Obama-in-baseball-cap to other negative portrayals online to accusations of Obama's clandestine Muslim-ness to the general climate for U.S. Muslims. However, the visual sparked these associations for Adam, allowing him to speak out about an issue that held personal relevance for him and to offer the perspective of an American Muslim, a counterstory (Delgado, 1989), in the age of racial-religious threats against the president and others in the Muslim community. Yareli, too, had come to internalize questions of Obama's authenticity (racial, religious, national) and citizenship status through other visuals, perhaps connecting to the other conversations I had with Yareli that involved issues of immigration and citizenship status that affected her own life. Ultimately, employing this visual medium brought to the fore suppressed opinions by privileging the students' experiential knowledge and allowing them to personalize the issues at hand, issues that may have been challenging to vocalize within the racially silenced context of their high school. Rather than force a strict interpretation of the images, I generally followed along as students constructed their own meanings—even when those meanings seemed tangential at the time—and exercised agency and control as participants in the research (Banks & Zeitlyn, 2015), a theme I discuss further below.

Participant Ownership

Finally, student-participants extended upon and gained ownership of the research process through the use of visuals. As mentioned previously, I asked participants to look through the Obama images and choose the one that represented their personal view of the president. Interestingly, all of the students selected the same photograph through this exercise: an action-shot of then-candidate Obama playing in a basketball scrimmage with the University of North Carolina

men's basketball team (one student, Ella, actually revised her decision later on, as I describe later). Yareli explained her choice this way: "I feel like mine's not like a he's-playing-basketball-and-black-people-play-basketball-type thing. Mine's more of a…even though he's president, he still has that same…mmm…not connection; he still does ordinary things that ordinary people do" (personal communication, 4/2/14). The other students offered similar explanations, that they saw the basketball image as representative of Obama at his most approachable, his most humane. On a deeper level, Yareli took the opportunity to dismiss race as a relevant factor in her decision, despite my clear focus on that aspect of the issue. In a sense, Yareli took ownership both through choosing for herself how she connected to the president and for denying the salience of race in making that decision. This latter decision appears even more striking for its riskiness in Foucault's sense of dangerous discourse (Foucault & Pearson, 1997) due to the implied power differential between the participant and researcher.

In some cases, the students also took ownership of the research process by seeking out Obama-related images on their own. In one example, Ella brought into school a series of photos of the Obama family that she had found online with the expressed purpose of showing me the images. In the conversation that followed, Ella shared her opinions on the portrayal of African American women in the media, her affection for the Obamas as a family unit, and the importance of seeing a female, Michelle Obama, with Ella's own skin tone in such a place of prominence as the White House. Ella collected these images as a way to better answer my question about which Obama represented her image of the president; Ella's counterstory of race and Barack Obama could not be separated from Michelle Obama and issues of gender, family, and media representation. These kinds of moments allowed me to feel that the research process was, at least at times, mutually beneficial and dialogic (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993), an opportunity for students to use their storytelling for the purpose of what Delgado (1989) calls "psychic self-preservation" (p. 238). By "owning" the visuals, participants also had the opportunity to engage in what Hall (2007) describes as a meaning-making process, wherein counter-notions of Truth and significance in an image are constituted by the participant, creating counterstories of race through counter-interpretations.

Importance/Implications

CRT scholars offer a conceptual framework for critical methodology, including the privileging of experiential knowledge, recognition of racism as endemic to American life, and the challenging of dominant racial claims such as colorblindness and post-racialism (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado & Crenshaw, 1993). The project described here thus offers a practicable critical methodology that embodies these precepts of CRT and offers a pathway for other researchers to engage young people in examining race, or what Hall (1997) calls the "floating signifier," in the context of perhaps the most profound racial moment in their lives: the election of the first Black president.

Though visuals have historically reified institutional racial hierarchies, possibilities exist for the use of images as a means for disrupting these hierarchies and the majoritarian narratives, like post-racialism, that perpetuate them. By exploiting the socially constructed nature of the image (Hall, 1997), participants can carve out space for their own interpretations and counterstorytelling. As I have sought to demonstrate here, visual research allowed for a common text upon which students could share personal experiences with race, racialization, and their understandings of racial politics in the Obama American Era. In this way, visuals facilitate students in combatting

dominant narratives and the "racial regimes of representation" (Hall, 1997, p. 249) through voice and ownership of interpretation.

The use of visuals in this context also rendered the participants as what Foucault would call *parrhesiastes,* or those who engage in *parrhesia* (Foucault & Pearson, 2001). According to Foucault, *parrhesia* is a form of critique, a discourse of truth-telling in which the speaker "says what is his opinion, but his opinion is also the truth…

There is always an exact coincidence between belief and truth" (p. 14). Beyond a conviction of beliefs, the *parrhesiastes* also involve themselves in a process of risk-taking by contradicting the beliefs of the majority. For Foucault, discourse can only be considered *parrhesia* if there is inherent danger or risk to the teller. As noted elsewhere, the participants in this study occupied a decidedly inferior position in school and society: low-income students of color existing in a predominantly White space. Race held taboo status at Winston High School (Evans, Avery & Pederson, 2000) among teachers and staff, and yet students of color experienced myriad examples of racialized othering and marginalization. To return to the perspective of critical race theory, the majoritarian narratives of race operating in this environment, including colorblindness and meritocracy, only reinforced existing racial hierarchies through silence and normalization.

Consequently, the participants engaged in *parrhesia* by speaking truthfully about race despite the personal and social risks involved. As a White researcher coming from an academic setting, the students further placed themselves at risk by sharing their experiences and insights with me. As Foucault notes, "*Parrhesia* is a form of criticism, either towards another or towards oneself, but always in a situation where the speaker or confessor is in a position of inferiority with respect to the interlocutor" (p. 18). As someone who, at least on the surface, shares a common appearance with the White Winston faculty who tacitly maintained a racially unsafe school climate, I likely contributed to this hierarchy of power between participant and interlocutor.

My hope, however, is that the visual methodology incorporated into this inquiry mitigated some of the inherent risk to the participants. By creating a common text for discussion, allowing students to draw on personal experiences, and providing a measure of participant ownership in the process, the use of visuals acted as a tool for participant empowerment. In other words, I offer visual research as a methodological moderator of the inherent risk in truth-telling, in critiquing the dominant discourses of the majority and majoritarian racial narratives in the Obama American Era. Or more specifically, the visual methodology offers space for truth-telling that may otherwise be silenced by the taboos of the environment. When students share personal stories of being called upon to speak on African American history in class or connect images to sensitive memories of immigration, they counter the racial silence that pervades their school environment en-route to a broader truth-telling about how race is lived in America, or Hall's (1997) "racial regimes of representation" (p. 232). A critical race visual methodology, then, recognizes both the power in counterstorytelling through a visual medium as well as the danger in such action. When speakers from the racial margins choose "truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life or security" (Foucault & Pearson, p. 20), a visual methodology can promote greater safety in sharing those narratives. As I argue through this case study, a critical race visual methodology allows participants to embody Foucault's *parrhesia* through truth-telling of racial counternarratives. The visual methodology provided a text through which participants could challenge racial silences in their school environment and claim greater agency towards disrupting the researcher-researched power differential.

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Striking out on their Own: Lessons Learned from Student Teaching during and after the Chicago Teachers Union Strike

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Abstract

This study looks at the experiences of pre-service teachers who began their student teaching assignments amidst the 2012 Chicago Teachers Union strike. Four yearlong student teachers reflected on their understandings of teaching, unionism, and activism before, during, and after the strike. Findings suggest pre-service teachers need greater opportunities to a) learn about the politics of school, b) work with families and community members outside of school, and c) develop as truth-telling political activists.

On September 4, 2012, 19 Illinois State University (ISU) Chicago Professional Development School (PDS) yearlong intern teachers embarked on their very first, first day of school as teachers. They entered into buildings and classrooms ready to greet hundreds of students ranging in grades K-8. The ISU intern teachers had spent the three weeks prior to this first day of school working in their classrooms with their cooperating teachers, attending professional development sessions in their schools, attending ISU classes, and meeting with community leaders. Like many teachers on the first day of school, they were excited to meet their new students, nervous about how they would be received, and anxious to get the year started. Nevertheless, less than one week later, on September 10, 2012, the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) declared a strike, and the start of the intern teachers' first year was seriously altered.

This study examines the experiences of four out of 19 ISU Chicago PDS intern teachers as they were ushered into the teaching profession amidst the CTU strike. This case asks four questions: 1) In what ways did the preservice teachers perceive teachers unions and the politics of school before the strike? 2) In what ways did the preservice teachers' experiences during the strike affect them professionally? 3) In what ways do the preservice teachers perceive teachers unions and the politics of school after the strike? 4) In what ways should teacher education programs prepare preservice teachers for the politics of school, political activism, and truth-telling for social justice? While recent research regarding teachers unions, labor relations, and strikes exist (i.e. Barnetson, 2010; Jacoby, 2010; Jacoby and Nitta, 2012; Robertson, 2008), critical research involving both teachers strikes and preservice teachers education is less prominent. It is the hope of this case study to begin to fill that void.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts the concept of sociocultural theory (Bakhtin, 1986; Dewey, 1938/1997; Lave and Wenger, 1991; Vygostsky, 1978; and Wenger, 1998) as a lens through which to make sense of the social and cultural nature of preservice teachers' experiences and descriptions of what they learned as a result of the CTU strike. I chose to focus on preservice teachers' personal narratives as a primary source of data, and because I viewed the narratives through a sociocultural lens, my findings describe and interpret preservice teachers' learning within varied social and cultural contexts. In short, I used a narrative approach to research (Moen, 2006) to identify preservice teacher experiences of learning in terms of power, which are understood as occurring within the social organization of schooling and the culture of the school.

Influenced by sociocultural theory, a narrative approach to research is defined simply as "the study of how human beings experience the world" (Gudmundsdottir, 2001, p. 16). Essentially, a narrative approach focuses on how individuals assign meanings to their experiences through the stories they tell (Moen, 2006). A narrative approach is not only subject-centered by drawing focus on the lives of subjects, it also uses the subjects' own stories and interpretations as data and begins and ends in the storied lives of the people involved (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007). Subjects' stories cannot be understood without attention paid to the context of everyday life (Daniels, 2008). Further, the aim and purpose of a narrative approach is not to generalize and universalize truth (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007), but narratives are cultural scaffolds or thinking tools that can be used to develop the profession and the field of practice (Moen, 2006).

The personal voice and perspective that is captured by the narrative approach to research runs in concert with methodological truth-telling. Aaron Kuntz (2015), drawing from Foucault, defines methodological truth-telling, or parrhesia, as "the aim of intervening within normative practices of knowing and being" (p. 22). In the case of this study, the participants' perspectives regarding their positionality and learning during the CTU strike as they take action to initiate "progressive change in the name of social justice" (Kuntz, 2015, p. 22).

Methodology and Data Sources

Based on my pedagogical grounding in sociocultural theory, interpretive research, the interest in social construction of reality as individuals interact in social scenes (Geertz, 1973), was a comfortable research methodology. Elements of ethnography were also employed. "Ethnographic field research involves the study of groups and people as they go about their everyday lives" (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995, p. 1). The four participants in my study were the ones who made meaning of the particular experiences, and it was my objective to understand how they made meaning and what meaning they made regarding their learning in relation to the strike.

I also used a critical framework and paradigm for my research. By illuminating preservice teachers' voices and participant-assigned meaning, utilizing a narrative approach to research complimented a critical paradigm. Critical research is defined by the desire of the researcher to use research as a tool for social change (Morrell, 2004). Critical research is usually conducted with or on behalf of marginalized populations, the work itself is collaborative in nature, and the work is geared toward producing knowledge in the pursuit of action for change (Duncan-Andrade and Morrell, 2008). My use of a narrative approach as a critical researcher illustrates my professional intention towards social change.

This study illustrates the methodological kinship between the narrative approach, critical research, and truth-telling. Whereas the narrative approach seeks to study how people experience the world, truth-telling pushes further to include how people act upon the world politically for social justice ends. The explicit goal in truth-telling of political action and social change overlaps seamlessly with that of critical research as both value the activism of the researcher and (researcher) participant. In this study, the preservice teachers must come to terms with the disruption they feel in their professional trajectory caused by the strike; listen and respond to the voices of parents, students, and teachers impacted by the strike; and confront their political identities as beginning teachers. As a researcher and as their course instructor, my students' experiences relative to the strike pushed me to think of how our university-based urban teacher education program does and does not prepare preservice teachers to be political activists and truth-tellers.

The research for this study spanned the 2012-2013 school year. Four PDS intern teachers, Christina, Linda, Meredith, and Steven participated in the study. [1] The participants were in my university-based language arts methods class during the fall 2012 semester. All 19 of my students were invited to participate at the conclusion of the fall semester, and five consented, although one participant withdrew from the program in the spring semester. Participants were interviewed during the spring of 2013 and asked generative questions from three categories: before the strike, during the strike, and after the strike.

Table 1

Before the Strike	During the Strike	After the Strike
What were your experiences with and thoughts towards teachers unions prior to the strike?	What were your thoughts regarding your role during the strike?	What are your thoughts regarding the strike at the end of your student teaching year?
What were your thoughts towards the possibility of a CTU strike before the strike?	What did you do during the strike?	How did the strike shape your learning and professional development?
What were your thoughts towards CPS regarding their negotiation with the CTU?	What were the greatest challenges you faced during the strike?	What are your thoughts regarding how ISU handled your role during the strike?
	What were your greatest professional learnings during the strike?	What are your thoughts regarding unions, CPS, and the CTU after the strike?
	How did you see the strike impacting students, their families, and the community?	
	How did the strike impact teachers?	

Once collected, data was analyzed in steps through an open coding process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Step one involved the practice of "narrative smoothing," separating irrelevant and relevant data (Polkinghorne, 1995) to "see what is there" (Grant, 1999). Here, I isolated each sentence in the participants' responses with the intention of listening to the data and following the stories the participants were telling through their experiences. This step allowed me to become familiar with the data as a whole, and discard data that was not fruitful while not imposing what I thought to be important before closely interacting with the data.

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1. The names of people are pseudonyms.

Step two involved a functional approach to analysis (Bruner, 1991). Once I had a handle on the data from step one, I was able to see that there were recurring themes within and across participants' responses. I found that participants were explicitly making sense of their lived experiences regarding school, the strike, and their developing teacher identity. From here I reread the participants' responses more closely seeking to categorize data that illustrated their experiences regarding *school*, *the strike*, and their *teacher identity*. Overall, this step allowed me to continue to follow the lead of the participants and their voices within the data, rather than impose my own direction.

Step three of the analysis process involved participants "proofreading and editing" my analysis of their words and work. In one-on-one interviews, I shared with them what patterns, themes, and stories I saw emerging from the data. At this point participants were able to critique my analysis and provide critical feedback that informed the data analysis process. By engaging in "member checking" (Creswell and Miller, 2000), I was able to better gauge the validity of the data and analysis based on the participants' feedback. Also, the participants' perspectives on my analysis added credibility to the study by providing them the opportunity to react to the research. Finally, the act and purpose of "member checking" was philosophically consistent with the narrative approach, critical research, and truth-telling. All three, in part, work to center participant voices and build collaboration between researcher and participant. Member checking also values participant voice in that it can be used by researchers as a "way of finding out whether the data analysis is congruent with the participants' experiences" (Curtin & Fossey, 2007, p. 92). Member checking can be utilized as something more than a traditional, positivist approach of "checking the data." Through my member checking interviews, I wanted to "get it right" and establish transactional validity, but I also wanted to measure transformational validity and how participation in the study affected participants' thoughts and/or future behaviors (Koelsch, 2013).

Contextual Background

Chicago PDS

As previously noted, the participants were enrolled in my university-based language arts methods class and were a part of my university's Chicago PDS program. The Chicago PDS program involves a yearlong placement for elementary and bilingual elementary majors in one of three partner communities in Chicago (Albany Park, Little Village, and Auburn Gresham). Christina, a white woman, lived and taught in Auburn Gresham, a predominately African American community on Chicago's south side. Linda, a Latina; Meredith, a biracial Mexican American; and Michael, a white male, were all bilingual majors who lived and taught in Little Village, a predominately Mexican American community on Chicago's west side.

During their PDS year, participants taught in their classrooms and took university classes in Chicago during the fall semester, and taught exclusively in their classrooms during the spring semester. The Chicago PDS program has strong relationships with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in each partner neighborhood, and the participants worked with the CBOs so that their teaching could be more culturally and community responsive. One of the unique hallmarks of the Chicago PDS program is that preservice teachers don't come to the program to teach in a generic way with no attention to context. The content of the methods courses taught in Chicago along with the partnerships with the CBOs aim to push our preservice teachers to teach in ways

that build on the cultural and community strengths of their students and families. Preservice teachers learn about the communities in which they teach from CBOs and are taught by university faculty how to incorporate the community in the curriculum. Additionally, The Chicago PDS program also made housing available in each partner community. This allowed each participant to live within the community in which they taught.

CTU Strike

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is home to more than 600 schools, over 400,000 students, and approximately 23,000 certified teachers. While tension between labor and management is an important piece of Chicago's history, especially in city schools, the origins of the 2012 strike can be traced to the summer of 2011. In June of 2011, then Illinois governor, Pat Quinn signed into law legislation making it harder for teachers across the state to strike. The key provision of the law stated that teachers unions couldn't strike over salary disputes. Quickly parlaying the new law into political leverage, the CPS board of education rescinded the 4% annual pay raise it had pledged to the CTU membership. Because the CPS board of education members are appointed by the sitting mayor (at the time and currently Rahm Emmanuel), and not up for general election, the CTU was left with few political options in terms of lobbying individual board members to persuade their vote.

The inability to utilize the political tool of a strike in order to recoup the previously promised pay increase dealt a significant blow to the CTU. However, during the summer and into the fall of 2011 CTU leadership was able to organize a much more dynamic platform heading into the November negotiations with CPS. The CTU still advocated for greater financial benefits for teachers in the form of a protected pay scale relative to a teacher's experience and education, as well as a protection of health care benefits with no increase of out-of-pocket contributions. But the CTU also wanted teachers' evaluations to be minimally based on student standardized test scores. In another recent act of legislation, the state of Illinois passed a law mandated that school districts would use student test scores on standardized texts to make up at least 30% of teachers' evaluations. It was the contention of CPS to have 45% of teachers' evaluations to be based on students' standardized tests scores. Additionally, the CTU called for greater training built into contract days regarding new curricula, technology, testing, and standards, which CPS had cut in recent years.

Finally, the CTU advocated for greater investment in infrastructure and school support personnel. In recent years, CPS had tested the waters of quasi year-round schooling. Numerous elementary and high schools clustered in the same neighborhoods had been encouraged to implement a schedule, dubbed Track E, that would start school in early August and finish the school year in late June/early July. One of the key issues this move had exposed was the real lack of air conditioning, technological capacity, and other modern amenities in many CPS buildings. The CTU wanted the district to create and adhere to a workable timetable in modernizing CPS buildings. Also, the CTU wanted CPS to agree to hire more school nurses, counselors, school psychologists, and certified music, P.E., art, and technology teachers. By broadening the demands of the CTU to include increased support professionals for students, less emphasis on student testing, and "quality of life" infrastructure improvements, the CTU was attempting to move beyond salary talk and broaden their public appeal while maintaining their support of rank-and-file teachers.

The negotiations between the CTU and CPS that started on November 1, 2011 proved unfruitful, and mediations between the two parties began the following winter on February 1, 2012. Mediations throughout the winter and spring of 2012 brought the two sides no closer together, as

both sides seemed content to let the impasse play out over the summer. In a huge show of strength right before the end of the school year on June 11, the CTU put the notion of a fall strike to a member vote. After the ballots were tallied, a strike earned support from 90% of voting members. The overwhelming support for a strike in this vote showed the general public and the CPS leadership the CTU had the internal solidarity required to strike if need be. By the end of the month the current labor agreement expired, and for the next few weeks both sides made plays for the support of the public.

On July 24, 2012 after intense and ongoing negotiations, the CTU and CPS came to a partial agreement. Under the terms of the settlement, the CTU would agree to a lengthening of the school day, while CPS would agree to hire almost 500 teachers, many of whom had been laid off in recent years and rated as satisfactory or better. Of the teachers to be hired by the district, a significant amount would be music, P.E., and art teachers. Both sides claimed victory, but the larger areas of disagreement between the sides had been left unresolved.

Over 100,000 CPS students attending "year round" Track E schools returned to school on August 13, as did their teachers, this time teaching without a contract. Three weeks later on September 4, the remaining nearly 300,000 CPS students and their teachers returned to school as well. By now, the CTU had put in place the needed legal maneuvers to call for a September 10 strike. The stated strike date coupled with the start of the school year forced CPS to make a contract offer on September 5. The district's offer centered on a modest pay increase, well short of the previously withdrawn 4% increase from over a year ago. The CTU rejected CPS's offer, and the union began their strike on September 10, their first in 25 years.

While CTU members hit the picket lines, CPS enacted a strike contingency plan that would open 144 of the district's 675 schools as "Children First" sites serving CPS students, and run by non-union CPS employees. The sites offered free breakfast and lunch to all students, "engagement activities", and were open from 8:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. Additionally, 59 faith-based organizations, 78 Chicago Public Libraries, 78 Chicago Park District sites, and over 90 community-based organizations offered programming during much of the regular school day hours. Both sides were well-prepared for the beginning of the strike. The district mounted an aggressive public relations campaign running radio, print, and TV ads in English and in Spanish. The ads were geared towards CPS parents to apply pressure on their local schools and teachers. However, the CTU enjoyed a We Ask America public opinion poll that indicated 55.5% of voting Chicagoans polled supported the strike with 40% opposing. And of those polled who were CPS parents, 66% supported the CTU strike.

Sensing the momentum of the CTU and public opinion, CPS reached a tentative agreement with the CTU on September 14. Under the terms of the agreement, teachers who were laid off due to school closing would receive preferential treatment in being rehired by CPS and student test scores would play a less significant role in annual teacher evaluations. However, the agreement was not fully reached, and the strike continued. Chicago Mayor, Rahm Emanuel thus sought a legal injunction to force the CTU membership back to work. This effort stalled and the strike went into a second week.

Finally, after renewed negotiations, the CPS and CTU came to an agreement to end the strike on September 18, which allowed teachers and students to return school on September 19. By many accounts, the CTU had won a major victory. Under the conditions of the new contract over 600 additional music, P.E., art and other certified teachers were to be hired. Limits on class sizes in general education classrooms would be maintained. Textbooks would be made available to students and teachers on or before the first day of school. There would be room for greater

parent voice regarding class size on Local School Councils. Protocols were added to increase racial diversity in hiring of new teachers. Student tests scores of standardized tests for annual teacher evaluations would be reduced from the 45% proposed by the district to the state minimum of 30%. Funding would be increased in order to hire more special education teachers, school psychologists, social workers, school nurses, classroom aides, and school counselors. The longer school day that CPS wanted was agreed upon. And the CTU agreed on a 17.6% increase in salary over the next four years after initially seeking a 30% increase over the same time period.

Findings

The participants all taught in Track R schools. The university school year had started August 20, 2012 so they had been in their schools with their cooperating teachers (CTs) when CPS teachers reported later in August, and had been meeting with CBO leaders and Chicago PDS faculty and staff prior to the first day of the CPS school year. Essentially, three weeks into their official start as a preservice teacher in CPS, and perhaps their symbolic start as a teacher, the CTU voted to go on strike, and nine days later, classes resumed.

Before the Strike…Fighting for Education

Findings suggest that the preservice teachers were deeply affected by their experiences with the CTU strike. Before the strike, participants generally noted that the primary function of a teachers union was to negotiate teachers' salaries. However, during the time prior to the strike, participants learned that the CTU also advocated for textbook availability for students, as well as a lowering of the cap on class size. Linda mentioned that she had never learned about unions and "this side of school" in any of her university classes, and wondered why.

Because of their outside position as non- members of the CTU who eventually wanted to work in CPS, the participants found safety in being able to stay "neutral." They appreciated their ability to ask questions and listen to the veteran teachers in their building, but they were keenly aware of the ways in which their building principals talked about the impending strike. Steven mentioned, with surprise, that his principal showed constrained support for her teachers and the CTU. Nevertheless, they all spoke about not wanting to "ruffle any feathers" or get on the principal's bad side if they outwardly supported the CTU.

Meredith stated, "Prior to the strike, I did not know that the union fought for education and learning environments for students. Later, I realized that the union is a lot more focused on the students' wellbeing than what I thought." Regardless of whether or not the participants came in to the school year as being knowledgeable and/or sympathetic to teachers unions, the four participants expressed surprise in knowing all that the CTU had been advocating for. Having open conversations with their CTs and other teachers in their school prior to the beginning of school helped to broaden the participants' knowledge and understanding of the CTU's position, specifically, as well as the function of teachers unions, generally.

During the Strike…Sinking or Swimming

Normally, I taught my literacy methods class at one of our partner schools on the south side of Chicago in Auburn Gresham. However, during the strike, we were not going to cross the picket lines so we had to hold our class in the university office located in Little Village. Our one

class during the strike opened with us talking about everyone's experiences that week. Many of the participants found the media coverage to be very one-sided in favor of CPS. Steven made note that over the summer he wasn't really paying attention to the possible strike. But once the school year started, he paid close attention to what he was hearing from media outlets, statements from Mayor Emmanuel's office, and from Chicagoans. While all participants recognized the bias in the media coverage, Steven was the most appalled by it. He said, pointedly,

> Uh, what I've heard on the news and read online has been ridiculous! They're making it sound like the teachers are greedy, don't care about teaching, and are only out for money. How can they not report what the actual demands of the union are? It's crazy!

The participants also noted that the media coverage and public relations blitz from the CPS and CTU confused many of their students' parents. This was particularly true in Little Village, where many of the residents do not speak English as their primary language. Linda, Meredith, and Steven discussed with other peers teaching in Little Village that the ads being broadcast on Spanish-language television and radio stations were aggressive, contradictory, and confusing to many residents. Linda noted,

> I heard from my CT that parents are getting calls in Spanish from CPS and the union, and both sound a lot a like. The parents are scared and confused. The district calls say something about teachers breaking the law with the strike, and the union calls say something about the district not supporting students and teachers. I guess a lot of our parents just can't tell the difference and don't know how to get involved. When they hear 'break the law' they get scared.

As previously stated, while the strike was happening, most CPS schools were unavailable for students to access. The CPS utilized some buildings and offered parents the opportunity to drop off their children for most of the day. Many student teachers from other university programs in Chicago were sent to those sights while their home school site was shuddered. However, due to the ISU Chicago PDS program's relationships with CBOs in the partner communities, the participants spent the week of the strike in "safe" locations (e.g. churches, CBO buildings) working with a wide variety of students doing a wide variety of activities. This was described as the most difficult and educative experience relative to the strike for the participants.

On Monday of the strike week the participants were directed to a "safe" location by the Chicago PDS staff. CBOs had set up these sites for parents to utilize while school was not in session. Church kitchens, CBO gyms, and other spaces were used to house the youth of the community. The participants, and the CBOs, had no idea what to expect the first day of the strike, and student teachers were simply directed to be ready to work with the kids who came. When the participants arrived at their sites on that Monday, they found them to be lacking any instructional materials for kids. But shortly after their arrival came the kids.

Armed with very little, prepared for even less, the participants had to figure out how to engage youth, mostly Kindergarten-5th graders, for the duration of the typical school day. Christina mentioned all she had access to on Monday was a box of markers and a tablet of paper. The CBO was able to provide lunch for the youths, and Christina was able to locate a TV by the end of the day. Nevertheless, Christina noted that she went home crying that evening and didn't want to come back the next day. Despite her challenging day, Christina and the other participants stated how

they scrambled that evening for things to bring and activities to do with the youth in their charge. Christina brought in yoga DVDs to do with the children, Linda took the kids outside on a prolonged "nature walk", even hearing from a child, "we never get to do stuff like this in school," and Steven talked about playing all kinds of relay games in the gym.

The participants found this "sink or swim" experience so early in their careers to be both extremely stressful while also extremely rewarding. They felt overwhelmed and underprepared as they were left completely in charge of a group of children before they had even taught their first lesson as an intern teacher. Still, they conveyed a similar and more nuanced sense of understanding relative to being a teacher. They drew a connection between being under-resourced to work with their youth and lack of instructional resources they saw in many CPS schools. Also, they viewed a connection between their implementation of movement, music, and outdoors learning that engaged their youth with the limited opportunities their youth receive to do such things in a school setting. Finally, while they acknowledged they were certain they hadn't taught their youth much that week, they did see and experience teaching as an organic dynamic between students and teachers. They didn't necessarily need traditional school structures (e.g. desks, textbooks, tests) to engage youth in educative activities.

As the week winded down, and the buzz of the end of strike growing, participants noted that the support for the striking teachers from parents and community members was very high. Parents and community leaders brought coffee and breakfast to picketing teachers. Parents, for the most part, offered encouraging statements like, "I hope you win!" to the participants as they picked up their children. The participants missed their students and worried about parents who were inconvenienced, but for the most part finished the week emboldened. Christina reflected on her learning during the strike stating, "As a teacher, I have learned it is my professional responsibility to be there for my students and school community in any way possible."

After the Strike…So much More

After the strike and upon returning to their school, participants reflected on how the nature of their school community changed due to the strike. Participants noted that teachers felt an elevated sense of pride and collegiality along with a deeper respect for the parents that were generally strongly supportive. Teachers and parents appeared to see each other in a new, more positive light. Also, participants saw that while administrators remained neutral, they interpreted some of their actions as being supportive of the CTU, and were very supportive and happy to get back to work.

In addition, participants stated that they saw the strike as necessary, while also being just a start. Linda noted, "There is still so much more that needs to be changed to favor students." Looking at the strike in retrospect, Linda ultimately saw the strike as something to be done for students, not for teachers. Finally, participants felt like they saw teaching through a different lens now, one that was more realistic towards the politics at play within a large, urban school district. As Steven stated, "I feel disheartened that CPS continues to struggle in that way, when its neighboring districts in the suburbs commonly contrast CPS with its abundance of resources."

Discussion

Based on the analysis of the data, the following assertions can be made regarding preservice clinical placements and teacher education: First, preservice teachers need opportunities to have educative experiences regarding the politics of schools, particularly those being prepared to teach

in urban communities. The participants spoke consistently about knowing very little regarding the politics of schooling prior to the strike. Within teacher education courses and experiences, opportunities for preservice teachers to more closely and deeply examine the political functions of school districts and teachers unions need to exist. These experiences will more fully prepare them for the profession they are about to join.

After the 2012 strike, our program began a partnership with the Chicago Grassroots Curriculum Taskforce (CGCT) in an effort to better infuse critical truth-telling in our PDS curricula. The CGCT has helped us move our students to not only see the presence of politics within their classroom (e.g. school policy, provided curricular resources, assessment) but also within the broader society (e.g. federal and state policy, school funding, community policing). Once our students see where and how politics emerge in the classroom, they are then taught as teachers the professional imperative to intervene as critical truth-tellers within their classroom as instructional leaders, within their school communities as community members, and beyond as engaged citizens.

Second, preservice teachers need to have opportunities working with youth, families, and community members outside of the schoolhouse. The participants found it extremely educative to engage with stakeholders. While being given full responsibility of such a fluid group of children during the weeklong strike was initially discomforting, the intern teachers found that they were able to more closely engage with the resources and expertise of CBOs and parents during that week. Additionally, they were able to, at times, be more responsive to their youths because they were free from the trappings of "doing school." Where there lacked logistical support and materials, there was autonomy to explore new avenues for learning. The participants spoke to this point and wanted to do their best to maintain the "authentic learning" they experienced that week as they reentered their classrooms.

Recognizing the trappings of "doing school" based on the narrowed, district provided or mandated curricula and resources is in itself beginning evidence of truth-telling in our preservice teachers. Often, university-based teacher preparation programs, like ours, urge their teacher candidates to reject canned curricula and teach in ways that are more centered on their own students. However, this cannot be fully realized without community collaboration and an eye for truth-telling. Two years after Linda's experiences as a preservice teacher during the CTU strike, she spoke to me about how, as a second-year teacher in CPS, she reached out to community members to guide her teaching. Linda was teaching 2nd grade and wanted to read *And Tango Makes Three*, a picture book that depicts the true story of two male penguins who adopt and co-parent a baby penguin. She wanted to read the book to her students knowing that some parents and co-workers might find it too controversial or age inappropriate. By reaching out to the community organization, Linda was able to build her confidence in reading the text to her students, and develop a strategy specific to her community for interacting with students and adults who may challenge her and the text. When teacher educators help preservice teachers engage with youth, families, and community members outside the schoolhouse they can become stronger critical truth-tellers.

Finally, preservice teachers need to have opportunities to develop a disposition towards political activism. Steven captured the participants' general view towards action when he spoke about "sneaking into a CTU rally." He wore a red CTU shirt, boarded an "L" train after work, and went downtown to meet up with other intern teachers to march in a CTU rally. He felt he needed to be there, to be active, to be energized. With policies in numerous states challenging teachers unions, teacher tenure and due process, redefining teacher evaluation systems, along with many other powerful issues, preservice teachers need to study current teacher activism and be explicitly prepared to be active in the civic political process (Horn, 2014).

The CTU strike helped our program think more deeply about how we are preparing our students to be teachers who are truth-telling activists. Since 2012 we have made improvements to our courses to meet this end, as well as more actively involved our students in the political climate of Chicago. During September of 2015, our PDS program canceled classes and took our students to a sit-in rally at City Hall to protest to proposed closing of a Dyett High School. Also last fall, one of our recent graduates spoke at a public hearing in opposition of her school co-locating with two other schools in the same building. And this spring, current students and recent graduates alike participated in rallies downtown and across Chicago to support the CTU's strike on April 1. Our program's increased effort to be more public truth-tellers with our students have developed our graduates and students to be truth-tellers themselves.

This study is situated in a time and place of great struggle for teachers unions. The CTU strike came after collective bargaining by teachers unions was weakened in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ohio and before 50 Chicago schools were to be closed, and over 2,000 Chicago teachers were to be laid off. With teachers unions and unionism in flux, it is important for teacher educators and institutions of teacher preparation to prepare preservice teachers for the political landscape they are about to enter. Exploring the lived experiences of these four preservice teachers can potentially inform teacher education innovation, practice, and policy. Our program was strengthened when we listened to our students' experiences during the 2012 strike. The inquiry involved in this study related to "how human beings experience the world" (Gudmundsdottir, 2001, p. 16) and assign meanings to their experiences through the stories they tell (Moen, 2006) has become a more central component of our program design. While the narrative approach to research has contributed to the writing of this research, it has more importantly contributed a more active lens through which our program improves as it is committed to critical truth-telling and social justice.

On November 23, 2015 thousands of teachers, students, parents, and community activists held a rally in Chicago's Grant Park in support of CTU in their latest stalled contract negotiations with CPS (Waldroup, 2015). At stake, potentially hundreds of CTU members' jobs threatened by layoffs due to a city and state-wide budget crisis. Among the many teachers whose jobs are in jeopardy, Christina, and five of her 19 former ISU classmates who have just entered their third year teaching in CPS having endured the last CTU strike as preservice teachers. Since 2012, dozens of teachers unions have gone on strike, most notably in urban districts like Seattle, Scranton, PA, and East St. Louis, IL, but also in smaller districts like Kelso, WA and Prospect Heights, IL (Brenneman, 2015). For critical teacher educators across the country, active teacher solidarity is not isolated, and not in the past. The time is now for us to engage our preservice teachers in critical conversations about the politics of school, labor, and collective teacher action so that they are fully prepared to participate in the struggles that lie ahead.

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Like a Phoenix Rising: The Pedagogy of Critically Reclaiming Education—an Autoethnographic Study

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Abstract

In many institutions of higher education across the land, a resounding cry for reform echoes loudly, disrupting thriving projects and well-constructed programs. When our college's reform agenda left us little space for critical pedagogical interactions with our students and colleagues, we intuitively stepped away from the ashes of what we had known to engage in discussions that brought to light the critical processes of justice in education, not only for our students, but also for ourselves. We constructed guiding questions for our exploration to critically reclaim our professional lives: 1.) What insights can be gleaned from our experiences with reform in higher education for teacher educators who are confined by "reform" oriented, outcome-based educational cultures? 2.) What might our own interior narratives—woven with the writing of others—tell us about which characteristics and practices can potentially inform a more holistic critical pedagogy? We drew from writings on spirituality in education and Palmer's classic myth of objectivism for generating narrative and constructing thematic insights. We noted the need for increased, new spaces to rebuild an integrative critical pedagogy and wrote into particular loss-related happenings to reclaim spaces for critical thinking. Our narrative portrays our processes and discoveries—our tales of interiority—through collaboratively interweaving our individual meaning making with the voices and wisdom writings of others. The current writing grows out of the scarring and pain of the moral struggles over several years, yet builds on the belief that these experiences will encourage others with a message of hope to create new images that can move through intellectual time and space to open new integrative critical pedagogical interactions in education.

Keywords: critical pedagogy; higher education reform; creative paradox; auto ethnography

Demonization, Demoralization and Redemption

Voices rising like a phoenix—glorious out of the ashes
Once we were whole, and wholly existent
We listened to and heard each other's voices.
Respect and ethical behavior allowed us freedom
To research and write about the things and people we loved.
Schools, teachers, interns, and what made them curious about lived experiences.
What their voices had to say about students, pedagogy, assessment and success.
Now we are fractured, Bullied into oblivion.

Allowed to recede and allowed to be silenced.
Out of context and out of sight, we will be heard again.
Our voices will rise in unison to reclaim our value in the academy.

In many institutions of higher education across the land, a resounding cry for reform echoes loudly. Primarily the cries come from politicos and corporate moguls who believe that the realm of higher education is to maintain and support the interests of the market-driven economy (Torrence, 2015). Giroux (2014) states that "increasingly, pedagogy is reduced to learning reified methods, a hollow mechanistic enterprise divorced from understanding teaching as a moral and intellectual practice central to the creation of critical and engaged citizens" (p.39-40). As a result of reducing teaching and learning to a training exercise, faculty in colleges and universities find themselves engaged in the circular (and often futile) gathering of multiple forms of data to legitimatize their positions. "Faculty members are increasingly defined less as intellectuals than as technicians and grant writers" (Giroux, 2014, p. 39).

This is the environment which we found ourselves operating in 2012. Our ideal of giving students a broad, overarching view of the world and supporting their engagement in critical thought was suddenly viewed as trivial. The imposed neo-liberal, patriarchal, measurement-driven model was described as being a "Revolution in Education." The three of us were educated at Tier One research institutions and prided ourselves in our involvement in educational and civic engagement. Almost overnight, all that we had worked to build within our college was removed and replaced by a pre-packaged structured "reform" agenda. Our own academic writing and ongoing instruction of doctoral students was deemed unimportant in comparison to the work of our new leadership's business model reforms; however, decreasing our involvement with our doctoral students was out of the question. Therefore, our thoughts turned to how to reshape mandates to fit with our own hard-won convictions and priorities.

However, trying to maintain academic writing and to support doctoral students' work became increasingly more difficult. Wading through directives that continued to become more numerous, complicated, time-consuming and undefined, we were often uncertain how to equip and empower our students to creatively meet their life goals and to thrive within their programs. Eventually, due to our college's reform agenda, our workloads became too heavy, and we experienced the *almost total demise* of our own well-constructed plans and once thriving projects. Denzin and Giardina (2014) explain that any research unaligned with the narrow scope of *evidence based research*—or those that cannot be appropriated by the corporate marketplace for profit—is often debunked. Critical thinking is devalued. As knowledge has become something of a commodity even within academic settings, those who wish to escape this imposition must intentionally step outside it. Doing so may entail a literal journey, a metaphorical journey, or a synthesis of both; but in any case, "stepping outside the academy" constitutes questioning academic assumptions and practices; stepping outside existing paradigms. Therefore, we stepped away from the ashes of what we had known, and to the extent that practicality would allow, retreated from our professional context with the new realization that our commitment to critical pedagogy would have to be enacted outside the Academy. Moving past obstructions to critical thinking, we sought what would help both ourselves and others to practice a critical pedagogy.

Having 60+ years in education among us, our work was our passion, our gateway to critical engagement with schools, students and faculty colleagues. Starting with our passion for change, it was not long before we embraced Chittister's (2003) understanding that "struggle is what forces

us to attend to the greater things in life, to begin again when life [our educational life] is at its barest for us, to take the seeds of the past and give them new growth," (p. 40).

It is our role as educators that defines our professional life. We have been educators in public schools, in undergraduate and graduate programs. We have been academics as well. We realize our responsibility to the propagation of academic thought. "…academics as engaged scholars can further the activation of knowledge, passion, values, and hope…" (Giroux, 2014, p. 53). Outside our space within the academy, inside the space of our critical pedagogy, we gave our voices freedom to speak.

Following our metaphorical and literal moments of "time away" from impositional "norms," we did indeed encounter emergent joy as we engaged in discussions that brought to light the critical processes in which we had engaged. Our journey became a matter of justice not only for our students, but also for ourselves. Through discussion, the three of us—two associate professors and one new faculty administrator—constructed guiding questions for our exploration of how we might critically reclaim our professional lives and field:

> 1.) What insights can be gleaned from our experiences with reform in higher education for teacher educators who are confined by "reform" oriented, outcome-based educational cultures?
>
> 2.) What might our own interior narratives—woven with the writing of others—tell us about which characteristics and practices can potentially inform a more holistic critical pedagogy?

Knowing that our intrinsic mountains were at least as formidable as the obstacles imposed upon our journey paths by extrinsic "reforms" and outcomes, we aligned our research queries with Huebner's (2008) assertion that the question educators need to ask is what gets in the way of "the journey of the self or soul" (p.402). However, in addition to focusing on obstacles that needed to be removed, we also revisited moments in which obstacles were reshaped or transcended. Our memory work centered on past interactions and practices that had yielded generative work involving critical thinking, pedagogy and problem-solving. Distanced from such moments over time, we were able to observe a connected practice and event that held promise for generating spaces for critical thinking in the midst of reform limitations.

Having routinely set up critical questions for students within our courses to explore, we "watched" in retrospect as they spoke and *wrote into* meaning, joy, and clarity within their lives and practice.[1] As we re-envisioned past practices, one moment yielded another, and it hit us: It is the *writing into* that makes the difference. In prayer, in work, in mental reframing, in students' lives, in disappointments, *writing into* can become a tool for alternately covering and uncovering with insight's healing rhythm. Key to generating spaces for our students' critical thinking, it would seem that *writing into* held the potential to aid faculty in promoting critical thinking, as well. Writing into issues fraught with limitations or chaotic imposition, we were better able to reconstruct our interior and exterior worlds.

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1. The phrase "writing into" differs from the expected "writing about" a topic because it describes finding your way through writing. When overwhelmed by affective concerns or life's complexity, writing is often not so much a tool used for description, but one that is used to uncover what is inside the heart. For us, this phrase describes something that is not only therapeutic in nature but that also generates new ideas and fresh dispositions—often simultaneously. It is empowering; an assertive act of diving into a situation, rather than avoiding it. It is safe, because it allows for privacy and processing as long as they are needed. The motivation for this practice is to effect change—even if that change is only within a writers' interior world. It is not meant to be a pretentious phrase, but a powerful one.

Committed to structuring our exploration as a collaborative auto ethnographic study, our *writing into* was propelled by the work of interactive interviews (Ellis, 2004), and inquiry through writing (Richardson, 2014). Through these acts of *writing*—and at times talking—*into*, we pinpointed possibilities for transcending well-worn mechanistic habits of mind by looking to our own experiences and the narrative work of others. Our sense of collaborative autoethnography was similar to that identified by Chang, Ngunjiri, and Hernandez (2013) in that we sought to use our autobiographical experiences, individually and collectively to attempt to understand what was happening around us.

Each of us hit upon particular areas that promised fresh insights slated to better ground and equip us to critically reclaim humanizing characteristics within education. In doing so, we drew a great deal from writings focused on spirituality in education (Chittester, 2003; de Waal, 1993; Palmer, 1993, 2010), and utilized Palmer's (1993) now classic myth of objectivism as a springboard for generating narrative and constructing thematic insights. Stockbridge (2015) speaks to the role of spirituality and ethics through critical pedagogy when he identifies the theological roots that are found in the concepts of love, freedom and hope so often mentioned in the writings of critical pedagogues. "Our work of education for the mind and body are good to the extent to which they can bring us to transform this material world" (p.35). In the shadow of these writers, we found that we could construct spaces of critical thought and teaching with our students.

Leaning heavily on spirituality and art therapy, we noted the need for increased and new *spaces* from which to rebuild an integrative critical pedagogy and wrote into particular loss related happenings in order to reclaim new spaces for critical thinking. By doing so, we exposed a recurring pattern of connection between *the role of paradox* and *an integrative critical pedagogy*. Cited by de Waal (1993) as necessary for thinking through what is most meaningful in life, understanding life paradoxes requires "thinking with the heart"—a practice that potentially opens the way for creative problem-solving and healing justice. We embraced the notion that much that is generative, is born from struggle. As Chitteser (2003) explains, "To struggle is to begin to see the world differently…it requires an audacity we did not know we had…it leads to self-knowledge…tests our purity of heart and brings total metamorphosis" (p.19).

Speaking into the lives of individuals, Chitteser's (2003) words also resonated with the roots and the history of critical pedagogy, and they demonstrated the importance of "thinking through the heart" a component of an *integrative critical thinking* that has aided us in recognizing and removing distortions, which we came to know as an ongoing and foundational part of claiming just spaces for ourselves and others.

We have not constructed an autoethnography *primarily* concerned with physical, chronological events, or even memories. Rather, we have written our own stories of *integrative critical thinking*. In particular, our narrative portrays our processes and discoveries—our tales of interiority—that came to be through collaboratively interweaving our individual meaning making with the voices and wisdom writings of others.

Finding our way through Distortions

Over time, our visions for more holistic thinking and practice within education not only became more refined, but they also expanded as we uncovered edges we wished had been sharper and resources we wished we had not so often neglected. Analysis of our contexts in the light of accepted theory, or the presentation of well-developed rationales in support of justice are not enough to critically reclaim education. Buechner (1992) counsels that we are "to listen to our

lives," and by doing so we noted that for too long, educators in favor of critical theory and holistic education, have taught and reasoned as if the limitations pervasive mechanistic paradigms necessitated were acceptable. In an effort to appear reasonable, to be pragmatic, to work with what we have, our visions of holistic practices have often been reduced to "tweaking" within the confines of the status quo. However, distortions woven into the fabric of an entire field's identity, cannot be shaken off; but each thread must be pin pointed and gently removed, one-by-one.

Walking "reform's" treadmill of measurement and meetings, we wondered why reciprocal listening was so scarce, why scores on a page were held supreme. Why was it that thriving work, time, teaching and discovery were so tenaciously sacrificed at the altar of quantifiable score production? Measureable outcomes do not ensure that wider connections, deeper understandings, or meaningful commitments have been made. Contexts are important; listening is important. Recalling the work of Palmer (1993), we were reminded that "the root meaning of 'objective' is 'to put against, to oppose" (p.68). He explained that

> once the objectivist has "the facts," no listening is required, no other points of view are needed. The facts, after all, are the facts. All that remains is to bring others into conformity with the objective "truth"…By this view, we are not required to change so that the whole community might flourish; instead, the world must change to meet our needs. (p. 68)

Denzin (2015) demands that we should not be tolerant of the numbers dominated world and that critical inquirers must develop quality measures as moral criteria of what we do; we must "honor sound partisan work that offers knowledge-based critiques of social settings and institutions" (p.33). But how was this to be done? Listening to Palmer's (1993) words; listening with the ear of our hearts, we recognized our own recent experiences within higher education. The myth of objectivity loomed large, and we had been choking on it. Reformation, reform, reforming; who knew that it could be taken so literally?

If, as Palmer (1993) noted, the oppressive danger inherent within objectivism is that it "tells the world what is rather than listening to what it says about itself" (p.69), what dangers are inherent within more integrative modes of thought? If our subjectivism is rooted in what Palmer (1993) defines as a "decision to listen to no one except ourselves" (p.67), its results would be little different than those perpetuated by the myth of objectivity. Both modes are potentially heavy with distortion; yet, Palmer's (1993) work also hints at possible paradox—integrative thought that originates in *both the personal and the public*. He emphasized that is possible for "personal modes" of knowing or subjective research to be "subject" to the truth of the content or situation studied.

Particular topics call us to face particular realities about the world that are outside of ourselves. Therefore, our private, interior journeys can be challenged by the realities, problems and possibilities attached to the subject or context at hand. In addition, personal modes of knowing should also be subject to the checks and balances of community and collaborative interactions. It is this type of knowing that calls us back into service—to students, to communities, the field, and even to ourselves. It is in honoring the realities of content and lived contexts that equating education solely with world measurement, is replaced by a relational discipline devoted to understanding the world. *Looking to the truth situated within contextual realities or subject matter studied and making a way for it; checking our thinking through collaborative interactions; acknowledging the bigger picture of paradoxical possibilities and truth that is larger than ourselves is a place to start*—an echo of Denzin's call for moral criteria, a flexible framework from which to move—in our ongoing construction of a more integrative critical pedagogy. *Writing into* our own and the

wisdom narratives of others, we developed the above criteria to promote what Denzin (2015) calls a safe space "where writers, teachers, and students are willing to take risks, to move back and forth between the personal and the political, the biographical and the historical" (p. 46).

Constructing such a place, we found, requires recognizing some of the soul wounds around us and then attending to our own. Far from the proverbial exercise in "navel gazing," this awareness is key for removing obstacles within our educational journeys. Palmer is often quoted for his assertion that "we teach who we are"; if this is true, then attention to "soul wounds" is essential for critical thinking and pedagogy, for promoting healing justice.

Soul Wounds: Removing Obstacles to Reclaiming Critical Pedagogy

Silenced and injured, we saw our everyday work reconfigured in ways that we feared harmed our preservice teachers, our classroom teacher partners, and the children they taught. We were directed to step away from research, position ourselves as secondary to practitioner instructors, and relieve ourselves of being in schools where we had become fixtures. Where we once had been collaboratively involved with teachers/principals/central office administrators, we were asked to step away. The directive was to "listen to our constituents" and re-order the teacher preparation program with ideas that contradicted the professional standards and best practices that drove our previous methods for meeting needs of diverse body of students across content areas in our region. Practices challenged our very core values.

In their recent work on "Soul Repair" with veterans recovering from moral injury after war, Brock and Lettini (2012) explain that moral injury occurs not only from our own actions but also by "seeing someone else violate core moral values or feeling betrayed by the person in authority requiring such actions…that can lead to a loss of meaning" (p. xv). The cumulative effect of the injury reaches to the very depths of our soul. When our core moral values are continuously violated, we suffer moral injury which Brock and Lettini (2012) define as a "violation of core moral beliefs" (p. xv). As educators, we have deep moral convictions concerning the value of each person. Thus, when our work with future educators was reduced to random numerical reports on a series of meaningless tasks, we struggled to respond to the requirement. It was particularly odious when it separated students into two groups—the successful and the unsuccessful. We could not throw away students who could become competent caring teachers for the children in our community.

To heal moral injury, according to Brock and Lettiner (2012), requires particular attention to address the guilt associated with violating core moral beliefs even in response to orders by those in authority. Recovery among some war veterans seems to be helped by talking with others who have similar experiences. To begin the process of healing from moral injury, according to veterans' stories shared by Brock and Lettiner (2012), the injured must have places to talk with others sharing similar horrific experiences; they need friendships with veterans to connect with war and friendships with civilians to connect with return to community; those willing to engage in friendship with the morally injured must be willing to do "deep listening" to stories they find uncomfortable; they need to regain a sense of life purpose and meaningful service in the larger community. The recovery from moral injury is not only with the individual, but also with families, communities, and societies as we all seek to regain a sense of moral conscience.

It follows, then, that educators who have received injuries within the same vein must also receive some healing and cleansing to restore the wholeness in relationships with students and teachers harmed by separation from a nurturing educative school experience. These may include

cleansing through forgiving relationships, links to the richness of mentored professional relations, telling the story of the pain and injury, and growing into renewed hope for education that recognizes the strengths of students and nurtures that growth over time. Starting with ourselves through the practice of writing into and interactive interviews, we see the possibility of integrating such practices work with students. Whether outside or within the academy, assignments can be structured for personal and collaborative storytelling. Mentoring and nurture can take place. Moving into a space for gleaning insights on what it means to generate an integrative critical pedagogy, this brings us hope.

Generating an Integrative Critical Pedagogy

Writing into what it means to construct an integrative critical pedagogy, we noted overall dispositions and habits of mind that seemed to hold the potential for equipping marginalized students and faculty towards safe and generative spaces for thinking, validation and growth. The practical realities attached to the quest for safe spaces was well-described by Palmer (1993), when he explained that—

> Space may sound like a vague, poetic metaphor until we realize that it describes experiences of everyday life. We know what it means to be in a green and open field; we know what it means to be on crowded rush-hour bus. On the crowded bus we lack space to breathe and think and be ourselves. But in an open field, we open up too; ideas and feelings arise within us; knowledge comes out of hiding…These experiences of physical space have parallels in our relations with others…To be in a class where the teacher stuffs our minds with information, organizes it with finality, insists on having the answers while being utterly uninterested in our views, and forces us into a grim competition for grades—to sit in such a class is to experience a lack of space for learning. But to study with a teacher who not only speaks but listens, who not only gives answers but asks questions and welcomes insights, who provides information and theories that do not close doors but open new ones, who encourages students to help each other learn…is to know the power of a learning space. (pp.70-71)

To create space for learning, or "openness," we need to "to remove the impediments to learning that we find around and within us" (p.71) and to equip students (or, as the case may be, faculty) with the room and respect to do the same. Palmer's description resonated with our experiences. It was multi-leveled, in that it acknowledged the power of physical openness and interior worlds, exterior input and our interactions among the three. All are necessary. While some cannot function well, if at all, within impositional environments that ignore identity and affective realities, others will continue to produce what is required. However, even when outward products or scores are satisfactory or even improved through instruction rooted in outcome-based, numerical assessments, the power of learning spaces within those environments and individuals is diminished. In integrative critical pedagogies, knowledge is represented by multiple ways of knowing, listening with the ear of the heart—context, connection and identity—the thinking and learning that cannot be easily measured is necessary if what is more readily measured is to have a larger meaning. Krikorian (2015) identifies the sense of personhood, being reduced to a mere number, such as standardized test scores, diminishes what alternative indicators might project for student potential. Critical pedagogical strategies take into account the affective and varying ways of knowing.

Carving out safe environments (both within and without) is one part of creating learning spaces, but so, too, is validation. Ignoring identity and affective realties lead to walls that marginalize. With impediments from within torn down, what is best within individuals and the learning community needs recognition and nurture. Awareness—being subject to the realities within individuals and a community—requires ongoing construction. Learning to look at the world and at each other in new and inventive ways is key. It equips us to remove the walls that marginalize and to pull disenfranchised parts of self and others into the center, allowing insights, intelligences and ways of knowing most often neglected within school contexts often come to light. Experiencing validation and sharing it with others became evident in each of our space-making narratives.

Following are three narratives, one representing each of the authors, yet possible due to our interactive writing and interviews. Moving past reform-inflicted wounds, each narrative embodies insights regarding ways to live out an integrative critical pedagogy within higher education reform. Writing into a hope of space for integrative critical pedagogy, each story points to contextualized, yet potentially transferable choices and strategies that have led us to validating spaces. While some possibilities for space and critical pedagogy require leaving one setting behind in favor of another, others highlight potential ways of reclaiming integrative critical practices within technocratic arenas.

Making Space for Critical Pedagogy through Reclaiming Passion—Reese's Story

For me (Reese), after years in elementary and middle schools, I knew that preparing K-6 teachers encompassed teaching and learning in the classroom plus extended engagement in the community. So when I experienced a tightening of programmatic parameters and diverting resources away from graduate programs in the name of reform in the university setting, I became increasingly uncomfortable with the new focus. The reforms separated me from interactions with my students in schools, community events, and museum education. Suffocating assessments and prescribed lesson presentations meant we could no longer participate in meaningful work such as partnering with classroom teachers to provide enrichment activities (i.e. giant floor maps in schools), act as assistant directors in school programs, or sponsor coat drives for children in our field-placement schools.

Losing the link between academic teacher preparation at the university and community action tore at the very core of my values as an educator. How could our future teachers learn to take care of our children when we could not show them how permeable the spaces between school and community really are in the lives of children? How would they understand and respect the cultural richness the children brought to the schoolhouse if they only focused on test scores? Where would they find their own voice to listen to children? I tried to bridge that chasm for several semesters until I finally understood I could not alter the path of the oncoming freight train of the reform "revolution." I left the academy, and, from a distance, tried to shepherd a few more students through the process to graduation and certification. I did not realize at the time how much I had been wounded by the constant hammering at the very core of my being. I left the academy, not seeking a new position, but taking time to regain my enthusiasm for teaching and learning.

Personal healing began with the opportunity to develop curriculum in relationship with valued museum colleagues. Grant funding with the Comanche National Museum and Cultural Center opened space for me to prepare curriculum to engage in-service teachers in building meaningful links between state history standards and Native American contributions to our state. Over the course of a year, museum colleagues and I created a series of lessons to accompany traveling

trunks of information and hands-on artifacts. In the beginning of our work together, the museum director showed me materials someone else had created for them with the comment, "We cannot use any of this; it does not match the story we want to tell at the museum." I took that as a challenge and vowed to create materials that honored the rich heritage of the Comanche people. Resources also had to make sense to non-indigenous educators, if they were to be useful in communicating the Comanche story. Two comments affirmed for me that I was meeting the challenge:

> **Museum exhibit curator**: "May I use some of your materials in our exhibits at the museum? May I include your introduction about spatial learning in the grant report?"

> **Teacher Participant Evaluations (Summer Institute)**: a) "Being able to see history as a living and breathing object helps teachers realize the importance of teaching the history of Native Americans. Seeing how important the Comanche people were and ARE to our country helps show us that we need to really add better curriculum to teach about the Comanche people then and now." b) "PERSPECTIVE is so IMPORTANT! Why do we teach history from one viewpoint when we could use another perspective, such as the perspective from the Comanche people?"

Establishing trust for working together grew slowly over time as stories of broken partnerships were shared. Not only did we need to speak and listen respectfully, but as a non-Indian educator, I also needed to treat the stories and traditions as gifts entrusted to me. In a non-material, oral tradition culture, the stories, songs, and dances honoring heroes are repeated with great accuracy over time and are treasures of great value. The People taught me about traditions and gently guided me through some pivotal experiences that I could then share with eighteen teachers in a 3-day summer institute. It was an opportunity to reconnect with my passion for teaching by negotiating the historical chasm of cultural differences and promoting respect and appreciation for the contributions of the Native American culture. That would benefit children in our K-12 classrooms.

In planning for the workshop, I prepared materials and proposed a flexible schedule to respond to participants' knowledge and experiences. I wanted to tap into the excitement of teaching and learning, beginning with some open-ended interactive learning activities, small group sharing, general exploration of the museum space, and then focusing on geography/history content. Museum partners were very uncomfortable with such a format. They wanted to begin with a presentation of the history of the People followed by the expectations of what teachers should learn from the workshop. They did not want to spend time with teachers working through the lessons and investigating resources on their own between presentations. That was not their way of learning. I intentionally stepped back from my plan out of respect for my colleagues. Their history already had enough white privilege. The program began with a lecture and video presentation, followed by a short supper time, and then another presentation. Limited interaction among participants occurred as they sat in rows at small tables. The following day was spent as a field trip around the area on a bus with tour guides. The hour dedicated to teacher workshop activity that was supposed to develop the link between field experiences and classroom learning activities lasted less than 30 minutes. I was frustrated with the lack of interaction that I know is critical for bridging gaps among cultural groups.

Our differences in expectations reflected issues found in other educational environments seeking tight control of particular content rather than a more dynamic learning structure allowing for an exchange of curricular applications among professionals. The evidence of a well-organized

workshop, according to the partners, included structured, measureable benchmarks of time and space/place that avoided any potential messiness of figuring things out. Perhaps it emerged from a concern that participants would not draw the right conclusions as they made sense of the immersion experience. The many previous failed efforts to bridge the cultural differences may have served as reminders of broken trust and misunderstood traditions. The cross cultural conversations offered rich learning opportunities and according to group interaction theory, (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011), the way we get past group stereotypes is by building relationships with individuals within that particular group. From that experience, new perspectives on the whole group are more likely to emerge.

We had engaged in a truth-telling experience through an ongoing construction of looking at each other in new and inventive ways. Non-native participants walked away with deeper understanding of indigenous people and the stories of their contributions to state history.

At the end of the institute, the Comanche museum educators gave me a shawl to wear at the summer tribal powwow and I was invited into the dance arena to give a gift from our teachers to the tribe. It was a powerful, humbling, emotional experience for me and one that participants clearly understood. My follow up conversations with teachers and museum colleagues confirm that what they saw from our Comanche colleagues spoke louder than a re-structured institute program might have said. Respect, honor, trust are enduring core values and can be nurtured among educators in community settings beyond the academy. It took time and my own immersion into a gentler, grounded Comanche space to recover from the moral injury received in the academy. As one of the Comanche elders told me, "Take time to meditate." She was right.

Reclaiming Historical Contexts as Space for Critical Possibilities—Peggie's Story

Writing into our history, I seek spaces for promoting and walking out an integrative critical pedagogy. I have been a part of our college for almost two decades. In my department, I am one of the senior-most remaining faculty members. Sally, and then Reese came to us in a period of expansion in which their ideas and philosophies about teaching and learning were most welcomed. Along with a large group of others who have since left, we evolved into a collaborative, interactive, intellectually inquisitive team that co-constructed undergraduate and graduate courses, regenerated programs, researched our work, presented at conferences, and offered up our research in journal articles. We created history together. We were encouraged to engage in our individual and collective educational passions. Whether it was engaging in the work of professional development schools, developing writing groups with middle school girls, creating lessons and preservice teacher teaching experiences with traveling maps, we felt comfortable offering our time and energy to something we loved to do. It was our own golden age of professional participation. For at least a decade we enjoyed academic freedom and the collective joy of coming to work with people we truly admired.

With administrative change, we suddenly found ourselves facing something that none of us had ever considered; a loss of our ability to utilize our creative talents with those we most wanted to reach and teach. Our world was literally turned upside down when a new dean was hired. What came next was a complete dismantling of our approaches to working with and in the schools. Our research agendas were put on the back burner while we reorganized our college into an image of Chrysler Motors through mindless meetings in which we had no voice in the outcome.

As educators, we had never experienced a leader who was from the corporate world. In our college, most of us were K-12 educators in our former lives. We had over a century of public

school experience. Our experiential knowledge in teaching and in the public schools of our community was vast. Suddenly what we had done in the past was not only devalued, it was denigrated. We were told that our professional time was to be spent on a "vision" that had been determined for us. Year 1, nine major initiatives mandated by the new Dean. Year 2, four new initiatives added to the list. Year 3, three more. I often equated the situation as reminiscent of the circus performer whose act was spinning multiple plates on sticks in the air. As soon as one plate started to falter, the performer had to run to it and get it equalized before running to the next. Plates on sticks in the air need constant maintenance. So also do mandated initiatives in a college of education. We were constantly dividing our research and service time to maintaining imaginary plates on sticks! As I assumed the position of department chair, I saw a veritable change in the demeanor of the faculty. Soon, as faculty discovered that they could no longer pursue their professional interests, office doors which had once been open and inviting, were now closed and the offices empty. As I wander the halls and remember the laughter and the joy, I am struck by the loss. My colleagues and friends are gone. Their contributions are not only forgotten, but are buried under mounds of useless data that had to be collected as measures of accountability. Data that is meaningless in that it shows nothing of the true teaching and learning that is generated by true academics and their students. We became invisible as curriculum theorists, critical pedagogists, critical researchers, and teacher educators. Cannella and Lincoln (2009) give light to the narrowing of scholarship and the corporatization of knowledge as an eradication of critical pedagogy and qualitative research. "Scholarship in higher education must actively work to counter corporatization of knowledge from within by challenging controlling, narrow discourse of accountability, quality, and excellence" (p. 62). One of my friends and colleagues has chosen to do this outside the realm of the academy, while another is connected through online delivery. Their gain is my loss. Chittister (2015) brings the "joy" of loss into a realistic space for me. "Loss is not loss. It is simply the invitation to find the more of ourselves that is waiting to become the rest of ourselves" (p. 105). While our journeys and space making differ, we are each committed to stepping off a technocratic mill and into freer spaces. We can promote an integrative critical pedagogy when we make spaces for our voices to be heard—whether that space is within or outside of the academy.

Redeeming the Time: Writing into Integrative Critical Thinking with Choral Reading—Sally's Story

Most of my teacher-life has been spent equipping both myself (Sally) and my students to remove the lies that tangle our journeys and to replace them with truth. Reading Huebner's (1993) assertion that the question educators needed to deal with involved "What gets in the way of the soul's journey?" was like arriving home for me. Writing into the question of what has impeded my own journey, the practice of a more integrative critical theory, I arrive at a space where I want the time back—what has been lost re-forming my context into its outcomes based image. I want to redeem the time lost to technocratic duties, to activity that I do not value as "real." Recalling where I was when I first met higher education re-forming, I think of what those close to me were experiencing at the time. My home was a lesson in juxtaposition.

In spite of the record keeping, the bureaucracy, the personality conflicts, the observable pain and insipid waste woven into his daily existence, as an addictions counselor, my husband enjoyed what he did. *It was real.* The joy of it was clear, not shadow-hidden or sleepy blanketed; but bubbling from within, spilling into the lives of others. Smiling through the remembering, I

write into this moment, looking for clues— for real questions—leading back to forgotten work, to hidden spaces.

Program *Re*-form: A Choral Reading Re-visited

Hours, days, weeks are gobbled ravenously by the business of reforming.
We are one committee training to critique program plans;
Shape shifting definitions—just eluding our grasp…
In two afternoons
—Around a conference table—
I ask: What *is* an **acceptable** *distinctive trademark*?
"How can you stand this?" my friend whispers. Five hours, ten hours training;
In two afternoons
—With circular logic and errant formulas—
I am answered: "We don't know, yet; but programs *have got* to get them *right*!
No one notices—a ten hour trip down a rabbit hole.
Reformation, reform, reforming; can we redeem this time?

Retreating from this place and stepping back into life, time related themes seemed to meet me at every corner.

Redeeming the Time, or Anyone in the Market for a Tessaract?

Sally: Walking through the halls of a first grade museum field trip, I am struck by a prairie painting. A vicious grey twister curving near an abandoned farm house strikes a momentary pose for the painter's imagination. Wound around its funnel are several brightly colored wrist watches—unexpected time pieces—or pieces of time?

Wisdom Seeker 1: In *Walking on Water*, Madeleine L'Engle explains that one word could not encapsulate the meaning of time for the Ancient Greeks. *Chronos* time, which conceptualizes time as we know it, was the word they used for ordinary, measureable, passing days and moments: time as it is registered in a calendar or on a clock. Whereas, *Kairos* was the word they used to describe a part of the nature of time that cannot be measured. As L'Engle (2001) explains, "real time" or "God's time," known as kairos, is

> That time which breaks through chronos with a shock of joy, that time we do not recognize while we are experiencing it, but only afterwards, because kairos has nothing to do chronological time. In kairos we are completely unselfconscious, and yet paradoxically far more real than we can ever be when we're constantly checking our watches for chronological time. (p. 109)

Sally: Watching my son flying across a soccer field, kicking the ball with focused earnest, *his* moment of real time becomes my own…In researching our memories, in artful play, we move beyond ourselves to a sometimes-redemption of moments lost to chronos.

Our *writing into* those moments when we recall joy—points when kairos time broke into everyday realities, offers hope and direction. Environments laden with imposition and restricted by a *measured* linearity, leave little space for creativity or the disruptions of wristwatch spiraling. While initial anger can motivate, a long-term bitterness is stultifying. Recalling those moments when joy broke through, I glean what I can to inform new habits of mind—both for myself and my pedagogy. Awakened by my museum trip, observations that would yield validation in later moments, spoke once again of listening to our lives. Watching my son run within and into moments of joy, both of us were absorbed by what was larger than ourselves. As I write into these realities, into the truth that Kairos can be controlled, I also write into paradoxes—key to my holistic thinking about thinking. In order to make spaces, I must fill them—fill them with what is real, with what calls to my life. In order to save time, I must sacrifice it. Time set aside to serve with joy, to rest, to focus on what is larger, makes space for removing "what obstructs the soul," for thinking with a holistic clarity—even at times—for a Kairos disruption. It stirs the soul with its juxtaposition of technocratic schooling and integrative knowing. Empowered by these spaces, I can better evaluate my contexts and teach my students to do the same. No matter how much time is demanded, no matter how much space is filled with outcome-based demands, I must creatively recognize it for what it is and remove what I can as I work for change. "Do not despise small beginnings" I have been told. Healing justice and clear thinking now have a place to thrive. The smallest space filled with joy, shocked by Kairos, has amazing powers of expansion. In the midst of outcome-based requirements, I provide choices, validation through feedback, and questions focused on listening to subject at hand. In the midst of outcome-based requirements, we engage in collaborative work with space for differing voices. In the midst of outcome-based requirements, there are grace periods for time redemption, for space making. In the midst of outcome-based requirements, we write into; we listen. And listening, I know whether to step away and build something new, or to generate new spaces where I am.

Conclusion: Experiencing Joy in Creating the Space for Critical Pedagogical Growth

We have known each other for well over a decade. Collectively we have experienced both professional and personal triumphs, defeats, and deaths. While "spatially" we are apart, our thoughts are cognitively intertwined. We have watched how Reese has been renewed and over-joyed by her work with the Comanche people. How she has shared her own critical pedagogical understanding of a way of life and knowledge of nature that otherwise would have been left unseen/unheard by countless school children and adults; opening their lives to new understandings. We have witnessed how through bi-weekly volunteer work, Sally has regained her passion for educational possibilities by working with children and teachers in a diverse school setting that potentially critically challenges reform mentalities by allowing for spaces for genuine teaching and learning. Although still heavily ensconced in reform mandates through online teaching, programmatic tasks and committee work, she is physically removed. While retired, Reese is still connected to the lives and work of her colleagues. However, their physical distance from the day-to-day pounding of the measurement, objectivist gavel has given them the space to acknowledge that our lives as educators are not worthless. They are transformed by hope. At the same time, by making spaces to connect with hopeful enterprises and relationships that are alive and real, Peggie has gained the insights and stamina necessary to continue in her journey towards an integrative critical pedagogy.

> The important things in life, one way or another, all leave us marked and scarred. We call it memory. We never stop remembering our triumphs. We never stop regretting our losses. Some of them threaten to mark us with bitterness unless we tend to those wounds. But all of them can, if we will allow them, mark us with wisdom. (Chittister 2003, p. 102)

Devoid of time spent attending to integrative instruction, wisdom narratives, and writing into paradox—currently marginalized ways of knowing and being inside the Academy—there is little possibility that critical thinking will flourish. Far from being a reductionist formula or product, critical thinking and pedagogy emerge from human beings and the tangled, yet beautiful mess of their subjectivities. Listening to our lives, we write into our stories and the wisdom narratives that have informed them. We recognize wounds, attend to healing, and make spaces within restrictive environments. By doing so, we integrate life back into the meaning and purposes of critical pedagogy. Hopeful, we encourage others to do the same.

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Stepping Up for Childhood: A Contextual Critical Methodology

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Abstract

In this paper, we theorize a critical methodology for education centering community experiences of systemic injustice, drawing upon Critical Race Theory, critical educational leadership studies, Chicana feminism, participant action research and political theory, to refocus our work on the human relationships at the center of the learning and teaching endeavor. We propose a discourse analysis of the dominant, master narrative and incorporation of a community of memory to provide emancipatory counternarratives that provide members with avenues toward territorialization and reclamation of communal spaces such as public schools. Finally, we present four potential sites of this critical methodology to be activated in response to North Carolina's educational crises, including NC Senate Bill 8 (Charter School law), the Read to Achieve law, the Teacher of the Year awards, and NC General Statute 95-98.

Keywords: injustice, critical methodology, Chicana, participant action research, rasquachismo, feminism, communities of practice, counternarrative, educational leadership, territorialization

We begin this article by examining the terms "critical" and "methodology." We center the term "critical" within the paradigm of Critical Race Theory and Critical Multicultural Education, wherein the word is tied to activity and transformation. We draw upon Delgado Bernal and frame "critical" specifically as a challenge to dominating discourses of educational practice that marginalize and suppress the voice of certain groups.[1] As children of two revolutionary moments (the Black Power movement in Detroit in the 1970s and the EZLN (or Zapatista) movement of the 1990s), we position ourselves as proponents of transformation, arguing that "critical" presents an exact and careful evaluation that promotes an inclusive turning point that might be fraught with danger for business-as-usual, status quo apologists. As Critical Race Theory and Critical Multicultural Education implement an active verb within the context of "critical," this epistemology maintains a direct connection with transformation and alteration of the dominant Master Narrative paradigm.

In a similar way, "methodology" is more than a listing of research tools and instruments, and incorporates the epistemological stance of the researchers. While surveys, narratives, obser-

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1. Delores Delgado Bernal, "Using a Chicana Feminist Epistemology in Educational Research," *Harvard Educational Review* 68 (1998): 555-581.

vations, or analyses are important, "methodology" must include the often unmentioned positionality of the researchers and their approach to a specific subject of study. "Methodology" can be a listing of the techniques used to gather data, confusing "method" with epistemological "methodology." Taking direction from Delgado Bernal's case for raced-gendered epistemologies, we situate critical methodology within a contextual, living setting. Rather than spending time discussing differences between qualitative or quantitative methods, we argue that research itself must reflect the community of study and the scholar involved. We elevate the importance of particularities,[2] which can only be apprehended through listening, observing, participating, and evocation of community of memory.[3] In doing so, we push against the colonization of research by theories and methodologies that separate the researcher from the community, and focus on relationships.

This approach challenges the tradition established by the Frankfurt School, which privileged class as the unit of analysis with little attention to gender or race, and focused its methodology on critiquing the impact the means of production have on social arrangements, relationships, and cultural production. An interesting point in the genealogy traced by Thayer-Bacon is philosophical thought in ancient Greece that advanced the idea that critical thinking was needed in order to separate fact from opinion.[4] Discernment between the two was the objective, but the underlying claim of this dualist thought was that we can sever our epistemic subjectivity from the world out there.[5] Code sees refractions of this in Cartesian thought, noting the failure of Descartes to see the "epistemic significance of early experiences with other people."[6] This turn to community, anti-dualism, and a critique of the superstructure in the formation of epistemic subjectivity was made by the Combahee River Collective and Third World feminists, who imagined epistemology as theory in the flesh.[7] For these women, critical thinking and methodology could only emerge from deep knowledge of the body's interaction with the world. This lived experience was the site of epistemological production. While the Frankfurt School made distinct claims about critical thinking, it ignored discrete components that comprise subjectivity and the intersectionality of these; it ignored the flesh.

We both come from America's Rust Belt, raised in primarily low-income neighborhoods, and deeply embedded within marginalized communities. One of us is a White male who lived in a primarily African American city, while the other is a Mexican American female from a city of ethnic enclaves. Within those domains, we both were enmeshed in an orientation that regarded the dominant narrative as openly hostile to our perspectives and our respective people. Our theoretical lenses incorporate this disconnection and distrust of mainstream media and academic knowledge. The methodologies we have engaged in are similarly guided by the goal of disrupting status quo-supporting narratives and research, partnering with participant co-researchers, and human relationships, within emancipatory practices such as co-ownership, subject feedback and editorial authority, in a respectful and deeply contextual setting.

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2. George W. Noblit, *Particularities: Collected Essays on Ethnography and Education,* Vol. 44 (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Incorporated), 1999.

3. Marta Sánchez and George W. Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism: Locating Leadership When Borders No Longer Hold" *Educational Leaders Without Borders: Rising To Global Challenges to Educate All Children*, edited eds. Papa Rosemary and English Fenwick, 57 (New York: Springer), 2015.

4. Barbara J. Thayer-Bacon, "Doubting and Believing: Contraries or Complementaries in Inquiry," *Information Analysis*, 1992

5. Thayer, *Doubting and Believing*, 375-376.

6. Lorraine Code, *Rhetorical Spaces: Essays on Gendered Locations* (New York: Routledge), 12, 1995.

7. Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (New York: SUNY Press), 1981.

Banks developed a typology of knowledge that may further the concept of critical methodology we are suggesting.[8] Banks argued that School Knowledge was comprised of both Popular Knowledge and Mainstream Academic Knowledge. Popular knowledge are the ideas and concepts that are consistently maintained within mass media production. Mainstream academic knowledge are the ideas that constitute a Euro-centric, dominating narrative of abstracted truths transmitted from generation to generation. Transformative academic knowledge, on the other hand, "consists of concepts, paradigms, themes, and explanations that challenge mainstream academic knowledge and expand the historical and literary canon."[9] We situate critical methodology firmly in the realm of transformative academic knowledge.

Critical methodology, accordingly, would need to incorporate the critical, transformative activity of closely examining a specific, contextualized subject within a practice that enhances relationships and uncovers counternarratives to dominant discourses through territorialization of discourse.[10] In a word, critical methodology would endeavor to uncover the human interactions between and among educators to create meaning and transformation in their lives and the lives of their pupils. Rather than relying on epistemologically "objective" measures, critical methodology blurs the relationship between researcher/teacher and research participants/students to focus attention on the humanity in both. Epistemological breakthroughs, truth-telling, and practical wisdom, exist in the moment between the participants, when members are engaged with each other; however, the final artifact, the academic paper, fails to reflect the dynamic and vital connections established because the fetishization of evidence and the positioning of "results" as markers of an assumed objectivity.

We situate our critical methodology within an analysis of one of the more disruptive movements in public education today: school reform. Our methodology speaks to a series of critical stances introduced above and drawn from studies in educational leadership and theory,[11] aesthetics,[12] and social movements.[13] We challenge the master narrative of school reform logic with the truth-telling and practical wisdom that inhere in the community of memory and reclaim the public space from marketizing forces.

The Methodology

We draw upon Foucault, suggesting that the language of power conceals available truths—discourse itself is "controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its power and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality."[14] It takes courage to go against these regulatory systems that

8. James Banks, "The Canon Debate, Knowledge Construction, and Multicultural Education," *Educational Researcher* 22, no. 5 (1993).

9. Banks, "The Canon Debate," 9.

10. Raul Zibechi, *Dispersing Power: Social Movements As Anti-State Forces* (Oakland, CA: AK Press), 2010

11. Banks, *The Canon Debate*; John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans,* 9th Ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill), 2011; Sánchez and Noblit, *Nationalism Without Borders*.

12. Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, "Rasquachismo: A Chicano Sensibility. In Chicano Aesthetics: Rasquachismo." Exhibition Catalogue. Phoenix, Arizona: MARS, Movimiento Artístico del Río Salado, 1989: 5-8.

13. Raul Zibechi, *Territories in Resistance: A Cartography of Latin American Social Movements* (Oakland, CA: AK Press), 2012.

14. Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge: And Discourse on Language,* trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books), 1972, 216.

position one as mad when violating the conditions under which one can speak truths.[15] The dominating narrative asserts specific truths, truths that do not permit alternative understandings. Counternarratives, consequently, suggest that the dominant narrative's assertions are operating with their own internal rules and rely upon the illusory premise that only one option, the dominant one, is available. An alternative understanding of power is that there are many truths, many worlds, and, many centers, which are their own sites of power. They are in constant construction in ways that can disrupt what is perceived to be hegemonic State power and, therefore, taken as the "inevitable." To initiate such processes and have them gain traction has an impact on the relationship between a hegemonic center and anti- or non-hegemonic center and requires individuals and their communities to better understand how State power is buttressed by wealth, force, and narratives that occupy and shape the social perception so that other narratives seem aberrant and its storytellers deviant. That is, hegemonic State power deploys a master narrative to establish and affirm its power. We use the term intentionally—the master narrative is the story of the master that seeks to silence all other narratives and positions them as spurious and anomalous. The result is a body politic that places more trust in the master than each other.

This critical methodology draws its genealogy from the work of Chicana Feminism,[16] educational leadership studies, [17] political theory emerging from Latin American social movements,[18] and ongoing theorizations of rasquachismo (also spelled "rascuachismo"). Each process is a point of entry into our proposed apparatus (Figure 1 next page). The apparatus's discrete components are engaged in symbiotic and mutually constitutive movement. We posit that cultural intuition is distilled from community of memory[19] and community of memory is expanded when rasquachismo is engaged. [20] These improvisations become part of the community of memory and are redeployed as needed in a new form, mētis.[21]

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15. Foucault, *Archaeology*, 230.

16. Delores Delgado Bernal, "Using a Chicana Feminist Epistemology," and Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press), 2001.

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18. Zibechi, *Dispersing Power,* and Zibechi, *Territories in Resistance*

19. Sánchez and Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism," 57.

20. Rosario Carrillo, "Expressing Latina Sexuality with Vieja Argüentera Embodiments and Rasquache Language: How Women's Culture Enables Living Filosofia," *NWSA Journal* 21, no.3 (2009): 121-142.; David G. Garcia, "Remembering Chavez Ravine: Culture Clash and Critical Race Theater," *Chicano-Latino Law Review* 111 (2006): 1-16; Amalia Mesa-Bains, "'Domesticana': The Sensibility of Chicana Rasquache," *Aztlán* 24 (1999): 157-167; Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, "Rasquachismo: A Chicano sensibility. In Chicano aesthetics: Rasquachismo." Exhibition Catalogue. Phoenix, Arizona: MARS, Movimiento Artístico del Río Salado, 1989: 5-8.

21. Sánchez and Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism," 54.
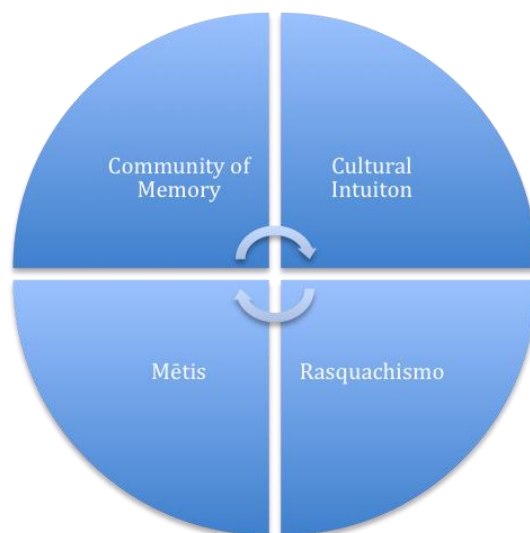
Figure 1. Apparatus for territorialization

We refer specifically to the collective community of memory,[22] knowledge emerging from lived experience from the recent and distant past; cultural intuition, a sensibility gained from personal and professional experience, the relevant literature, and the research process[23] rasquachismo, and a sensibility and a capacity for improvisation that is produced by need. [24] Rasquachismo is multi-dimensional, a concept referring to a Chicano-aesthetic art form and sensibility, which has migrated to performance and research methodologies.[25] Rasquachismo is an act, a state of being and doing in ways that produce much more than what we start with. It is also a disposition that allows us to improvise, using the resources at hand to create and maneuver. We include mētis,[26] "a range of practical skills and a learned intelligence from responding to constant change" that function as tools of resistance.[27] The processes overlap and interact in ways that, when brought into conversation with each other, function as an apparatus [28] that can be deployed to challenge the master narrative and overtake, or territorialize it.[29] Territorialization historically has referred to the power of being able to control geographic space, a right reserved by the State. Territorialization also refers to rootedness, sometimes in the local and sometimes in a broader social movement.[30] To challenge a master narrative is to challenge State power; territorialization requires human interaction, mobilization and occupation to defy and disrupt demarcations in order to create new ones.

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22. Sánchez and Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism": 57.

23. Delgado Bernal, "Using a Chicana Feminist Epistemology," 563.

24. Carrillo, "Expressing Latina Sexuality;" David G. Garcia, "Remembering Chavez Ravine: Culture Clash and Critical Race Theater," *Chicano-Latino Law Review* 111 (2006): 1-16; Mesa-Bains, "'Domesticana;'" and Ybarra-Frausto, "Rasquachismo"

25. Ibid.

26. David Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), 1998.

27. Sánchez and Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism," 57.

28. Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press), 2001.

29. Zibechi, *Dispersing Power.*

30. Ibid.

A basic assumption in this work is that State power, or capital, is dispersed in ways that make it unrecognizable. We go further: capital will always have its way but is never reckless. It colonizes public spaces and coffers through intermediaries and remains undetected as an aggressor. In such a scenario, we can all be recruited and become complicit in projects that crush our own best interests. At the core of these writings is the need to be (1) rooted in community so as to have access to local and practical knowledge and inventiveness, and (2) possess a sense of urgency in responding to social injustice.[31] In the current moment of late capitalism in which public schooling has been marketized and school children repositioned as sites of profit, we must engage rasquachismo, using what we have and being "defiant…inventive"[32] and "noncompliant."[33] For this stance to be effective, we must belong to a "community of memory"[34] that helps us "feel our way through."[35] Community of memory is like cultural intuition.[36] Both rely on the "experiential, intuitive, historical, personal, collective and dynamic…[and that] extends one's personal experience to include the collective experience and community memory."[37]

The community of memory makes accessible to us *mētis.*[38] It is the practical, local knowledge that is "acquired only by long practice at similar but rarely identical tasks."[39] Sánchez and Noblit (2015) note that mētis is a process and strategy that educators can employ to counter or appropriate State power. It is difficult to teach mētis outside of actually engaging in the practice.[40] Mētis is akin to rasquachismo in that the latter is also "rooted in resourcefulness and adaptability."[41] The material reality of one's existence "engenders a rasquache attitude of survival and inventiveness," such that we are encouraged to make do with what we have.[42]

These strategies and processes, when engaged by educators, can move classrooms and communities into social action. Social movements are "bearers of other worlds."[43] Current social movements in education propose worlds that are different from the ones advanced by neoliberalism.[44] Activists and allies privilege social relations that build community rather than individual wealth. A key strategy in these movements is "territorialization of movement" in which spaces, or "territories of hope," are forged in response to oppression.[45] These spaces are characterized by collective action, reciprocity, and a desire to restore human dignity by responding to human needs. To further deflect State oppression, social movements disperse power in the same way that governments historically have done this, using other actors to carry out their agenda.[46] Aymaran resistance to the privatization of water in Cochabamba, Bolivia, for example, worked toward ensur-

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31. Sánchez and Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism," 58.
32. Mesa Bains, *Domesticana,* 12.
33. Carrillo, "Expressing Latina Sexuality," 121.
34. Sánchez and Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism," 54.
35. Scott, *Seeing Like a State,* 327.
36. Delgado Bernal, "Using Chicana Feminist Epistemologies."
37. Ibid., 567-568.
38. Scott, *Seeing Like a State,* 7.
39. Ibid., 177.
40. Sánchez and Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism," 57.
41. Ybarra-Frausto, "Rasquachismo," 5.
42. Ibid.
43. Zibechi, *Territories in Resistance*, 13.
44. Zibechi, *Dispersing Power.*
45. Zibechi, *Territories of Hope*, 189.
46. Zibechi, *Dispersing Power*.

ing that any Aymara could reproduce the conditions for change. Zibechi (2010) writes that "community as a social machine does not merely exist but is made."[47] Knowledge is redistributed in such a way that the community becomes a site of non-State power. These theorists and processes begin to suggest a methodology with which educators can reimagine the instructional context as a site of non-state power in which other worlds are made possible.[48] This methodology can be used as an analytic to examine how power is structured in schools and communities and as a methodology to dismantle injustice.

The Particularities

The current state of affairs in education points to the need for such a methodology. The insinuation of a market-driven reform paradigm into the daily practice of teaching and learning in public schools is a global movement that positions public schools and individual school children as sites of profit and teachers and parents as adversaries.[49] This type of reform presses for the reconstitution of public education's historical role as a public good and tool for social mobility to being a commodity. Central nodes in carrying out the movement are the discourses of accountability and school choice and a man by the name of Sir Michael Barber.[50] Barber was a high ranking official in Tony Blair's administration who was recruited by educational publisher, Pearson, and named Chief Education Officer tasked with managing Pearson's growth plan. Hogan, Sellar and Lingard argue that Pearson is betting on Barber's extensive political network to reposition itself as "an organizational policy actor in education."[51] The case of Barber and Pearson demonstrates how policy can become hegemonic when government and private enterprise collude to overturn the public trust in teachers and education as a way to ensure corporate adjudication of public servants, spaces and goods. The North Carolina K-6 teacher licensing exam, for example, is comprised of two Pearson products, the Pearson Foundations of Reading Test and the Pearson General Curriculum Test for North Carolina.

The current school reform movement is an oppressive force that traffics in mistrust and alienation as part of a key strategy to take away from teachers, children, families and communities a primary set of relationships and processes that hold the promise for a better life. The constructs that comprise public school reform "talk," such as "accountability" and "school quality," in the quick read, suggests a new efficiency and rigor in education with the potential to be uplifting. A closer look, however, uncovers a master narrative that undermines or deepens an already entrenched legacy of distrust in public schooling among marginalized and poor communities.[52] In Chicago, public school stakeholders rightly asked, "Accountability to whom?" as they reflected on the school district's self-adjudicated supreme authority to decide on and implement reforms whose potential impact on student outcomes lacked evidence.[53] What is truly championed by these

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47. Ibid., 14.
48. Kris Gutiérrez, "Pedagogies of Dissent and Transformation: A Dialogue About Post-Modernity." In *Rage and Hope: Interview With Peter Mclaren on War, Imperialism, and Critical Pedagogy,* ed. Peter McLaren, 169-191. New York, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang, 2004.
49. Anna Hogan, Sam Sellar, and Bob Lingard, *Network restructuring of global edu-business. Mapping corporate education reform: Power and policy networks in the neoliberal state*. 2015.
50. Ibid., 43.
51. Ibid., 44.
52. Public Agenda. *Community Responses to School Reform in Chicago: Opportunities For Local Stakeholder Engagement.* Public Agenda: A report to the Joyce Foundation. New York, NY: Fall 2012. www.PublicAgenda.org.
53. Ibid., 13.

reformers is more of John Franklin Bobbit's early 20th century industrial efficiency-based model fashioned after the vision of American engineer, Frederick Taylor.[54] Bobbitt argued for a factory model of scientifically managed education that emphasized administrative control over the production process.[55] Today's new Taylorism is reflected in the standardization of the school curriculum that reduces teachers to production line laborers and in the testing schemes that punish children and teachers and publicly shame "failing" schools.[56] The word "reform" emerges as a free-floating signifier that suggests improvement while it conceals the dismantling of public education.

For many families, school reform has meant more of the same: the negation of an equitable education for their children. The models of school reform implemented in Chicago[57] and New Orleans,[58] and Michigan's Acts 192-197 that dissolved the Detroit Public School system altogether,[59] subsuming it into a new "community district" under state control, were made possible by the willful exclusion of the voices that parents, teachers, support staff and allies raised through protests. At the same time, the National Center for Teacher Quality (NCTQ), an organization created by the conservative Thomas B. Fordham Institute, teamed up with *U.S. News & World Report* to publish rankings of colleges of education that train teachers to work in public education.[60] These evaluations are based on a college's performance on 19 review standards, which NCTQ gleans from publicly available information, course syllabi, graduate and employer surveys, and student teacher placements.[61] NCTQ itself notes that their analysis is considered low inference, because their "analysts are trained to look only for evidence that teacher preparation programs have particular features related to admissions and content and professional preparation."[62] These rankings buttress business models that advance the idea that quality is improved through constant surveillance and competition. This converts communities of practice into institutional rivals for advancement and erodes ethics of care.[63] School choice similarly evokes the marketplace and positions education as an investment. It further suggests that choice should be made by attending to basic principles of capitalism rather than working for equitable funding and quality markers that reflect an ethos of commitment to meeting the particular needs of the community.

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54. Wayne Au. "Teaching Under the New Taylorism: High Stakes Testing and the Standardization of the 21st Century Curriculum." *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 43, no. 1 (2011): 25-45.

55. Ibid., 27.

56. Ibid., 25.

57. Pauline Lipman. *The New Political Economy of Urban Education: Neoliberalism, Race, and The Right To The City*. New York: Routledge, 2011; Kenneth Saltman, "Closures and Chartering Aren't a Formula for School Reform." *Crain's Chicago Business*. August 26, 2013. www.chicagobusiness.com/article/20130826/OPINION/130829891/closures-and-chartering-arent-a-formula-for-school-reform and David Stovall,"Against the Politics of Desperation: Educational Justice, Critical Race Theory, and Chicago School Reform." *Critical Studies in Education* 54, no. 1 (2013): 33-43.

58. Kristen Buras. *Charter Schools, Race, and Urban Space: Where the Market Meets Grassroots Resistance*. New York: Routledge, 2015.

59. Diane Bukowski. "Wall Street Greed = Death of Detroit Public Schools; Fight Back in Courts, On Streets" Voice of Detroit, July 7, 2016. http://voiceofdetroit.net/2016/07/07/wall-street-greed-death-of-detroit-public-schools-fight-back-in-court-on-streets/.

60. Diane Ravitch. *What is NCTQ?* Web log comment. June 17, 2014. http://dianeravitch.net/2014/06/17/what-is-nctq-2/.

61. NCTQ. General methodology for teacher prep review. 2014, 7. Retrieved from www.nctq.org/teacherPrep/review2014.

62. Ibid., 10

63. Konstantine Kyriacopoulos, "Civic Engagement and Youth: Research on." In *Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education*, ed. James A. Banks. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012.

The Case in North Carolina: Creating "Territories of Hope" by Territorializing the Master Narrative the "Charter School Law," the "Read to Achieve" Law, the Teacher of the Year Award and North Carolina General Statute 95-98

As we have indicated, the critical methodology we propose incorporates the communities affected by the research as co-participants. We offer these examples from the state of North Carolina as potential sites for this work; however, the co-participants, parents, guardians, and teachers in these cases have not been activated in the current phase of research. What we present below represents a potential, rather than the full-fledged critical methodology in actual practice. A comprehensive presentation could only occur when all communities of practice are engaged within the research and transformative practice revealed through participant action research. For the model to be thoroughly realized, community members would need to be able to meet and interrogate sites of difference and power through a democratizing practice of asserting the rights of silenced participants to have voice, and to critically deconstruct policies and languages that seek to dispossess administrators, teachers, parents, and students of agency.[64] Along with researchers, co-participants could then mobilize to reframe, territorialize and reclaim authority within educational institutions.

In North Carolina, where the state legislature has introduced laws that put into question the future of public education as a viable site of care and learning, we examine the inclusion of punitive test-and-damage assessments for third graders in Read to Achieve and the "Teacher of the Year" award in North Carolina Senate Bill 8, each indicative of methods used to apply business models of choice, meritocracy, and competition. We apply our critical method to navigate and analyze the components of these cases in order to reclaim and reconstitute community. We specifically employ the concept of territorialization.[65] Territorialization refers to the expanses of the Nation-State, the land and spaces it occupies. That is, this land and space comprise the national territory. Indigenous communities located in the rain forest and mountains of Latin America invoked the term as they began to experience the invasion of their homelands by multinational corporations. In an effort to protect these spaces, indigenous communities began to protest, adopting the phrase, "Don't invade our territories."[66] Zibechi (2012) introduces "territorialization" as the reclaiming of a space from an invading and invasive entity. In this process of reclamation, an "alternative efficacy" in movement emerges: community.[67] Territorialization is a reminder of the tools of sit-ins, marches, and boycotts North Carolinians have historically used to reclaim public institutions.[68]

North Carolina (NC) Senate Bill 8: The Charter School Law

The 2011, NC Senate Bill 8 allowed for the removal of the cap on the number of charter schools that could be established. This same law removed other safeguards intended to ensure quality in all North Carolina schools. Charter schools, for example, were required to have minimum enrollment numbers, were prohibited from creating schools that served only some students and not others, and were to be held accountable using the same student accountability model that

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64. Madeline Fox, Kavitha Mediratta, Jessica Ruglis, Brett Stoudt, Seema Shah and Michelle Fine, "Critical Youth Engagement: Participatory Action Research and Organizing," In *Handbook of Research on Civic Engagement in Youth*, eds. Lonnie. R. Sherrod, Judith Torney-Purta, and Constance Flanagan, 621-649, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2010.

65. Zibechi, *Dispersing Power*; Zibechi, *Territories in Resistance*

66. Zibechi, *Territories in Resistance*, 136.

67. Ibid.

68. Bayard Rustin, *I Must Resist: Bayard Rustin's Life and Letters*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights, 2013.

public schools are subjected to.[69] NC Senate Bill 8 did away with all such safeguards. This unprecedented display of favoritism for the charter school system creates a perverse symbiosis with public schools: charter schools can exist and demonstrate good student outcomes because they can be selective and send "undesirable" students (in the eyes of the charter school system) back to the public school setting. At the same time, the public school's existence is now contingent upon this symbiosis: the public school *must* exist so that charter schools *can* exist as highly selective, segregated spaces in which the master narrative that upholds heteronormativity and White privilege inheres and is reified as curriculum and school choice. As support for public schooling dwindles, the only way public schools can exist is if charter schools exist.

Teachers and administrators working with children who live in economic poverty and who come from racial and other marginalized communities, can, together with the families of the students they serve, appropriate NC Bill 8 to create charter schools that serve their students in culturally sustaining ways.[70] They can introduce models of education that public schools in North Carolina have adopted in pockets of the state but not as statewide policy. These include dual-language programs, anti-racist curricula, Afro-centric curricula, and critical literacies curricula. By territorializing the space of charter schools as a legitimate space that can belong to the subaltern, marginalized communities pull back the school choice discourse in favor of curricula tailored to support the positive racial and social identity of their children and promote outcomes based on collective approaches to learning and teaching.

Read to Achieve (NC House Bill 950/S.L. 2012-142 Section 7A and House Bill 230)

Read to Achieve is a legislative initiative that is part of the Excellent Public Schools Act of North Carolina. The law impacts third graders enrolled in public schools and their teachers and parents. Third graders who are not reading at grade level are identified for extra services during the school year and are "encouraged" to attend a summer Read to Achieve camp, complete a student reading portfolio, or take either the Read to Achieve alternative assessment or the local alternative reading assessment.[71]

If students do well in the summer camp and score "proficient," they will either be retained and placed in a third grade accelerated class the academic year following the summer Read to Achieve camp, placed in a 3/4 transition class with a retained reading label, or placed in a fourth grade accelerated class with a retained reading label. Students with a "retained reading" label, regardless of grade-level placement, receive 90 minutes of focused instruction on reading. Some students qualify for an exemption for not reading at grade level; the exemption can be granted to students who are receiving English as a Second Language services, for example, or students who place "proficient" on an alternative exam.[72] Students who are proficient readers in third grade are promoted without restrictions to fourth grade.

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69. Public Schools First NC, *The Facts on Charter Schools*. North Carolina: Public Schools First NC, 2011. Retrieved from http://www.publicschoolsfirstnc.org/resources/fact-sheets/the-facts-on-charter-schools/.

70. Django Paris, "Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: A Needed Change in Stance, Terminology, and Practice." *Educational Researcher 41*, no. 3 (2012): 93-97.

71. NC Department of Public Instruction. *North Carolina Read to Achieve: A Guide to Implementing House Bill 950/S.L. 2012-142 Section 7A and House Bill 230*, 2015. Raleigh, NC, 2012. *Contracts Between Units of Government and Labor Unions, Trade Unions or Labor Organizations Concerning Public Employees Declared to Be Illegal*. NC General Statute 95-98.

72. *Read to Achieve Law*. House Bill 950, State Law 2012-142 Section 7A, 2015, 9.

While a majority of recently surveyed teachers support the goals of Read to Achieve, 92% of the 100 survey respondents reported that the law increased student stress and anxiety levels and had a negative impact on their development in academic areas because less time was spent on developing those domains of learning.[73] Critics of the law point out that the legislature's increased demand on third graders coincides with "...reduced prekindergarten opportunities, [elimination of] class size caps, and [cutting of] the ranks of teachers and teacher assistants."[74] Also noted are the lack of evidence in support of the Read to Achieve law and the excessive testing of children. As the law made its way into the daily life activities of the third grade classroom, teachers in school districts that adopted the use of portfolio assessments discovered that children would have to pass 36 separate assessments, each taking 30 minutes to administer.[75]

Thia "read or flunk" law [76] has a punitive effect on some children; retention in the early grades within the North Carolina public school system has been established as a raced and gendered process that is counterproductive and economically costly.[77] A law, then, such as Read to Achieve, that uses early grade retention as its primary strategy to create proficient readers, should be interrogated. The importance of children knowing how to read is not in question. What is in question is why legislators chose to enact a law that engages a practice (retention) that has been identified as disproportionately impacting African-, Latino-, and Native-American boys. Here, boys of color are removed from geographies of learning and resettled in holding spaces—intellectual prisons or reservations—and submitted to a series of reminders of their inadequacy as determined by spurious assessments.

Removal and resettlement were strategies used by the federal government to move Native Americans from their land as part of the colonial project and as a way to facilitate elites' use of these lands for their own profit and gain.[78] Today, young boys of color find themselves interned by this same logic. This manufactured failure of boys of color seeks the social erasure of these communities. Many actors can take part in territorializing the assessment discourse under accountability. First, academics can continue to call out the punitive, ideologically-motivated aspects of the Read to Achieve law and highlight its negative impact on all students. Second, the research and policy community can deploy a critique of the law and of lawmakers for the abuse of power demonstrated in passing the ill-designed law, which lacks evidence from the research and policy field. Third, teachers can evoke their cultural intuition[79] and community of memory,[80] and do what they have always done in quiet rebellion: close the classroom door and do what is right by children.

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73. Robert Smith, Scott Imig, and Brad Walker, "Read To Achieve: North Carolina 3rd Grade Teachers' Views on Reading Policies to End Social Promotion: Results of a Survey of 100 Third Grade Teachers in Southeastern North Carolina." Wilmington, NC, 2015. http://uncw.edu/newsletters/watson-chronicle/2015/09/wce-professors-survey-teachers-on-read-to-achieve.html.

74. Jana Robertson Siegel and Pamela Grundy. "Politics driven Read to Achieve: A path to failure for North Carolina." May 14, 2014, 8. http://dianeravitch.net/2014/05/07/north-carolina-the-negative-impact-of-read-to-achieve-for-third-graders/.

75. Lindsay Wagner, "Students, Teachers Grapple with Read To Achieve Law". NC Policy Watch. March 20, 2014.

76. Ann Doss Helms, "Read or Flunk Law: Changing NC Law Puzzles Parents." *Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, NC), July 8, 2014.

77. Kindergarten Readiness Issues Group, Partners in Research Forum. "North Carolina Early Grade Retention in the Age of Accountability." Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, 2003.

78. Sandy Grande, *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.

79. Delgado Bernal, "Using Chicana Feminist Epistemologies"

80. Sánchez and Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism"

Read to Achieve is sustained by the tautological argument, "Excellent readers go to excellent schools." The tautology conceals how the law allows schools to remove readers who are not proficient on reading assessments and how testing is used to continue stratifying American society. The tests themselves have been designed to ensure America's competitiveness through the "production of an efficient and marketable worker."[81] The law embraces the neoliberal logic that education must prepare students to compete rather than to take on the great challenges of our time. It aims to transform society into a place where no one really wins: the non-proficient readers are removed and the excellent students pay with their excellence to be able to labor and love within a narrow set of parameters that limit vision, human potential and joy.

Teacher of the Year Award

The North Carolina Teacher of the Year Award recognizes the work of a single teacher in the public school setting. The award includes the responsibility of providing professional development to colleagues throughout the state as a way to maximize her utility, to put it in neoliberal terms.[82] The teacher of the year receives an automobile to facilitate the travel she must undertake in order to fulfill this obligation. Schools feature poster-sized images of the car with the issuing car dealer's logo displayed across the image. A common photograph that circulates as part of the public relations campaign that follows the announcement of the award is that of the teacher shaking the car dealer's hand, both facing the camera with the shiny new vehicle at their side. Video footage might feature the teacher expressing gratitude for the car and what it represents: excellence in the teaching profession and the opportunity to share that expertise with others. A celebratory component is the actual award ceremony, where the teacher is introduced, presented to the audience and invited to offer comments, reflections, and expressions of appreciation. The moment reifies the master narrative of education reform. It fetishizes objective measures that are used to reassert the accountability paradigm. By identifying the one teacher that is the best one among North Carolina's 95,116, it dissolves the community of practice among education professionals, and it sows distrust between teachers and parents. [83]

Both of these events, receiving the car at the dealership and attending the award ceremony, are potentially emancipatory spaces that the teacher of the year can territorialize to reclaim community. The teacher can engage in a series of strategies to unsettle the underlying discourses that fuel a master narrative, such as competition, or the idea that only one person can occupy a particular niche, or "corner the market" on excellence. The teacher can invite her students and colleagues to these events as a way to demonstrate, through the physical occupation of her community, that the award belongs not only to her but to her students and colleagues as well, because it is through their shared work that she can be excellent. A second approach can be to donate the car to the

81. Joanne Larson, "Operationalizing the Neoliberal Common Good," in *Closer Readings of the Common Core: Asking Big Questions about the English/Language Arts Standards*, edited by Patrick Shannon, ix-xv, (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann), 2013, iv.

82. Bryan Metcalfe, "Narrative Resistance to Democratic Education," in *Demythologizing Educational Reforms: Responses to The Political and Corporate Takeover Of Education*, edited by Arthur T. Costigan and Leslie Grey, 20-33, (New York: Routledge), 2015.

83. National Education Association. "Rankings and Estimates: Rankings of the States 2014 and Estimates of School Statistics 2015." Washington, DC: National Education Association, March 2015, 17. http://www.nea.org/home/rankings-and-estimates-2014-2015.htmlhttp://www.nea.org/home/rankings-and-estimates-2014-2015.html.

school for the use of the larger community, such as a school social worker who makes home visits or parent transportation to make it to school meetings. The teacher can also ask that the car be auctioned and the money be used to pay for a pressing school need, or to fund a school enrichment or tutoring program. The professional development that the teacher of the year is required to offer to fellow teachers statewide can be reconceptualized as a model of collaborative exchange in which the focus is on an examination of the school and community conditions and relationships that make possible the emergence of a teacher of the year. This model of collaboration should involve the entire school community from colleagues to students to families and administrators and should be offered online to facilitate the participation of the various community stakeholders. The teacher can territorialize the language of education reform and introduce the revised model of sharing knowledge as an "innovation" that leads to better outcomes for all. This move also implies that excellence is everywhere, decentralized and dispersed, and highly situated in its responsiveness to local needs.

The teacher can leverage the access to the public that the press junket that follows her to the awards ceremony and car dealership as opportunities to counter the master narrative that positions teachers as marketplace subjects rather than as members of communities in which every member contributes to the co-construction of a particular space and future based on a shared vision. Territorializing competitive dimensions of the Teacher of the Year award relies on enacting rasquachismo's ethos of "making do with what you have."[84] The teacher exploits the space she has for the greater good. Together with her community, she pushes back on neoliberal models of excellence which seek to confirm individual and collective progress using a normative standard as the privileged metric.[85]

NC General Statute 95-98 Declared To Be Illegal! The Right to Collective Bargaining

North Carolina state law GS 95-98 (1959) prohibits contracts between any government entity and labor or trade unions or labor organizations as these concern public employees. Collective bargaining is, therefore, declared to be illegal as part of Article 12 of the Department of Labor and Labor Regulations. This means that NC public school teachers who organize or seek to bargain collectively would be violating the law. Yet, with a 17.4% decline in NC teacher pay and one of the lowest amounts of per student expenditure in the country, as well as the loss of teacher tenure and salary raises for attaining an advanced degree, teachers may want to partner with students and their families to bargain directly with the state.[86] North Carolina has the 10th largest public school enrollment in the country, with nearly 1.5 million students.[87] The state also employs 95,116 teachers.[88] Together, with students' families, these numbers can swell to 2 million.

By territorializing the space normally occupied by a labor union, teachers, students and families become a formidable force that the state cannot ignore. It is not, however, just about the masses. This work must begin at the local level, with power dispersed within each school district

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84. Ybarra-Frausto, "Rasquachismo"
85. Metcalfe, "Narrative Resistance to Democratic Education."
86. NEA Research (2015, March). Rankings & Estimates, x.
87. Ibid., 11.
88. Ibid., 17.

horizontally[89] and rhizomatically.[90] Here, the community serves as a "social machine,"[91] where "subjective links [are formed] in which all participants are one"[92] and function to "reveal hidden aspects of cooperation."[93] This revelation energizes and mobilizes, and it is in this moment, as Zibechi reminds us, that internal power is unleashed *and* as it is unleashed, is discovered as power.

Concluding Space

In the four cases above, NC Senate Bill 8, Read to Achieve, Teacher of the Year, and NC General Statute 95-98, we present opportunities for critical methodology research. Each of these examples suggests moments of imminent threat to public education and the communities that rely upon the democratizing project of public schooling. NC Senate Bill 8 proposes the elimination of public school in favor of corporatized charter schools, Read to Achieve inserts the state control over the teacher-student relationship by asserting the damaging precedent that student development is dependent on an arbitrarily standardized reading level, and Teacher of the Year corrodes teacher community with the incorporation of competition between members of a community of practice, turning peers into rivals.[94] Teachers, parents, guardians, administrators, students and concerned citizens can reclaim the territory[95] of their community public schools by stepping up for childhood and asserting their local and practical knowledge and inventiveness, [96] becoming defiant to those who would usurp their authority,[97] noncompliant,[98] by reclaiming their ability to make do with what they have,[99] and participating in community-based action.[100]

As communities are reconstructed as an alternative efficacy, power becomes dispersed in ways that resist centralization.[101] This is not an easy task to accomplish, and in fact, results in a difficult coexistence with the state. Notes Zibechi, "the state is governed by the logic of the market: homogeneity and capitalism, while the community is governed by the logic of difference and its right to assert community."[102]

The critical methodology we propose for stepping up for childhood does not come without peril. The corporate and ideological forces at work to deprofessionalize and vilify public education in North Carolina, and around the nation, are well resourced and carefully orchestrated. Only an overt disruption and extensive critical analysis will engage those damaged by the privatization of public education and motivate communities to reclaim their stolen territories. Within a culture of compliance and conformity, North Carolina citizens face a particularly difficult task to address the

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89. Zibechi, *Dispersing Power*, 14.

90. Gillles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1987.

91. Zibechi, *Dispersing Power,* 14.

92. Ibid.

93. Zibechi, *Dispersing Power*, 11

94. Kyriacopoulos, "Civic Engagement and Youth"; Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press), 1991.

95. Zibechi, *Territories in Resistance*.

96. Sánchez and Noblit, "Education Without Nationalism."

97. Mesa Bains, *Domesticana*

98. Carrillo, "Expressing Latina Sexuality."

99. Ybarra-Frausto, "Rasquachismo.

100. Fox, et al., "Critical Youth Engagement: Participatory Action Research and Organizing."

101. Zibechi, *Dispersing Power,* 136.

102. Ibid.

power in the state legislature and act against edicts that dispossess teachers of the right to do their jobs.

Critical methodologies intervene as moral action taken up as a community. Their aim is not to produce a competitive worker but a just society. They activate and reclaim what we have inherited and continue to construct from ongoing struggles for human rights for all. These methodologies intervene as remembering- so that we might pick up the tools that were left for us. The researcher is no more capable than the co-participants; all can and have intervened.

We cannot predict where the co-participants and researchers will take the critical methodology with the four cases we have presented, nor should we. The idea behind this methodology is that it is deeply contextual, dependent on the circumstance and the practitioners, created for and by the situation that calls for it. The communities most impacted by these practices have yet to be engaged in this critical methodology but belong to communities of memory in which liberatory praxis is lived experience (e.g. Civil Rights Movement). Their conclusions will, nonetheless, be specific to their contexts. The purpose of a critical methodology is liberation rather than restrictions, or external impositions, emancipation rather than stratification. We suggest that engaged researchers step up for childhood through applying this method, but we will not—cannot—dictate the results or solutions they will arrive with. We can only assert that a critical methodology assembles community, and only community can transform and alter the dominant Master Narrative paradigm.

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