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The Journal of the New York State Foundations of Education Association
Volume 3 (2023)

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Educational Myths of an American Empire:
Colonial Narratives and The Meriam Report

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Abstract: The Meriam Report is a remarkable historical artifact of the United States' colonial project. The idea of a stronger nation through education embodied in the report betrays the report's imperial core. The report's authors express moral outrage at the failure of the United States to respect the human dignity of Native Americans. To absolve these failures, the report repeatedly looks to education as the way forward. My interest is in the discursive construction of that argument, specifically how new discourses of progress, scientific management, and modern administrative principles were used to justify expansion of the federal government and solidify the moral mission of the nation. I show how the language and discursive practices of the report extend a relationship of benevolent domination over the nation's Indigenous population.

Introduction

In 1928, the government of the United States released a jarring report on the condition of Native Americans. Popularly called the "Meriam Report," the publication was the result of two years of fieldwork from an interdisciplinary team. It compiled a vast collection of statistics, diligently collected details and harrowing testimonials, all in support of a damning conclusion: the federal government had failed its most basic obligations to support the welfare of Native Americans. Massive sections were devoted to health care, economic development, and family life. Celebrated by the press at the time and hailed by historians in the following decades,[1] the report became perceived as a turning point in the treatment of Native Americans. Throughout the 800-page report was a recurring call for better Native education,[2] and amidst the recognition of its importance this running theme betrays the fundamentally colonial drive at the heart of calls for reform.

The Meriam Report is a remarkable historical artifact of the United States' colonial project. I argue that the idea of a stronger nation through education betrays the imperial core of this artifact. At first glance, this may be difficult to detect as it decried four decades of corrupt and ineffective Native American policy, shining a spotlight on frugal government funding, abuse, and land theft. The report's authors express disappointment and moral outrage at the utter failure of the United States to respect the common human dignity of Native Americans. To absolve these failures, the report repeatedly looks to education as the way forward. My interest is in the discursive construction of that argument, specifically how new discourses of progress, scientific management, and modern administrative principles were used to justify the expansion of the federal government and solidify the moral mission of the nation. I analyze one section in particular, the comprehensive survey of the state of Native American education, to show how education was central to the specific type of empire that was being constructed by the United

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[1] See for example Jennifer L. Bertolet, "After the Meriam Report: W. Carson Ryan, Jr. and the Transformation of American Indian Education, 1928-1936." PhD diss., George Washington University, 2007; Margaret Szasz. *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-determination since 1928.* (University of New Mexico Press, 1999); Randolph C. Downes. "A Crusade for Indian Reform, 1922-1934." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 32, no. 3 (1945): 331-354; Kenneth R. Philp. *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform: 1920-1954.* (University of Arizona Press. 1977).

[2] Joseph Watras. "Progressive Education and Native American Schools, 1929-1950." *Educational Foundations*, 18 (2004): 81-105.

States in the 1920s and 30s. A few years after the report was published, the New Deal would be enacted, followed by the Wheeler-Howard Act,[3] legislation which set the grounds for Native self-determination. Those accomplishments exist alongside the discursive imprint of America's long fixation with the "Indian Problem," that singular phrase[4] capturing a morphing preoccupation of policymakers, wealthy philanthropists, generals on the Western plains, and educators.[5] Starting in the last decades of the nineteenth century, their debates would coalesce around the understanding that there was one way to lead Native Americans away from extinction and towards civilization: education.

Education has always been at the heart of empire building.[6] Using discourse analysis, I show how the language and discursive practices of the report extend a relationship of benevolent domination over the nation's Indigenous population. This ideology, thoroughly baked into the language and practices of the Meriam Report, is what makes it an imperial document, and it is a background that continues to inform reform around the world today, including present-day policies, concepts of education, and ideas about civilization.

This is not a study of the impact of US education policy on Native peoples or even of Indigenous education — Native voices, stories, perspectives are absent. Instead, it's an exploration of the stories a conquering society tells itself. Still, Native scholars have led the way in reinterpreting metanarratives of progress, benevolence, modernity, and tragedy,[7] crafting counternarratives against colonial historiographies, and creating distinct timelines and relationships on their own terms.[8] Many draw on a settler colonial perspective that questions central myths of free democracy, liberal welfare states, and modernity.[9] Such stances can "unfreeze" Natives — and other marginalized groups — from cultural baggage of colonial domination.[10]

I will first briefly discuss discourse analysis as a method and its interrelationship with ideology. Then, I'll describe the historical context of the Meriam Report, focusing on the

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[3] Also called the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934.

[4] Throughout this paper I will use the term "Indian" when quoting or referencing the work of historical figures. Recognizing the varied history and preferences for terminology, I use the terms Native Americans and Indigenous interchangeably.

[5] David Wallace Adams. *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875–1928.* (University Press of Kansas, 2020).

[6] Rebecca Swartz. *Education and Empire: Children, Race and Humanitarianism in the British Settler Colonies, 1833–1880.* (Springer, 2019).

[7] See for example Meredith L. McCoy and Matthew Villeneuve. "Reconceiving Schooling: Centering Indigenous Experimentation in Indian Education History." *History of Education Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (2020): 487-519; Kirby Brown, "American Indian Modernities and New Modernist Studies' 'Indian Problem'." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 59, no. 3 (2017): 287-318; Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, "Origin and Development of the American Indian Boarding School System." In *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences.* Edited by Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc. (University of Nebraska Press, 2006): 1-34; Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places.* (University Press of Kansas, 2004); K. Tsianina Lomawaima. *They Called it Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School.* (University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

[8] McCoy and Villeneuve. "Reconceiving Schooling;" Susan A. Miller. "Native America Writes Back: The Origin of the Indigenous Paradigm in Historiography." *Wicazo Sa Review* 23, no. 2 (2008): 9-28; and Brown, "American Indian Modernities"

[9] Patrick Wolfe. *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology.* (London: Cassell, 1999).

[10] Frederick E. Hoxie. "Retrieving the Red Continent: Settler Colonialism and the History of American Indians in the US." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 6 (2008): 1153-1167.

changing discursive construct of the "Indian Problem." Next, I'll analyze the structure of the report and select passages from the education section to highlight discursive techniques used in the text. I'll close by connecting the Meriam Report with modern discourses about education that continue the colonial project.

The Meriam Report as a Discursive Act (I)

The Meriam Report first caught my attention because of its disturbing portrayal of Native American education. Described as "the most significant investigation into the field of Indian affairs,"[11] the report included detailed descriptions of abuse, food budgets for children as low as eleven cents per day, inept and negligent educators, and conditions of incredible poverty. What struck me most was the near absence of Native perspectives. This was a document fully written in the voice of the federal government. With that in mind, I came to see the report as a discursive act of an institution developing the grounds for its own authority.

This is a perspective opened up by discourse analysis. There are many variations on the concept of discourse that share a fluid understanding of interaction between language, symbols, images, and other signs as well as the underlying social relationships from which such products emerge.[12] I use Fairclough's interpretation of discourse as a combination of vocabulary, grammar, structure, and actions that collectively convey meanings based in cultural frames from which they are produced.[13] Language doesn't emerge from a vacuum; it is the product of social positions and institutional roles that produce language in different forms. Like the values that guide institutions, discourse is part of the symbolic environment that influences human relations.

Fairclough describes how discourse can be analyzed at three different levels. The first level is that of text and includes the actual words, phrases, and grammatical structure. At the second level are "discursive acts," which go beyond text to include the actions and images that accompany how language is made visible and disseminated. How a text is produced, distributed, and ultimately consumed all matter for the meanings that are conveyed. For example, the text of the Meriam Report represents not only the thousands of human hours of fieldwork involved in its production, but, as I will argue, the relationships of power implied in work being done in a distant "field" by a team of "specialists" representing a government department.

Fairclough uses the term "social practices" for the third level, the all-encompassing domain from which the languages of a certain community are created. Various discursive acts — the specific actions that produce language in a given context — reflect social power dynamics; they are produced within frameworks that shape what we are capable of experiencing and understanding. Foucault called such frameworks "orders of discourse;"[14] I prefer the term ideology. Discourse and ideology exist in a confusing and uneasy relationship; if ideologies are

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[11] Special Subcommittee on Indian Education, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy - A National Challenge*. S. Rep. No. 91-501. (1969), 12.
[12] Rebecca Rogers. "Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis in Educational Research." In *An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis in Education*. Edited by Rebecca Rogers. (Routledge, 2004): 1-20.
[13] Norman Fairclough. *Discourse and Social Change*. (Polity, 1993). Fairclough adopts a Critical perspective, thus referring to his approach as critical discourse analysis. I share a similar interest in power relations, and the constitutive nature of language. Though I do not claim to be neutral, neither do I elect to use the term Critical as I see the analysis open to multiple interpretations.
[14] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. (New York: Pantheon, 1972).

meaningful systems of belief, then discourse is their symbolic and linguistic manifestation.[15]

Because discourse can produce a network of shared but contingent truths, ideas, and identities, discourse takes on greater significance when backed by the authority of institutions.[16] I explore these concepts in the Meriam Report by asking what is the significance of the structure, tone, and language use in the document? What can we tell about the values shaping the production, distribution, and consumption of discourse? What identities, relationships, and shared realities does the document create? Through probing such questions, I contend that the Meriam Report draws on ideologies that persist in education and parallels stories about education told in the present day. For these reasons, I begin by discussing the historical context in which the Meriam Report was produced.

Background and Context of the Meriam Report

The Meriam Report arrived at an important transition in Native American education from a period of forced boarding schools and battles over compulsory education to the beginning of the expansion of mass public education.[17] In some ways, its publication created divergent histories of Native education in the United States and Canada.[18] Still, it was less a major turning point in Native American policy than a new type of institutional report that layered different discursive practices over old notions of the role of White America in its relationship with its Indigenous population. It was a new type of document, created by a new type of institution, written at a time of growth in American educational bureaucracy.[19]

Understanding the historical context of the Meriam Report gives a sense of the ideological field in which it was created. The 1920s brought increased awareness of the plight of Native Americans, a flourishing of muckraking journalism, and a new faith in the growing administrative state. The United States was approaching almost fifty years into an explicit policy of Indigenous assimilation and there was growing pressure to change. We can reinterpret these developments within the frame of settler colonialism, the idea that nations like the United States were undertaking imperial projects of land appropriation that necessitated the removal or elimination of Indigenous populations.[20]

The prominence of this drive is captured in the persistent recurrence of a singular phrase: "The Indian Problem." This phrase had been in use since the arrival of European colonists in North America. It was employed to describe different issues that arose as White settlers encountered Natives — from warfare to government corruption to treaties — and flexibly accommodated a variety of responses.[21] Pairing "Indian" and "problem" discursively linked

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[15] Trevor Purvis and Alan Hunt. "Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology…" *British Journal of Sociology* (1993): 473-499; Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places,* 9.

[16] Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change;* see also Teun A. Van Dijk. "Ideology and Discourse Analysis." *Journal of Political Ideologies,* 11, no. 2 (2006): 115-140; James Paul Gee. *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method.* (Routledge, 2014).

[17] Adams, *Education and Extinction.*

[18] Andrew Woolford. *This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States.* (University of Nebraska Press, 2015). 80-87

[19] David B. Tyack. *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education.* (Harvard University Press, 1974).

[20] Patrick Wolfe, "After the Frontier: Separation and Absorption in US Indian policy." *Settler Colonial Studies,* 1, no. 1 (2011).

[21] Woolford, *This Benevolent Experiment,* 47-48; Robert Hays, *Editorializing "The Indian Problem,"* (Southern

Indians to any number of challenges that Whites encountered as they sought to gain more land. The discursive link of the Indigenous to the problematic continued with the Meriam Report as its driving metaphor, a metaphor that characterized and reconfirmed White views on how to treat Native peoples. This phrasing symbolically created a background of trouble with Natives as the subject and origin of a problem that demanded resolution. Like in other settler colonial states, one response was to employ concepts like *terra nullius* and the "Doctrine of Discovery" to resolve moral questions arising from taking the land of others.[22] At other times, the response was simply war. From Andrew Jackson through the Southwest and the wars on the plains, armed conflict was often the answer to the "problem".[23]

Military action, which was expensive and cost White lives, and was becoming increasingly difficult to justify morally.[24] By the 1870s, most Natives had been subdued and confined by tentative treaties, and the US Government backed away from further campaigns. Turning instead to a collection of new technologies that allowed more precise map-making as well as record-keeping of land titles, and other legal instruments. These culminated in the land allotment policies of the Dawes Act, which restricted Natives to small parcels of land and freed the remainder for Whites — even land that had been granted under treaties.[25] The policies severed Natives from land they had freely used for generations. Serving as a "mighty pulverizing engine for breaking up the tribal mass,"[26] policy and legislation further provided the rationalizations for White appropriation of land. With allotment policies, as Patrick Wolfe has written, the "Indian problem was discursively reconstituted as administrative rather than political."[27]

The "Indian Problem" evoked a strong humanitarian response expressed in conferences, conventions, religious organizations, and policy reports; in these efforts, education became a consensus solution. One reason for this was that education was connected to a desire to turn Natives into agriculturalists, who would own their own plots of land and actively participate in the market economy. This was based on a specific notion of civilization that education was meant to convey. As Secretary of Interior Carl Schurz wrote in the 1870s, education was a way to "introduce to the growing generation civilized ideas, wants, and aspirations."[28] Driving the idea of bringing civilization to the Native population, however, was a desire to fundamentally transform Native Americans into Whites through a fully assimilative education. This desire was grounded in religious Universalism that held all people were truly equal, and that with excellent education Natives could overcome their savagery and become full members of modern

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Illinois University Press, 2007).

[22] Allan Greer, "Settler Colonialism and Empire in Early America." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 76, no. 3 (2019): 383-390; Edward Cavanagh, "Possession and Dispossession in Corporate New France, 1600–1663: Debunking a 'Juridical History' and Revisiting *terra nullius*." *Law and History Review* 32, no. 1 (2014): 97-125; Andrew Fitzmaurice. "The Genealogy of *terra nullius*." *Australian Historical Studies* 38, no. 129 (2007): 1-15.

[23] Peter Cozzens. *The Earth is Weeping: The Epic Story of the Indian Wars for the American West*. (Atlantic Books, 2016).

[24] Cozzens, *The Earth is Weeping*; Jacqueline Fear-Segal. *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation*. (University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

[25] Ward Churchill. *Kill the Indian, save the man: The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools*. (City Lights, 2004). Also, see Wolfe, "After the Frontier," 33; Philp, *John Collier's Crusade*; Francis Paul Prucha. *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*. Vol. 2. (University of Nebraska Press, 1995). 580-598.

[26] Theodore Roosevelt, "First Annual Message," Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/206187

[27] Wolfe, "After the frontier," 33.

[28] Prucha, *The Great Father*, 595.

civilization. "Education is the Indian's only salvation," wrote Thomas Jefferson Morgan, leader of the influential Lake Mohonk Conferences. For Morgan: "Education is to be the medium through which the rising generation of Indians are to be brought into fraternal and harmonious relationship with their white fellow-citizens, and with them enjoy the sweets of refined homes, the delight of social intercourse, the emoluments of commerce and trade, the advantages of travel, together with the pleasures that come from literature, science, and philosophy, and the solace and stimulus afforded by true religion."[29]

Efforts at Native assimilation through education intensified at the end of the nineteenth century. Dozens of new schools for Natives were opened nationwide, including a handful far removed from reservations. Bureaucrats became convinced of the power of education,[30] and Native student enrolments rose dramatically along with increased budget allocations and the government take-over of many formerly religious schools.[31] The effort was brutal. Lt. Col. Richard Henry Pratt, who opened and ran the Carlisle Boarding School, considered education another front in the war on Natives. An army officer, he managed his school with a military spirit; his credo was "Kill the Indian, save the man," and his autobiography was revealingly titled *Battlefield and Classroom*. Force was essential to schooling: the government would withhold rations for families who refused to send their children to school, strict surveillance and discipline were prevalent, children were frequently abused and tortured in school, and those who tried to run away faced cruel punishments if caught.[32] Yet faith in education persisted because of the underlying humanitarian and civilizing myths of schooling, leading Fear-Segal to write "the ethnocidal task of the schools was sanitized by being narrated within the ideological frame of national expansion or 'manifest destiny.'"[33]

The word "Indian" is a problematic word in our modern times for many reasons, and although it was commonly used for generations, it carries important connotations. First is an ambiguity about whether the Indian is perceived as *causing* the problem or whether they *are* the problem. Years of raids, resistance, refusal to attend schools, and Native pride are all constructed as obstacles to education and civilization, problems that must be addressed. A second consideration is how the term constructed a mythical, exoticized Other, reinforced in songs, stories, images, and other cultural artifacts. An enduring difference was repeatedly created through the use of the term "Indian" and all the related cultural artifacts that made declarations about "Indian" characteristics, mentalities, and practices, with the subtext being that the Indian himself was the problem simply by nature of being Indian.[34]

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[29] *Proceedings of the Lake Mohonk Conference*, (1889), 16-17, quoted in Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club,* 75.

[30] DeJong writes: "The solution to the 'Indian problem,' at least in the minds of federal policymakers, Indian Office administrators, and Indian reformers, [was] a highly formalized and ritualized education designed … to stamp out all things Indigenous." See David H. DeJong "'Unless they are kept alive:' Federal Indian Schools and Student Health, 1878-1918." *American Indian Quarterly* (2007): 257.

[31] Adams, *Education for Extinction,* 41-58; Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club.*

[32] See for example, Adams, *Education for Extinction,* 41-58; Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club.* Also, Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*; Churchill. *Kill the Indian, save the man*.

[33] Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club,* vi.

[34] See for example Elizabeth S. Bird, ed., *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture.* (Routledge, 2018). 2-5; James A. Clifton, ed., *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies.* (Routledge, 2017); Robert F. Berkhofer. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*. (Vintage, 1979).

There existed another ideological belief that the very existence of Native Americans was a problem that needed to be solved through the simple logic of elimination via assimilation. What in the past had been accomplished through war was transferred to the institution of education where Native Americans as a race could be eliminated by learning to be White.[35] For example, in a 1910 pamphlet titled *The Indian and His Problem*, the former commissioner of Indian Affairs Francis Leupp wrote: "If we can watch our body of dependent Indians shrink even by one member at a time, we may congratulate ourselves that the complete solution is only a question of patience."[36] For assimilation to be effective, the end product had to be the elimination of Natives.

Informed by new scientific theories of racial inferiority, the nature of the "Indian Problem" changed again as ideas began to shift in the early twentieth century. Because Native Americans were believed to be incapable of ever fully integrating into society,[37] efforts to educate Native Americans became less assimilationist and more directed towards channeling students into unskilled sectors of the economy. Enrolment in boarding schools dropped, education budgets shrank, and neglect and abuse increased as the curriculum in schools shifted to more vocational and manual skilling appropriate for specific economic jobs.[38] Rates of contagions soared and, combined with abuses, created shocking mortality rates in some schools as high as 20 percent.[39]

Humanitarians and activists took note of corruption on reservations and the betrayal of Native rights.[40] In 1915, a new commissioner of Indian Affairs wrote: "There is something fundamental here: We cannot solve the Indian problem without Indians. We cannot educate their children unless they are kept alive."[41] Pressure mounted and by the early 1920s, Secretary Hubert Work of the Department of Interior appointed an advisory council to study the issue. Called the Commission of One Hundred, it was meant to be "a landmark in the history of the Government's effort to handle the Indian question."[42] Their report, published in 1923 and titled *The Indian Problem: Resolution of the Committee of One Hundred*, was co-opted by conservatives on the council who watered down its findings. The committee had members who believed firmly in assimilation through quality education and others who openly advocated for the US government to rid itself of the Indian Problem by ending its support of Native Americans altogether.[43] The disdain in the press was withering, and, with faith in the Indian Affairs deteriorating,[44] Secretary Work appointed more reviews and reports. In 1926, recognizing the lack of trust in its recommendations, the Board of Indian Commissioners wrote to Secretary Work: "[A] report from a non-Government, disinterested organization, with a field force of experts, would carry

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[35] Wolfe, "After the frontier," 21-26.

[36] Francis Ellington Leupp. *The Indian and His Problem*. (C. Scribner's Sons, 1910).

[37] Frederick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920*. (University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

[38] DeJong, "'Unless they are kept alive'"

[39] DeJong, "'Unless they are kept alive;'" Adams, *Education for Extinction*; Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club*

[40] For example, see "The Tragedy of the Indian," *Scientific American*, 134, 1, (January, 1926), 5-7; John Collier, "America's Treatment of Her Indians." *Current History and Forum*, 18, no. 5 (1923). 771; Rose C. Feld. "U.S. Trying to Salvage 240,000 Indian Wards." *The New York Times*, (March 16, 1924). See also Downes, "A Crusade for Indian Reform," Philp, *John Collier's Crusade*.

[41] Quoted in DeJong, "'Unless they are kept alive,'" 256

[42] Prucha, *The Great Father*, 805.

[43] For example, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Burke was quoted in 1923 as saying "I believe in making the Indian take his chance, just the same as white folks do.... Don't fool yourself. The Indian makes good when he has the chance." see Downes, "A Crusade for Indian Reform", 385.

[44] See Prucha, *The Great Father*, 809-811; Bertolet, *After the Meriam Report*, 115.

great weight not only with Congress but also with the general public."[45]

Secretary Work convinced the Institute of Government Research, a non-partisan research organization, to conduct a detailed and privately-funded survey study, which would be carried out in "a thoroughly impartial and scientific spirit."[46] It was to be an objective study led by experts, and including a former US Census statistician and Harvard graduate, Lewis Meriam. The "Indian Problem" had been remade, this time the object of careful, scientific, and institutional attention, an object onto which the administrative apparatus of the US government could apply its most modern techniques. Thus, the discursive grounds were laid for the Meriam Report, a document whose official title is no coincidence: *The Problem of Indian Administration.*

The Meriam Report as a Discursive Act (II)

Lewis Meriam began work on the report in 1926 by assembling a team of specialists in fields like economics, health, family life, and education. Beginning in October, 1926, the team traveled the West and conducted nine months of fieldwork in various reservations. They started in Norman, Oklahoma and then visited thirty different sites and reservations as they traveled to the Pacific Northwest, down through California and the Southwest, before ending the following May at the Rosebud agency in South Dakota. In the summer the team drafted their reports, with Meriam editing their work in the Fall before publication in early 1928.[47]

The final product is striking. To analyze the discourse of this document is to look at the actual text as well as its structure, tone, and presentation. Tables of neatly arranged statistics are everywhere. The massive, 857-page report is divided into sections based on the work of various specialists, and neatly arranged tables of statistics appear throughout. The first page describes the Institute of Government Research and lists its officers and trustees. The report opens with a gracious letter of introduction from Institute Director W.F. Willoughby, which clearly marks the solution-oriented objective of the report: "The object of the Institute was not to say whether the Indian Service has done well with the funds at its disposal but rather to look to the future and insofar as possible to indicate what remains to be done to adjust the Indians to the prevailing civilization."[48]

These elements form a style of "moderate tone and scientific impartiality"[49] with frequent references to figures, actual observations from fieldwork, and absence of blame for past actions. These stylistic choices were critical. For the report to be palatable to a wide range of people, it had to avoid major offense to anyone. One historian remarked the Meriam Report was a "masterpiece of reform propaganda…[its] high-minded scientific accuracy was never seriously questioned. Its non-controversial tone commanded the respect of both supporters and critics of the Indian Bureau."[50] This stance helped avoid rancor even as it opened with a memorably stark

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[45] *Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners*, (1926), 13, quoted in Downes, "A Crusade for Indian Reform," 342.

[46] Letter from Secretary of the Interior to Institute for Government Research in 1926. Quoted in Bertolet, *After the Meriam Report,* 116. The Institute for Government Research would later become part of the Brookings Institute. The report was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

[47] Donald L Parman and Lewis Meriam. "Lewis Meriam's Letters during the Survey of Indian Affairs 1926-1927 (Part I)." *Arizona and the West 24*, no. 3 (1982): 253-280.

[48] Lewis Meriam. *The Problem of Indian Administration. Report of a Survey Made at the Request of Honorable Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior*. (Johns Hopkins Press, 1928), vii.

[49] Prucha, *The Great Father*, 810.

[50] Downes, "A Crusade for Indian Reform," 342.

line: "An overwhelming majority of the Indians are poor, even extremely poor, and they are not adjusted to the economic and social system of the dominant white civilization."[51]

Also contained in the sentence is a reminder of the superiority of White society, signaled in the use of the word "dominant" and further underscored by positioning Natives as the subjects who bore the burden of adjustment. "The whole Indian problem is essentially an educational one"[52] the report states at a later point, a phrase that discursively positions education as the key vehicle for such adjustment. The ideology of progress and assimilation can be clearly seen in the discourse about education, and I now turn to a closer look at the section devoted to education.

Ideologies of Progress and Assimilation in Discourse of Education

Analyzing the discourse of the education section of the Meriam Report shows how better training, higher qualifications, and larger budgets were central themes in the posed solutions to the Indian Problem. The appearance of these themes will seem familiar to scholars of educational policy from several eras of the last century, and their presence in this specific document is a fascinating artifact of a nascent educational institution conveying full faith in their ability to lead progress. Professor Carson Ryan of Swarthmore College authored the section on education. Ryan, a graduate of Harvard and Columbia, had held several different advisory and editorial positions, and had "participated in many educational surveys".[53] Several pages are devoted to describing the impressive credentials of each specialist — the word used to describe the authors — with Ryan's entry extending in dense block text beyond a page in length.

The education section is organized into several sub-sections with headings such as "Need for an Educational Census," "School Organization in the Indian Service," and "Teaching Methods." There are righteous attacks on boarding school management, the paltry funding allotted for food and housing,[54] and abusive child labor. One subsection is titled "Can the Indian be 'educated'?" and theories of racial difference, studies of IQ, and interviews with "full-bloods" are all drawn upon to argue that, yes, "The Indian is essentially capable of education."[55] The pursuit of this question foregrounds an unresolved tension between the persistent insistence on racial difference, upheld through emphases on blood quanta and intelligence profiles of racial groups, and the belief in humanitarian equality: "Whether certain Indian characteristics of today are racial or merely the natural result of experiences — and the probabilities are strongly in favor of the latter assumption — it is the task of education to help the Indian, not by assuming that he is fundamentally different, but that he is a human being very much like the rest of us, with a cultural background quite worthwhile for its own sake and as a basis for changes needed in adjusting to modern life…"[56]

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[51] Meriam, *The Problem of Indian Administration*, 3.

[52] *Ibid*., 348.

[53] *Ibid*., 84.

[54] *Ibid*., 11. One of the most shocking findings of the report was that some boarding schools were trying to feed and board students for a mere 11 cents per day. "The survey staff finds itself obliged to say frankly and unequivocally that the provisions for the care of the Indian children in boarding schools are grossly inadequate."

[55] *Ibid*., 352. The report notes that "...in a study of over a thousand full-blood children of the southwestern and plains tribes…the ratio between the Indian mental age and that of the whites was 100 to 114, or that the whites were 14 per cent better than the Indians."

[56] *Ibid.*, 354.

This passage ambivalently affirms the existence of a class of "Indian characteristics," one that is very different but "very much like the rest of us," while also reinforcing the responsibility of White expertise to be applied to the task of education. In fulfilling the responsibility to "help the Indian," Natives are positioned as dependent. Because Natives are expected to ultimately "adjust to modern life," the superiority of the dominant civilization is reinforced, secure in an image of national goodness.

These themes recur in various forms throughout this section of the report. Consider the following passage:

> The impression a visitor almost inevitably gets upon entering the classroom of an Indian school is that here is a survival of methods and schoolroom organization belonging … to a former period. The nailed-down desks, in rows; the old-type "recitation"; the unnatural formality between teacher and pupil, the use of mechanistic words and devices, as "class rise!," "class pass!"; the lack of enriching materials, such as reading books and out-of-doors material, all suggest a type of school-keeping that still exists, of course, but has been greatly modified in most modern school systems, if not abandoned altogether, as the result of what has been made known in the past twenty-five years about learning and behavior.[57]

The structure of this paragraph is one frequently repeated: an improper or obsolete method is contrasted with the expert knowledge held by specialists. Here, the outdated techniques of teaching are highlighted in the images of nailed-down desks and recitation. Native American education is depicted as a system of deficits, one of antiquated materials that are not up to modern standards. "Modern" is a linguistic symbol signaling new knowledge of human learning and behavior generated by twenty-five years of scientific study. The metaphor of progress is fully evoked, according to which reservation schools are lagging behind the ascendant mainstream schools in their organization, supplies, and administration.

Such themes are present again in this passage focused on facilities:

> Old buildings, often kept in use long after they should have been pulled down…; crowded dormitories; conditions of sanitation that are usually perhaps as good as they can be under the circumstances, but certainly below accepted standards; boilers and machinery out-of-date and in some instances unsafe, to the point of having long since been condemned, but never replaced; many medical officers who are of low standards of training and relatively unacquainted with the methods of modern medicine, to say nothing of health education for children; lack of milk sufficient to give children anything like the official "standard" of a quart per child per day, almost none of the fresh fruits and vegetables that are recommended as necessary in the menus taught to the children in the classroom; the serious malnutrition, due to the lack of food and use of wrong foods; schoolrooms seldom showing knowledge of modern principles of lighting and ventilating.[58]

Once again, archaic elements are highlighted; facilities are "out-of-date," "condemned," or "unsafe," as Native schools are found severely lacking. Again, there is a reference to the latest knowledge, this time referred to as the "accepted standards" and applied to buildings, school

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[57] *Ibid*., 378-379
[58] *Ibid*., 392

medical officers, and health education. A veil of ignorance is cast over the Native schools as scientifically determined standards for nutrition are unmet where children are given insufficient quantities of food. Modern principles are invoked yet again, this time with reference to lighting and ventilation.

One final excerpt shows these same themes recurring, this time in reference to the bureaucratic organization of the Native school system:

> The principle of the salary schedule should be applied to the Indian education service, so that professionally qualified teachers and other members of the educational staff … can count upon salary increases for capable work…the greatest difficulty is not the low entrance salary so much as the fact that advancement is almost unknown. …it is the regular thing to find everywhere in the Indian Service elementary teachers of many years' experience receiving the same $1,200 paid to the beginning teacher. Nothing could be so destructive of morale as this. The Indian school service is almost alone among modern educational systems in not having a definite salary schedule. The Research Division of the National Education Association, which has made a special study of the matter, is authority for the statement that practically all large cities and approximately 70 per cent of all communities over 2,500 population have salary schedules.[59]

The modern/obsolete dynamic is used again; here, the modernist principle concerns salary structures rather than building codes or instructional techniques. The findings of a prominent Research Division cement the authority of the salary schedule principle backed by statistics from a recent study. The numbers themselves are another type of symbol conveying the legitimacy of the principle. Once again, the Indian Service is isolated from the benefits of most modern school systems with massive consequences for morale. In one hundred pages of the education section, numerous passages follow this discursive pattern: a problem inherent in Native schools is highlighted, modern principles of education and administration are evoked, and a norm-referenced solution is recommended. Whether better ventilation, up-to-date textbooks, or policy towards remuneration, there is assumed to be a correct, scientifically determined, and legitimate way of management, and As Ryan writes at one point, Native schools are found "at variance with modern views of education and social work."[60]

The structure of the text — identifying a problem and contrasting it with modern principles — shows the way to a logical solution: a strengthened and enlarged bureaucratic apparatus that mimicked the culture and techniques of dominant society. More qualified personnel were needed, working conditions had to be strengthened, and funding increased. In short, "...principles that have been found to be successful in educational administration on a large scale should be applied,"[61] a phrase that frames the education of Native Americans as an identifiable and knowable strand of the "Indian Problem" that could be solved by bureaucratic expansion. The detailed study, precise tabulations, and rational comparisons with new ideas about education, all expressed in a particular discursive format, not only reflected the ideologies of progress through modern administrative principles but also created a new ideological context that made possible

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[59]*Ibid.*, 365.
[60]*Ibid.,* 403.
[61]*Ibid*., 423.

the swelling of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In effect, the words of the report expanded the bureaucracy devoted to Native American education, which was justified by the ideas of progress.

The Institutional Narratives of a Conquering Nation

The existence of the Meriam Report is remarkable. It was the product of an immense commitment of time, resources, and effort, fueled by values and ideas of progress. The report, from its production of the text to its subsequent use in testimonies, congressional hearings, and debates on policy, became a discursive representation of an ideology that believed Native Americans could be reformed through advanced principles of modern administration. This was a colonial ideology, one that spoke of the power of progress while maintaining a social hierarchy grounded in racial characteristics. It held in tension the faith in modern progress and humanitarianism alongside colonial beliefs in the essential difference of ethnic and racial others.

The publication had a significant impact on the administration of Native affairs. The national press responded favorably to the humanitarian spirit and practical solutions, even while calling for measured reforms. The new Hoover Administration responded to the report with increases in the budget for Indian Services, including desperately needed funding for school nutrition and clothing. The workforce of the Indian administration increased by 300% as two thousand new employees were hired and salaries increased by 25%.[62] Carson Ryan, the author of the section on education, was appointed Director of Indian Education and subsequently brought reforms to boarding school administration, curriculum, the treatment of students, and teacher qualifications.[63] Sixteen boarding schools were closed in the subsequent years and the enrolment of Native children shifted to the dozens of newly opened day schools.[64] It became an important touchstone in the passing of the Wheeler-Howard Act of 1934, and in the fifteen years that followed Congress referred to the document frequently in its deliberations on Native American policy.[65]

While considered a turning point by some, others have characterized the report and the resulting changes as acts of political survival rather than meaningful change. The Department of Interior commissioned the report only after years of unrelenting journalistic and political pressure, a "defensive response of a government bureaucracy under attack from its own constituents."[66] Lewis Meriam himself was a thorough bureaucrat and the technical, studiously objective report reflects his career background. However, Prucha's analysis reveals that there were no new policies or innovative ideas, only a doubling down on existing efforts.[67] The proposed solution to administrative neglect was more administration.

Using the perspective of discourse analysis helps move beyond questions about the success or failure of the report. Instead, the Meriam Report can be seen as an artifact of the ideological

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[62] Philp, *John Collier's Crusade,* 96; Donald T. Critchlow, "Lewis Meriam, Expertise, and Indian Reform." *The Historian* 43, no. 3 (1981): 325-343.

[63] Bertolet, "After the Meriam Report"

[64] S. Rep. No. 91-501, 13.

[65] Prucha claims that over 20,000 pages of reports on Indian affairs were generated during this period following the publication of the Meriam Report. Prucha, *The Great Father,* 810-812.

[66] Critchlow, "Lewis Meriam, Expertise, and Indian Reform," 324.

[67] Prucha, *The Great Father,* 810-812. Berkhofer describes the report in this way: "If this report employed new phrases to express its goals and new social engineering to discuss the Indian problem, the ultimate ends resembled those traditionally espoused for Indians." See Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, 182.

context in which it was created, a window into contemporary beliefs both about Native populations and more importantly about the nation itself. Even while spurring incremental changes, the document reflects deeper narratives about the power of the institution of education to create a righteous and moral nation with stewardship over its Indigenous peoples. In the years since its publication, I have come to view the Meriam Report as less a policy document than a discursive representation of a nation committed to righting the wrongs of the past and using education to drive forward into a better future. In this way, it's a fully imperial document created by a colonial nation consolidating its power.

I make this statement by connecting the report to the various constructions of "The Indian Problem" that have framed colonial efforts towards Native Americans. The Meriam Report was a new type of solution posed to the problem, or a set of familiar solutions posed in a new way to a familiar problem. It was also the product of a modern bureaucracy seeking to apply its expertise to an old challenge. Education was the fulcrum for this response. I selected three passages to examine, but I could have chosen from dozens of examples where training, qualified teachers, or precise methods were recommended for use with Native children and adults to prepare them for civilization. But looking even deeper than the recommended solutions, the Meriam Report reveals a discursive structure that tells a story about the efforts of the United States' government and dominant White society directing its superiority towards a moral good. I want to close by highlighting three themes in that story related to progress, assimilation, and benevolence. Together, these themes are strands in the fabric of national myth-making that uphold the legitimacy of a conquering society.

Progress is everywhere in the text of the report. The word 'modern' is used 52 times in the education section alone. Time and again the text speaks of the modern principles, standards, and proven techniques used in the most forward-thinking school districts. Repeatedly, the report urges better training, more stringent qualifications for teachers, and the implementation of an organized administrative apparatus. The solution was to bring rational thinking to the issue, succinctly described here:

> In the long run the nation will settle the Indian problem or not by its willingness to take hold of the issue in a responsible and business-like way. It is business-like to apply to the task in hand the best methods that can be found. At the time the Indian work began there were no accepted principles of education and social work that could be used, but in the past forty or fifty years a body of experience in both education and social work has developed that can and should be applied in order to speed up the solution of the Indian problem.[68]

Implicit in this theme is the faith that with the right techniques, those already in use in the idealized realms of affluent neighborhoods and successful businesses, the Indian Problem would disappear. The "Indian Problem" clearly stands out as a discrete issue, and it can be solved by the new knowledge acquired in the experiences of a growing nation. Other issues — those of historical violence, neglect, racism, land appropriation, and more — are less avoided than erased from the framing of the problem. Part of this erasure was political; the report was written with the goal of being accepted by a wide range of interests in Congress. Another possibility is that, rather than active erasure, the ideological fields from which the authors operated contained a blindness to other truths about the conditions of Native Americans. From the bureaucratic

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[68] Meriam, *The Problem of Indian Administration*, 429.

background of the authors to the actual fieldwork, the report was birthed in a context where White America was bringing a valuable commodity to Native Americans: modern civilization. Here is Meriam, writing a letter to Washington D.C. during the course of the field work, describing a visit to a school on the Tulalip reservation near Seattle: "The teacher [Nina M. Hurlbut] was a highly trained woman and had taken a special course under Madame Montessori herself. How under the sun the Indian Service succeeds in getting a teacher like that for $100 a month it is difficult to understand, unless one gives great credit to the missionary spirit."[69]

This observation brings out the ideology of progress underlying the project as Meriam comments on the power of a "highly trained" teacher, a cutting-edge curriculum in the form of the new Montessori method, and the importance of attractive salaries. As Tyack writes of the era, a new class of "administrative progressives" evangelized about the power of schools: "The schoolhouse was to America what the cathedral was to the Middle Ages."[70] Among educators and bureaucrats, schools represented salvation, recalling Thomas Jefferson Morgan at the Lake Mohonk Conferences four decades earlier.

Assimilation is a second theme, continuing a long tradition of rhetoric about absorbing Native Americans into mainstream society. The Meriam Report was supposed to be a step towards cultural pluralism; it condemned the land allotment policy, showed a level of respect for Native values, culture, and history. It advocated for self-government and a route to self-determination that became opened with the Wheeler-Howard Act of 1934.

Self-determination, however, was conceptualized within narrow confines that replicated White ways of legislative government. Many tribes rejected the terms altogether.[71] Discussions about self-determination also brought to the forefront the issue of blood quanta, a quasi-scientific idea about the essence of Indianness as represented by the image of elemental blood mixing in the veins of people. Discursive roots for this thinking are apparent throughout the Meriam Report. Various tables and statistics divide and tabulate Native populations by their tribes. "Full-bloods" and "mixed-bloods" are contrasted in the text to show that some classes of Natives will require more work to be educated. For example, here is a passage describing the possibility of enrolling Native American students in mainstream public schools: "To hand over the task of Indian schooling to the public school without providing public health nurse service, family visiting, and some oversight of housing, feeding, and clothing, results unfortunately for the Indian child, *especially the fullblood*. He becomes irregular in school attendance, loses interest, feels that he is inferior, leaves school as soon as possible; or, in some cases, he is regarded by the white parents as a disease menace…"[72] Indianness is constructed to be a barrier to assimilation, and to be full-blooded is an even more formidable barrier. To be Indian is to carry a propensity to be disengaged, a school dropout, or simply a menace.

Blood quanta as a definition of Indianness furthered the project to know Native populations through better accounting, tracking, and surveillance.[73] These ideas arose as new racial sciences displaced old beliefs in universal humanity to construct a gradient of difference between Whites and others.[74] Assimilation was upheld as a goal, but it existed in tension with the belief that the

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[69] Parman and Meriam, "Lewis Meriam's Letters," 269.

[70] Tyack, *The One Best System*, 16.

[71] Wolfe, "After the Frontier"; Berkhofer. *The White Man's Indian,* 185-193.

[72] Meriam, *The Problem of Indian Administration*, 418, emphasis added.

[73] Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, 26.

[74] See Hoxie, *A Final Promise* or Swartz, *Education and Empire*.

essence of Indians would persist through their blood, a mythical Indian-hood to be saved through White education yet never fully integrated into White society.[75] The Meriam Report is both a product and producer of this project, employing new phrases and structures steeped in discourses of modernity, progress, and civilization, that claimed a respect for Native difference while still believing in the Otherness of Native Americans. Or, perhaps more precisely, the report claimed a respect for Native Americans *because* of a belief in their difference. "Cultural pluralism," wrote the historian Richard Berkhofer, Jr., "seemed but the icing upon the cake of assimilation.[76]

This leads to a final theme of benevolence grafted onto the myth of Indianness. The Meriam Report continued a long discursive tradition of casting Indigenous people as deficient; whether savage, childlike, innocent, or simply uncivilized, multiple cultural fictions have been written of inferior Natives. Many of which have supported narratives of benevolence. Discursively confining Natives to perpetual childhood justified colonial interventions in schooling.[77] Indeed, several authors have argued that the very process of saving Natives is necessary in the production of both Whiteness and the legitimation of White superiority.[78]

Benevolence can be interpreted as a mechanism of soothing cultural guilt. As I've shown in the excerpts from the report, there exist recurring themes of duty, obligation, responsibility, and atonement, a point made explicit in the closing paragraph of the executive summary: "The people of the United States have the opportunity, if they will, to write the closing chapters of the history of the relationship of the national government and the Indians. The early chapters contain little of which the country may be proud. It would be something of a national atonement to the Indians if the closing chapters should disclose the national government supplying the Indians with an Indian service which would be a model for all governments concerned with the development and advancement of a retarded race."[79]

The passage clearly speaks of redemption while unambiguously positioning Natives as a backward people. What stands out most is the metaphor of unwritten final chapters in the nation's history. To write this history, the act of education — its design, provision, and administration — are all vital to this story. The Meriam Report in its entirety aspires to be the opening lines of those final chapters, a symbol of a compassionate nation.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, colonial administrators crafted similar narratives of progress, assimilation, and benevolence to establish the institution of education.[80] That dynamic has continued into post-colonial times as nations have built institutional structures on the myths of education as part of rightful claims to authority.[81] More recently, global discourses have put education to work in service of ideas such as development, poverty reduction, and partnership.[82] These contemporary narratives update the social relationship

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[75] Bird, *Dressing in Feathers*, 2-5; See also Homi K. Bhahba, *The Location of Culture*. (Routledge, 2012); 122-126, where he describes colonial efforts to make Natives "a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite."
[76] Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*,182
[77] See Sarah De Leeuw, "'If anything is to be done with the Indian, we must catch him very young': Colonial Constructions of Aboriginal Children and the Geographies of Indian Residential Schooling in British Columbia, Canada." *Children's Geographies* 7, no. 2 (2009), especially 129-131.
[78] See Bird, *Dressing in Feathers*; Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*; and Clifton, *The Invented Indian*.
[79] Meriam, *The Problem of Indian Administration*,51.
[80] Swartz, *Education and Empire.*
[81] John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan. "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony." *American Journal of Sociology* 83, no. 2 (1977): 340-363.
[82] For example, see Iveta Silova and William C. Brehm. "From Myths to Models: The (Re)Production of World

created by documents like the Meriam Report where a benevolent government — or an international community — brings cutting-edge techniques to uplift the masses of a new Other. Such narratives also place the Meriam Report in a wider context of transnational efforts to uphold a social order that subdues or eliminates Native populations through assimilation. The institution of education is neither neutral nor inevitable; it is a contingent human organization built upon ideologies of progress and dominance and expressed in the discourse of hundreds of narratives like the Meriam Report. Such ideologies focus the power of education on uplifting the less fortunate, and along the way serve as the background for nation-building.

Culture in Comparative Education." *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 13, no. 1 (2015): 8-33; Leon Tikly, "Education and the New Imperialism." *Comparative Education* 40, no. 2 (2004): 173-198; Frances Vavrus and Maud Seghers. "Critical Discourse Analysis in Comparative Education: A Discursive Study of 'Partnership' in Tanzania's Poverty Reduction Policies." *Comparative Education Review,* 54, no. 1 (2010): 77-103.

Writing for Our Lives:
(Un)Learning within The American School

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Abstract: This article underscores how writing to activate critical consciousness can function as a lifeline for Students of Color navigating Predominantly White Institutions. More specifically, we contend that nurturing the critical literacies of historically marginalized students within American higher education classroom settings can better equip them to demand and enact change from within and beyond the confines of academe. Thus, as a collective, we employ poetry as a means of coming to voice as well as drawing attention to the larger implications of empowering Students of Color to write for transformation, not just within Education courses, but across the curriculum.

Introduction

When a statement ends with, "for my life," it often connotes a sense of urgency — immediacy even. One might even begin to question what the conditions may be that elicit such a dire and extreme declaration in the first place. Fighting — *for my life.* Running — *for my life.* Writing — *for my life*? How have we, as People of Color, fought for our lives? How have we, as People of Color, run for our lives? More importantly, how have we, as People of Color, written *for* our lives? (Lorde, 1978) How have we documented how we are experiencing the conditions that compel us to resist? Moreover, how can writing function as a lifeline? How has it served as a vehicle for meaning-making and action for Communities of Color historically? And, why is this medium especially significant given the experiences of Students of Color at historically White institutions?

Audre Lorde, in her acclaimed piece, "Poetry is not a luxury," (1985, p. 218) aids us in addressing these critical inquiries. Not only does she speak to the centrality of poetry in the lives of women, but she also asserts that "The farthest external horizons of hopes and fears are cobbled by our poems, carved from the rock experiences of our daily lives." Thus, for women, especially those situated at the margins, the "nam[ing of] the nameless […] so it can be thought" and translating ideas into action is not only seminal to their survival, but also seminal to their very existence. Using this text to ground our production of meaning, we intentionally tap into this literary genealogy, and come together to unpack our individual and collective experience within EDUC 101: The American School. EDUC 101 is an introductory course within the Department of Educational Studies at Colgate University. For some context, Colgate University is a small, highly selective, residential liberal arts institution located on the unceded land of the Oneida people in rural Central, New York. My classes often reflect the racial makeup of the village the university resides in — mostly White. While a great majority of students are economically privileged, some are only able to attend the university due to Colgate's commitment to meeting students' financial needs. That said, even a handful of Students of Color in my courses is always a pleasant surprise.

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Nonetheless, before students are able to take additional courses within our department, it is expected that they take "The American School," which in many ways functions as a foundational course. Many students come to the classroom clinging desperately to the idea that education is truly the great equalizer, never really having had to think, (or be encouraged to think) about their own academic trajectories, who they interacted with on the journey, and who they never realized was absent the whole time. Needless to say, there is much (un)learning that transpires throughout the course of our time together. In my section of EDUC 101, my students (including my co-authors) and I wrestle with the idea that American schools have been forged and rooted in struggle and that contrary to popular belief, they have *always* been contested spaces. And yet, we are called to "[...] acknowledge that educational institutions operate in contradictory ways, with their potential to oppress and marginalize co-existing with their potential to emancipate and empower" (Solórzano and Yosso, 2001, p. 598).

With poetry as the medium of choice, Dr. Bell, the facilitator of learning and critical thought, Anthony, a sociology major powerfully coming to voice, and Racquel, a creative seeking outlet to produce meaning of her lived experiences within and beyond the classroom setting, collectivize to rethink the possibilities inherent within study and struggle (Patel, 2021). In so doing, all three of us have come to recognize and grapple with writing as a means of empowerment as well as a tool that aids in the building of critical consciousness and personal and intellectual transformation within and beyond the classroom environment.

Conceptual Framework

Critical race theory is a theoretical framework that gives us the tools to better understand as well as contend with issues of race, racism, and power embedded within the very fabric of American society (Delgado and Stefancic, 2023). Through storytelling, the focus and narrative shifts from the deleterious effects of majoritarian stories. This shift makes all the difference. People of Color, their experiential knowledge, and their stories of resistance work together to expose the myriad ways interlocking systems of oppression negatively impact their ability to live, *be*, and thrive. While critical legal theorists initially conceptualized this important paradigm, scholars of education (Tate and Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Yosso et. al, 2001, Brayboy, 2005; Covarrubias and Liou; 2014) have since expanded this framework not only to magnify the salience of race, racism, and power within and beyond legal and academic settings, but to also highlight the crucial role storytelling plays in empowering People of Color to "name [their] reality" and disrupt "business as usual."

Subsequently, when paired with the work of Dolores Delgado Bernal, (2002) Students of Color, in particular, are positioned as holders and creators of knowledge who are actively struggling toward liberation and working through the complexities of their lived experiences and material realities. We draw upon this standpoint as a means of rejecting deficit-oriented pedagogies and classroom environments predicated upon the banking method of teaching and learning as explained by Paulo Freire (2021) and bell hooks (1994). Connecting critical race theory with the idea that Students of Color are holders and creators of knowledge creates room for larger discussions on *how* we can tap into the untapped potential of said students, especially those navigating Predominantly White Institutions (Yosso, 2005; Gonzalez et al., 2006) Furthermore, when we consider the works of radical Feminists of Color (Guy-Sheftall, 1995; Moraga and Anzaldúa, 2003; 2022), who were also writers — activists deeply connected to community, educators, staunch advocates for intersectional justice, among many other things —

we observe the ways in which literacy, learning, and liberation have *always* been inextricably linked. Thus, we draw upon the principles of critical race theory, critical pedagogy, and Women of Color feminisms to foreground the power of building critical consciousness, and fostering critical literacies among Students of Color hungry for critical engagement within Predominantly White Institutions of higher education.

Poets' Statement

To exist within academia as a Person of Color means disregarding your experiences as knowledge and succumbing to the publicized narrative. Throughout history, the words and works of the majority have erased and buried the community of People of Color. The narrative that survives is the one maintained by society and society tells us to understand these narratives as facts with historical significance. Doing so has inculcated a sense of inadequacy into our sense of being; it is as though our thoughts, experiences, and truth(s) hold no weight on their own.

The introductory education course "EDUC 101: The American School" at Colgate University with Professor Bell was different. The class aimed to highlight our experiences — the experiences of those marginalized — within the school system and delineate the discrepancies the system was built on. For once, there was a teacher who understood us as knowledge producers rather than just students. Professor Bell fostered our curiosity and provoked the passions we were prone to suppressing. We remained equally impassioned to speak our truth to power. In one of the assignments, we were moved to disregard the word count limit for fear of risking our messages.

Although we were apologetic in response, Professor Bell urged us not to be apologetic but to wonder why we felt inclined to silence ourselves. As intimidating as it felt to go against the professor's standards and rubric, a sense of urgency overcame us to finally finish our thought. What we realized was that we didn't believe in our truth any less or think that what we knew was invaluable; we were simply adapting to survive. We were surviving by being passive participants, following rubrics, and citing authors, but Professor Bell taught us that was not surviving, but rather permitting our erasure. We will be consistently silenced, cut off, and "invisibilized" until we start writing ourselves back into existence.

When navigating spaces that never allowed residency by people like us, the work necessary is urgent. We occupy an intellectual space, one rooted in whiteness, rooted in homogeneity, but we come from places where whiteness and academia are foreign. We depended on our community to pass on life's most valuable lessons through stories, poems, and history; this is the knowledge that raised us. We have experienced the spectrum of the American School and only through this course, EDUC 101, did we find the strength to demand our space rather than just occupy it. We remain conscious of the stark difference between this privileged world and the reality for most People of Color in this system. We share a sense of responsibility to bring our communities into every space we enter. We share our communities and our *knowing* with the world through our writing. We share everything we have by writing.

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Racquel's poem

The body is a creature of habit

So maybe it makes sense that I learned to silence myself

Maybe, my body became so comfortable in that silence that I thought that's where I needed to
be
My senior year,
I was awarded a prize,
My headmaster addressing the school said
"She is an incredible friend and community member, pushing her school to be true to its ideals"
I was awarded a prize
I was awarded my shame gilded in pride

I learned how funny language is
If you compliment me on the outcome of my suffering,
Then I must thank you for it
If you praise the person I become because of your pain
Then I must be proud of it
If you force me to call you headmaster,
I must respect it

I was being a friend
Praising unity in the land of opportunity
I was naive to believe them when they looked like listeners
I felt sorry when they responded like prisoners
Stuck,
In a system that set them up for failure
Can't you see that it is not their fault that they live this way?
That they can only see the lack of privilege as peculiar?

The George B. Blake prize is awarded in recognition of extended voluntary and generous
service to others.
It seems now, entirely agonizing,
To be recognized for my service to others
Service solely responsible for my survival
Perhaps I was only seen as a friend because I allowed them to believe my work was for them,
Perhaps I believed once that it was actually for them

"We seek to provide the most meaningful educational experience our students will ever have in
their lives,"
So why did I have to fight?
The mission statement that I was fed
Eventually felt like mockery
They believed it to be true,
So much so,
that I thought it applied to me too

I was ordered to learn neutrally

To accept their teachings openly
that my meaningful educational experience must be deserved
A daily reminder that my spot is not assured

My mind soon began to degrade,
Considering the places that I belong,
What was given this authority?
To convince me,
That my bane existence is wrong

I was used to being blatantly ignored,
To be made invisible,
To be swallowed in noise
I was so used to my tongue burning in poise

My worst fear as a girl of color,
Was to get lost in this system of power
It's realizing that I could not be more than what they thought me to be
Because their desires disapproved of me

I was told to shut up by a white boy in 10th grade English
Defending Kaepernick as a liberator of our mental stuck in this perpetual state
Prideful,
In explaining his role as educator and sufferer
Seeing everything I know and feel through his kneel

I was told to shut up by a white boy in 10th grade English
And I recognized
my place in the classroom
It had already been designed
And my worst fear played out,
They saw me as everything I had previously assumed
I was stripped to my misunderstanding that I could exist neutral in this space,
Down to the darkened wronged impression that I could escape this foolish fate

I was told to shut up by a white boy in 10th grade English and I had to apologize
I'm Sorry.
I'm Sorry?
My own voice suffocated my thoughts,
Each syllable sour with shame
When I thought I may have been finally seen, their true intentions began to unfold
It was an empty commitment,
A weightless word

For the first time
A "sorry" didn't sound right It felt like the S

It was too ssssshhhh shaken with disbelief
Or the R
The R was too
Rrrrr ready to sacrifice it
I was used to apologizing,
For taking up space
For existing within their place
A place that permisses his rage with my presence
That likens his and my experience
They tried to justify his inability to be uncomfortable with the depth of my trouble

I was apologizing for sharing my knowledge
And for my experience being seen as so outrageous,
So impossible,
That it was a lie by nature
That I had to be silenced.
Is it my fault that you cannot see a life other than your own?

I began to know this as truth
That my knowledge was unproved

In that silence,
I began to listen
I heard Audre Lorde as she escaped the silence and spoke through the paper
As I listened, I knew there was no one to interrupt

I heard Tupac as he grew from concrete.
There was no bound or defeat
I saw their ideas morph through generations and their thoughts be preserved through time
I exist amongst my peers
Freely and unapologetically on paper.
There is no need to apologize on paper
To be quiet on paper
I was free to experience the world
To be my ancestors' dreams unfold

There was no one pretending to listen or to make me feel small
A paper must intuitively trust the writer
It trusted me.
It will always trust me.

I was told to shut up by a white-boy in 10th grade English
And my ambitions were killed
My perceptions and fears fulfilled
My identity became distinctive as my will diminished
I had no interest in respecting

a system only expecting
I was cursed to a cycle of double consciousness
I know because of the blood running through the pens of my people
I AM because of the pen I use to write my future
Are you here with us now?

****
Anthony's poem

Here, on the intersection of Whittier Boulevard and Maple Avenue
From the high-top *Converses posted on telewire
The ones tied together with colored laces
To that little sidewalk behind the corner store alley
Cracked, tagged, and in need of repair,
Behind the security bars of my window,
A home inside a prison
Even up above where the ghetto bird roams
Preying on melanated souls

It clearly doesn't require half a million dollars for a sociology degree
To recognize that the world is off balance
The academy brags of its commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
A desire to solve the world's most pressing issues
What a paradox then,
That the problem seeks to be the solution

Structures of power created in such a way
That these same people we study in Sociology
The working class, the immigrants, the unhoused, and other displaced peoples
Only exist in the abstract; in textbooks, lectures, and imagination
But not tangibly, not breathing here within these same four walls

Am I a ghost?
Have I not been breathing here within this institution?
Have I not been raising my hand for an eternity?
Pleading for the chance to speak
To share a truth that risks my livelihood as much as it does yours

It's almost as if my taking up of space
Taking up that little chair with that built in desk
One less seat for the elite
As if someone mistook a pinto bean for a grain of white rice
Is a glitch in the system

"*No pertenezco*"; I don't belong here

My people aren't worthy of a space here
Yet somehow, narratives of us are formed here
Often told inaccurately
Of how we are low-class
Of a people that threaten modernity and development
Of a people that simply don't wish to better themselves

Social deviants are what they call us
Sick people in need of a cure

I'm sorry *ama*,
All those times
Never forgetting those goodnight kisses
Those little potions, the *remedios* you would craft
The tubs of VapoRub, pots of lemon tea
Chili cheese fries and Fanta Strawberry at Arry's
Carrying me tight across your arms
Running to drop me off with Mrs. Gonzalez
The melodies your heart sang
When I'd rest against your chest
The constant reminders *que "si se puede"*
I could be a doctor, a firefighter, perhaps an artist
All those dreams we crafted together
All of that
Somehow not enough to save me from this disease

Apparently, I didn't cite enough readings
Enough research findings
Enough quotes from the 1800s

To understand my lived experiences
The many "*mijo echale ganas*" "EBT or WIC?"
"I'll bring the bus fare next time"

To realize that lived, legacies of resilience to cycles of oppression
To relate a type of knowledge gained

Gained far removed from literary text
Or from the tongue of a PhD graduate

To recognize that layer of perspective
Silenced by the dominant powers that be
Are linked to histories of who belongs and who doesn't
Is quite a dangerous thing

What am I to do now?

There is no turning back
No second chances
No undoing
Of the mountains crossed
Oceans swam
Families lost
For a dream which I'll never get the sleep for

The unspoken "do's and don'ts" to the formal education setting:

Among others,

Do listen to the professor
Do raise your hand before speaking
Do submit your work before 11:59 PM

But,
Please don't challenge this "education" you are receiving
Don't question why we experience space and place differently
And for People Of Color, just don't be

Quite frankly, our livelihoods are being erased
Who knew these fine lines of black ink
sprawled across this 8.5 by 11-inch sheet
could open up another dimension
A portal into a safe haven
Where what I know to be true,
That inner voice and memory
Is not silenced by the pressures to present knowledge a certain way
Is not lost to the convenience of accepting inequality as natural
Is not bound by rubrics and grading scales

And instead,
Opens up a place where our dreams could be made possible
Where all those structures that lead to -isms and -phobias cease to exist

This is what writing for liberation looks like.

Can you hear us now?

Discussion

At a time where complete histories are being erased, whitewashed, and sanitized, (Hartocollis and Fawcett, 2023) Students of Color are rewriting themselves back into existence.

Creating mirrors they can look into to see themselves and those they love reflected back to them as they navigate hostile living and learning environments (Gonzalez, (2022). Racquel and Anthony came to EDUC 101C: The American School. Slightly lifeless. Apologetic, but unsure of why they had to be. Both resuscitated themselves in my course. This revival was necessary. This revival was urgent. This revival is still now.

Dr. Micere Githae Mugo, a poet, playwright, essayist, novelist, orator, educator, and scholar once said, "Writing can be a lifeline, especially when your existence has been denied, especially when you have been left on the margins, especially when your life and process of growth have been subjected to attempts at strangulation." Like Racquel, in this moment, Dr. Mugo's words bring me back to Audre Lorde's "Litany for Survival." Still so resonant — transcendent:

> and when we speak we are afraid
> our words will not be heard
> nor welcomed
> but when we are silent
> we are still afraid
>
> So it is better to speak
> remembering
> we were never meant to survive.

Anthony and Racquel have spoken. Are you listening? Many Students of Color are dying slow and painful deaths within many halls, corners, and crevices of academe (Love, 2019). But, in the words of the Aboriginal Rights group in Queensland, "If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together." As a first-generation Black woman educator of Caribbean ancestry, my liberation is bound up with that of Racquel and Anthony. Their truths freed me/free me over and over and over again. Their truths beckon me to reconsider always my pedagogy and my praxis. How will we engage in above/underground operations within and across institutions not designed for nor desiring to nurture the brilliance of Students of Color, their histories, and their truths? How will we work together to facilitate education as a practice of freedom and as a lifeline for students languishing, perishing, and in need of life support across American school contexts?

How can our pedagogies restore? Are we intentional about drawing upon theoretical frameworks (the very ones that are crucified, vilified, set aside might I add) that inform our pedagogy and praxis in ways that acknowledge, center, and affirm students who have been overlooked, marginalized, and devalued historically and currently? Have we considered the ways in which James Baldwin and Robin D.G. Kelley are speaking to one another across time and space? "The paradox of education is precisely this," says Baldwin, "that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated." Kelley responds with, "Love and study cannot exist without struggle, and struggle cannot occur solely inside the refuge we call the university. Being grounded in the world we wish to make is fundamental."

Anthony and Racquel are literal and symbolic beings. For them, poetry is not a luxury, but a sheer necessity. How many other Anthonys and Racquels are out there in search of a classroom

space where they do not have to feel obligated to apologize to appease the status quo, or feel like they must remain silent *because* they are not members of the status quo? The exploration of study and struggle should not be confined to introductory courses within departments dedicated to educational study. Rather, it should be taken up in critical ways in courses students least expect (Burgess and Williams; 2022; Kokka, 2019).

Anthony and Racquel came to my class already brilliant, already critical, already enough. As educators, it is *our* responsibility to see them, engage critically with them, and push them to harness "the strength to demand [their] space [within academia] rather than just occupy it." And if you listen closely, you will hear the pounding of hearts as they are being resuscitated in classroom spaces where *everyone* present, *including* White students, is urged to take ownership of their learning and encouraged to think deeply about how their liberation is bound up with that of the person seated next to them. Writing is a lifeline. Poetry is a pathway. For many People of Color, writing for our lives is not a new practice (https://www.aiisf.org/poems-and-inscriptions). However, empowering Students of Color to tap into these legacies of resistance both intellectually and rhetorically can very well be the difference between life and death within institutions never architectured for their survival.

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Circle of Funds:
Funding Strategies for Undocumented Students

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Abstract: This paper seeks to (1) find ways to open doors closed to college funding for undocumented students in the U.S.; (2) construct a rejoinder to critiques that considerations of higher education for undocumented students focus too much on money; and (3) advocate for students whose voices/stories elevate our work as academics. This analysis is informed by the results of a study of undocumented students as well as the author's personal experience. Participants in the study primarily used three sources of funding for college: scholarships/fellowships, employment in the underground economy, and support from sponsoring/advocacy organizations. The Appendix outlines strategies for helping undocumented students fundraise for college education.

Introduction

For undocumented students, a significant barrier to achieving a degree in higher education stems from their ineligibility to apply for and receive federal and, in many cases, state financial aid despite their families' investment in the system (Perry, 2006). This paper presents the ongoing struggles endured by undocumented students as they finance their college educations. In the Appendix, I provide an outline of pragmatic funding strategies for this population of students and their supporters, allies, and advocates. These strategies were compiled after decades of working with undocumented students, including those interviewed for this study.

The current state of immigration in the United States is littered with examples of inhuman practices and discourse. There is continued anti-immigrant discourse in public media and various U.S. institutions (Bloch et al., 2020; Finley & Esposito, 2020; Rodriguez, 2020). Reports of inhuman detention facilities and deportations persist: lack of comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) and other such policy failures continue exasperate a broken immigration system (Filkins, 2023; Romero, 2023; Sullivan & Kanno-Youngs, 2023). Specific examples include repeatedly failed efforts to pass the DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act throughout the past 22 years and the attack on DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). DACA helped some but not all undocumented students. DACA was implemented by the Obama administration in 2012 and provided a two-year work permit and deprioritization for deportation, yet offered neither a change in immigration status (i.e., undocumented people remained undocumented people) nor a pathway to citizenship. The latest on DACA, after a failed attempt to phase out the program by the Trump administration, followed by Biden administration's failure to restore it to its original form, is *current* DACA holders may continue to benefit from the program, as well as apply for renewals. As of 2023, new applications are being accepted but are not being processed pursuant to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit decision No. 21-40680 (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS, 2022). Moreover, when undocumented students are stigmatized as "illegal," they can be denied federal student aid and other forms of college assistance." Undocumented students face the real possibility of being deported/removed from the United States, for many the only country they have ever known.

There is some good news at the state level, such as state "DREAM Acts." For example, laws enacted in New York State in 2002 and 2019 allow eligible undocumented college students to pay in-state tuition (AN ACT to Amend the Education Law, 2002; Enacts the New York State

DREAM Act, 2019), provided the applicant has met the following eligibility requirements: (1) attended at least 2 years of high school in New York; (2) graduated from a New York high school or earned a GED; (3) applied to college within 5 years of earning the diploma or GED; (4) showed proof of residence; and (5) filed an affidavit at the college that the applicant filed for authorized status as soon as they were eligible. Other states such as California have similar laws. However, no state can provide a pathway to citizenship or residency as these processes lie in the jurisdiction of the federal government. For immigrant rights advocates, CIR continues to be a major target.

The goals of this analysis include: (1) find ways to open the many closed doors to college funding that so many undocumented students face in this country; (2) construct a rejoinder to critiques that considerations of higher education for undocumented students focus too much on money for college degrees by those who have plenty of both; and (3) give an example of a journal article serving a dual purpose of being intellectually stimulating/engaging, and executing a practical purpose, in this case, advocating for students whose voices/stories elevate our work as academics. The body of this paper presents the results of a mixed-methods study I conducted with undocumented students and the Appendix provides a brief outline of fundraising strategies for helping undocumented students fundraise for their college education.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the paper is informed by the critical pedagogy tradition and Yosso's community cultural wealth theory (Yosso, 2006). Critical pedagogy is rooted in the interrogation of powerful systems that affect, influence, and mandate the education that occurs or, rather, is allowed to occur in classrooms, schools, and all places of teaching and learning. An important concept in critical pedagogy is student agency. Identifying the potential for societal change, and the potential in oneself to be part of that change, is foundational to education. Giroux (2001, p. 38) wrote, "Thus it is important that students come to grips with what a given society has made of them, how it has incorporated them ideologically and materially into its rules and logic, and what it is that they need to affirm and reject in their own histories in order to begin the process of struggling for the conditions that will give them opportunities to lead a self-managed existence." This quote is exemplified by the persistent struggle of undocumented students for a college education in the face of anti-immigrant discourse, detentions and deportations, and a broken immigration system that places their livelihoods and their lives in peril. Despite these challenges, undocumented students and their allies have found creative ways to fund their college education, while still advocating for systemic changes that would alleviate the need for such strategies to exist in the first place. Thus, in the spirit described by Giroux in the quote above, undocumented students will continue to seek and create opportunities that lead them toward a better way of life despite the challenges they confront. This analysis aims to provide important lessons about the role of agency and resistance among a group of students that continues to be marginalized and misunderstood in U.S. society.

In addition, to critical pedagogy, Yosso's (2006) community cultural wealth theory provides an important lens through which to understand how undocumented students seek an additive approach to their current situation and employ the various forms of capital Yosso describes in her theory. Despite the oppressive challenges that undocumented students face, they see value in themselves, their families, and the communities they reside in. This is particularly true through their use of social capital which Yosso (2006, p. 45) defines as the "networks of people and

community services" that undocumented students use to generate income to fund their college education. This analysis will examine specific examples of how undocumented students use social capital.

Methods

This analysis is informed by a mixed methods study (Del Razo, 2012). Within this larger study, key aspects of fundraising by undocumented students were identified that aligned with my personal experience across decades of witnessing and author's decades of witnessing and helping undocumented students' efforts to fund their college education. The qualitative portion of my study consisted primarily of interviews conducted in California and Arizona in 2011, the year before DACA was introduced. The interviews were semi-structured and conducted according to Brinkmann & Kvale's (2014, p. 4) definition of interviews as conversations "where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and interviewee". Indeed, throughout these interviews, the subjects often noted that it felt more like a *platica* (a talk) than an interview. Interviews typically lasted 90 minutes but some went as long as 3 hours. The interviews provided personal disclosures of participants' immigration status and the challenges of financing their college education. Participants also provided practical and useful advice on how to generate income within a system that produces financial barriers for undocumented students.

The quantitative portion of my study involved implementing a national survey, the College Matriculation of Undocumented Students (CMUS). The CMUS survey was distributed online to undocumented students from the high school graduating class of 2011. The survey was informed by the existing research literature on the topic, by decades of my own experience working with undocumented students, his research on the topic, and by the CIRP (Cooperative Institutional Research Program) survey which "has provided data on incoming college students' background characteristics, high school experiences, attitudes, behaviors, and expectations for college" for more than a half century (Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), n.d.). Items on the CMUS survey included questions about participants' financial situations and the importance of finding funding for their college education. The survey data provided an important backdrop to the stories that surfaced during my interviews and lent a pragmatic, mixed-method approach to the study that would examine the commonalities of both methods (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Together, these two methods provided rich data that made clear the sense of urgency that undocumented students associate with funding their college education. Where the survey data left questions, the interviews provided answers. As discussed below, the findings of this study contribute and understanding of the important and continuing conversations surrounding how undocumented students strategize to fund their college educations.

Findings I: Lack of Funds, Sparse Scholarships, and Inventive Fellowships

Funding their college education is very important for undocumented students and a top concern for a vast majority of them. As Figure 1 below shows, when asked, "Do you have any concern about your ability to finance your college education?" over 84% of the students reported that this was a major concern because they were not sure they would have enough funds to complete their college education. Close to 12% of the students reported that they had some concerns and 4% indicated that they had no concerns about their ability to finance their college education. Since this 4% translates to 12 students in the survey sample (N=290), then it is possible that these 12 students had secured sufficient funding to finance their entire college

expenses. This shows that not all undocumented students are unable to pay for college, but it does show that it is only a small percentage of them that are able to do so.

CMUS Study (N=290)
Financial Concerns for College of Undocumented Students
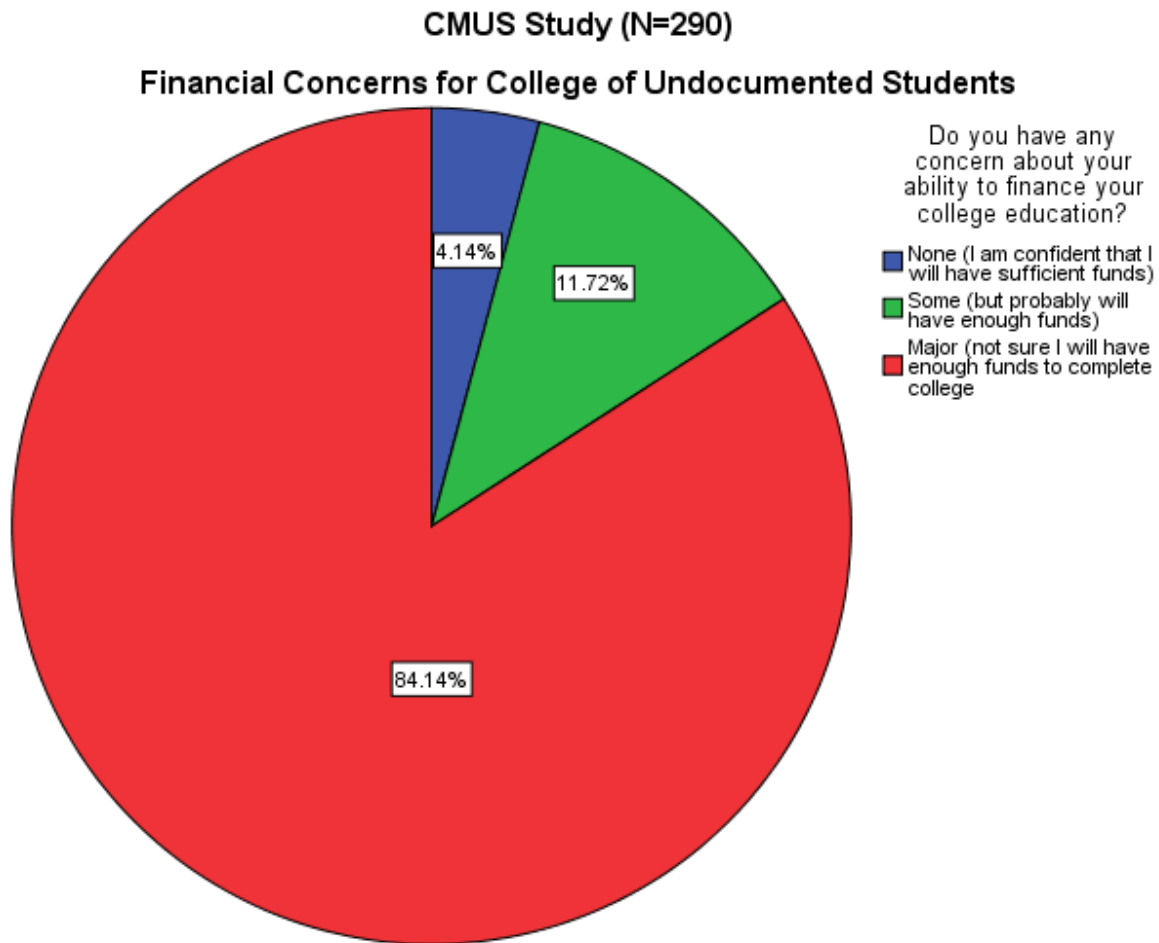
Figure 1

These percentages are staggering when compared to the national norms found in the 2011 CIRP Freshman Survey (Pryor et al., 2011), which asked the same question to the entering 2011 Freshman class. Table 1 (below) helps make this point more clearly. As Table 1 shows, almost a third (32.6%) of the National 2011 Freshman class were not concerned about paying for their college expenses while only 4.1% of the CMUS respondents reported feeling this way; a difference of 28.5%. As previously mentioned, the most staggering difference was that fewer than 12% of the National 2011 freshman class had a major concern about paying for their college expenses as compared to 84% of the CMUS respondents who reported feeling this way, which indicates *a difference of over 72%!* Although there are many issues that undocumented students are facing, the inability to fund their college education caused the biggest barrier for them, and it was the academic challenge most frequently reported by participants. In fact, 96% of the students surveyed "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that their biggest challenge in going to college is money. (See Figure 2 on p. 34.)

Table 1
2011 CIRP Freshman Survey and CMUS Survey Comparison

Do you have any concern about your ability to finance your college education?	2011 CIRP Freshman Survey Weighted National Norms – All Respondents	CMUS Study (N=290) Non-Weighted All Respondents	Differences
None (I am confident that I will have sufficient funds)	32.6%	4.1%	**28.5%**
Some (but probably will have enough funds)	55.5%	11.7%	**43.8%**
Major (Not sure I will have enough funds to complete college)	11.9%	84.1%	**-72.2%**

To deal with these financial challenges, undocumented students reported using a variety of strategies to earn income for college: scholarships, fellowships, and working in the underground economy were the three methods most commonly reported. Students also turned to advocacy organizations for support and guidance. Participants' stories gleaned through interviews revealed how each of these strategies carried particular benefits and challenges.

Monica's Story: For economically disadvantaged students who are *not* undocumented, applying for federal aid is a common strategy for funding college expenses. Because undocumented students are not allowed to apply for any type of federal aid, scholarships become an important avenue of funds. However, as Monica points out in the interview excerpt below, few scholarships available for undocumented students, and those that exist are usually highly competitive. Monica shared her challenges in securing scholarships for her college education when she said,

> It's hard. You have to be more resourceful. We have been through millions of
> websites to find scholarships. The first thing I look for is requirements. Some
> don't specify that you have to be a resident and then you look a little closer and
> it's there. [S*he points to a make-believe application.*] Argh! I have to go through a

lot like that. Then, I find a scholarship for undocumented students, which is like one in 50. But those are hard to get because undocumented students tend to be good students. So, the competition amongst undocumented students is harder than those that are not.

CMUS Study (N=290)
Importance of College Funding for Undocumented Students

My biggest challenge in going to college is money.

■ Srongly Disagree
■ Disagree
□ Undecided
□ Agree
■ Strongly Agree

1.38%

19.66%

76.55%
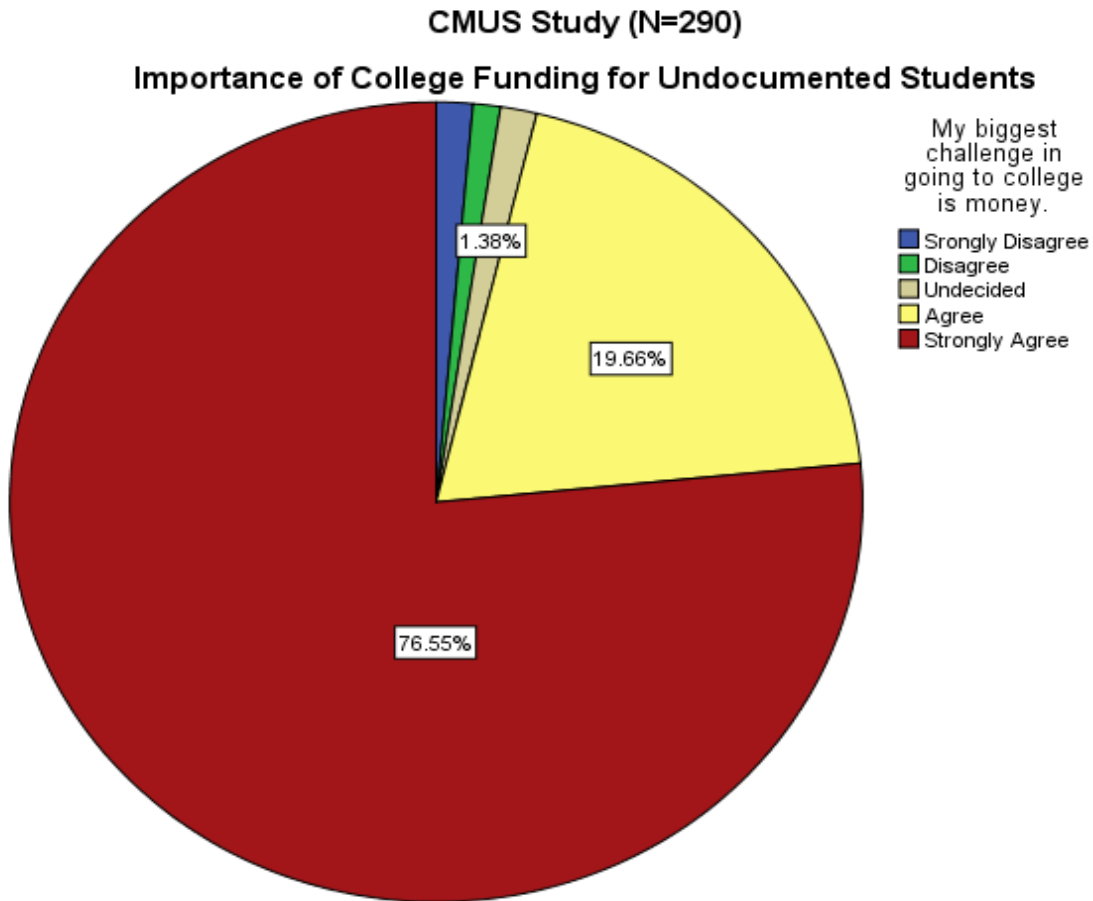
Figure 2

As Monica described her experience of searching for scholarships that permit undocumented students to apply, she explained how frustrating it was to discover that few were available to her. This description is indicative of many undocumented students in general and specifically for the students in this study. Other interviewees described similar experiences. Although discouraging, scholarships remained an important source of revenue for students interviewed in the study. Most of the students (14 of 16 or 87.5%) reported receiving at least one scholarship.

The survey data corroborated the data collected from the interviews in regard to how important scholarships were for undocumented students. When asked how much of their first year's educational expenses they expected to cover from "aid which need not be repaid" such as scholarships, over 82% responded that this type of aid would cover at least some of their first-year expenses. Over 21% expected this type of aid to cover 76%-100% of their first-year college

expenses. These results suggest that undocumented students are well aware of the importance of scholarships in helping them pay their way to college.

Daniel's Story: Fellowships are another type of aid that fits within this category is fellowships. Daniel discusses how he secured a fellowship with an organization that worked closely with the police department. Originally from Zacatecas, Mexico, Daniel, came to the U.S. when he was one and a half years old. Daniel's father was already in the U.S. and managed to fly his family, which consisted of his mother, older and younger sisters, and Daniel, to the U.S. Daniel's younger brother was born in the United States years after the family arrived. The family moved frequently but finally settled in one of the south cities of Los Angeles County. Despite his immigration status, Daniel participated in a police youth program and wanted to become a police officer. At the time of our interview, Daniel had graduated high school two months prior and was majoring in business at a local community college.

Given his experience in a police youth program, Daniel saw an opportunity to locate a fellowship with an organization that worked closely with the police department. Using his connection with the police youth program, Daniel informed the administrator of the fellowship, Rachel, that he was interested in the fellowship but that his undocumented status prevented him from providing a social security number, which was required in order to receive funds via check. Rachel improvised a way to award the fellowship funds. Daniel said, "They paid the other kids with a social [*i.e., social security number*] through a check. But for us that don't have a social, we got gift cards and bus passes. They helped us out. They said they would pay me in different ways. I thought that was pretty cool." Daniel's networking smarts and the social capital he brought to the table were key in helping secure this fellowship. On Yosso's definition of social capital as "networks of people and community resources" (Yosso, 2006, pg. 45), Daniel used the social capital he had gained as a participant in the police youth program to help secure this rare fellowship that accepted and found creative ways of helping undocumented students.

Important in this example is how organizations can fund undocumented students while still ensuring that they stay within the restrictions of any existing policies their organizations may have even in a place like a police department. Although not as many participants in the study reported securing fellowships as they did scholarships, this was still an important finding in the data as it demonstrated creative workarounds for generating income for undocumented students. way that some undocumented students were using to generate income. This study revealed that many organizations are interested in including undocumented students in securing fellowships but feel they wouldn't be able to pay the students because of their status. It was important to discover how an organization was able to not only provide a fellowship for an undocumented student but also find a way to compensate him without issuing him a check. Colleges and organizations supporting higher education may benefit from this example.

Findings II: Working in the Underground Economy

According to my study, over 78% of the survey respondents and over 68% of the students interviewed reported living below the poverty line. Securing income for college expenses determines whether or not the students ultimately enroll and persist in college. In addition to scholarships and fellowships, finding work in the underground economy was another method for generating funds for the students interviewed. Some students used an entrepreneurial attitude to create ways to make money on their own, as was the case with Chalo.

Chalo's Story: Chalo is originally from Coahuila, Mexico and came to the United States when he was 6 years old. Chalo's father had arrived earlier upon learning that one of his sisters in the U.S. was dying. His father eventually settled in the U.S. and worked as a dishwasher. Chalo, his mother, and younger brother came to the United States with visas, which eventually expired and resulted in his family losing their authorized, documented status. Chalo's youngest brother was born a couple of years after they arrived and is the only U.S. citizen of the family. Chalo began working at a very young age and started several businesses such as wedding coordinator and dance instructor for *quinceañeras* (15th year birthday parties). Chalo had graduated from high school two months prior to our interview, had just started community college, where he was majoring in electrical engineering with an emphasis in Computer Science.

Chalo considers himself self-employed and uses his skill and creativity to help pay for his expenses. He shares his ideas with other students. He said,

> It's hard to find jobs and I tell them to go to a mom-and-pop shops and try to remake their menus. Most students have access to computers and can work with [Microsoft] Word and PowerPoint and put pictures of their food on a PowerPoint presentation. And then they can create a slide show that changes their picture of their food. You could go up to them with an example and say, "Oh, I see you don't have anything like this for your restaurant" and tell them "I can provide your restaurant with a virtual menu like this" and they end up wanting it. That's what I did. That's the idea I give them.

Chalo's understanding of technology and those who use it prompted him to come up with this very creative way for him to provide services that businesses would pay for. These are examples of creative methods of generating funds by using the technology and know-how that some teens may have.

Finding employment in the underground economy was beneficial at times, as in Chalo's case, but for others, their undocumented status affected them in ways that also affected their parents. In order to survive, undocumented students' parents often work in the underground economy to provide an income to sustain the family. These jobs are often exploitative, with low pay and long hours. The students reported that their parents often encouraged them to go to college so that they would not have to work in these kinds of jobs. This is common among many families in general but specifically within immigrant families where many view the United States as a place where their children will have a better life and financially succeed at a higher level than their parents (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014). Immigrant children who are here with authorization have shown the ability to assimilate and succeed in the U.S. at higher levels than their parents, especially when compared with other children of immigrants who are born in the United States (Suárez -Orozco & Suárez -Orozco, 1995). However, when it comes to undocumented children, we can encounter a situation of segmented assimilation.

Segmented assimilation changes this straight-line path into the American mainstream. Various factors (e.g., non-acceptance, racial discrimination, lack of resources) disrupt upward mobility among the children of immigrants, resulting in them not improving upon their parents' economic status (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Zhou, 2006; Portes & Zhou, 1993). A unique distinction amongst children of immigrants is that undocumented students do not possess an authorized immigration status in this country and thus, acceptance as an individual who can benefit from public structures (e.g., public financial aid, working with authorization, and

licensures) is non-existent for many. Hence, many choose to enter the underground economy into jobs like those of their parents to see if they can generate funds for their college education and, sometimes, for their own survival. Many students in this study worked in this underground economy and experienced many of the injustices that their parents had undergone. However, they still viewed it as a source of funds they hoped would help in paying for college. In the following stories, the students discuss what they have had to endure in these jobs in order to secure funds for college such as the case was for Agusto.

Agusto's Story: Agusto is originally from Jalisco, Mexico and came by plane to the U.S. with his mother and older sister using travel visas. He was one and a half years old when he left Mexico. His father met the family in Los Angeles where the family eventually settled in one of the south cities of Los Angeles County. The family eventually grew to six with the arrival of Augusto's younger sister and brother. Like many other undocumented students, Agusto comes from a mixed-status family. Agusto plans on attending a local community college and majoring in Engineering or Business. Agusto knew that paying for college would be a big expense so despite securing a scholarship, it was still not enough to cover all his expenses. Agusto shares how he worked with the janitors at his school to try to save money for college: "I tried to do it once a week. I would tell them to give me $5 to help them out, like after school, or sometimes during lunchtime. I would tell them; I could clean up something during lunch. Like students would drop hot Cheetos on the floor and I could pick them up. I would also pick up bottles and recycle them, too."

Even though it was tough on him for his friends to see him picking up trash with the janitors, Agusto mentioned how he "had to do what he had to do" to make money for college. Agusto also tried working in other cities to help generate money. He said, "I also went to Anaheim. I told my friends that I can clean houses and the owners can donate whatever they can. It was hard to do this, but I had to do this because I am going to school and to pay for school." Agusto's strong desire to go to college superseded any other personal concerns he had about picking up trash at his high school or cleaning houses in strange cities. He was very determined to find funds that could help him pay for college. Similar to Agusto was Leticia, who also had a story of working as a means of raising funds for college, but she had a different circumstance than Agusto.

Leticia's Story: Leticia is originally from Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, and came to the U.S. when she was 5 years old. Leticia's journey of migration was through the *cerros* (the highlands) that separate Tijuana from the U.S. She crossed with her mother, her older sister who was pregnant at the time, and her sister-in-law. Leticia remembered the journey as being very scary as they crossed through the night with ant-infested food and contaminated water, which they consumed due to a lack of resources. After seven failed attempts to cross, they finally made it. Her father had already made the trip to the U.S. and once reunited, he brought the family to one of the south cities of Los Angeles County where they eventually settled. Leticia lost her mom to cancer when Leticia was in the ninth grade and this tragic experience is what makes her determined to become a registered nurse who aids cancer patients.

Leticia became a teenage mother during her senior year in high school but still managed to graduate on time with a 3.3 GPA. She took two years off to work before she enrolled in her local community college. Leticia saw herself in a difficult financial situation when she became pregnant in high school and was forced to work to create a funding stream to support her family. She describes how she did it:

In my senior year, I got pregnant, so after I graduated; I stayed home and looked for a job. I found one where I worked in a warehouse opening boxes but that soon ended. So, one day, I made *raspados* [shaved ice] and went to my old high school and sold them. But it was hard for my son. He was so little. He was 3 months or 4 months. My *suegra* [mother-in-law] couldn't take care of him so I took him with me when I went selling. I started making food like ceviche, burritos, tortas, y enchiladas and I would sell them at businesses, like *fabricas* [warehouses] with my son. It was embarrassing because they would tell me, "What are you doing here? You went to school here." I would tell them that I have to because I have no papers. It was hard but I had to do it.

Leticia described how difficult it was to earn money to feed her child while trying to save some money for college. So, despite having a three-month-old baby with no daycare, Leticia used her entrepreneurial skill to create a source of revenue to support her son and also save additional money for college. Leticia found it difficult and embarrassing to sell food on the streets especially when she considered that these difficult moments included her son. The following excerpt from her college personal statement shows how her son unfortunately shared the challenges she endured: "…it was very hard taking my son with me because he would be crying because the heat of the sun would bother him. Even my son was part of those moments." Leticia's sacrifices became her son's sacrifices, too. Leticia would eventually go to college after she had saved enough money to pay for tuition.

Susana's Story: Susana, another undocumented student, described how she was going to find money to go to college, which she had deferred for a semester because she did not have enough to start in the fall. This excerpt from my interview with her summarizes her difficulties and her determination to overcome them:

Susana: And now my challenges are getting a job and working to pay for college next year. I am going to work all summer and this fall semester so I can start in January. I am not going to give up on school. I plan on going back in January. I am still going to be applying for scholarships, too.

Jaime: What kind of work do you plan on doing?

Susana: Housekeeping in a hotel. I remember working in this in the eighth grade and I am going to try to get that job back again. And this other girl said she can help me get into Burger King. And I am going to be babysitting starting August so there is that. Just looking for anything that can help me. And I saw something from [telemarketing company] that helps high school graduates. I think I will be good at selling stuff for them but then I think I am going to apply for this job and then it hits me that they are going to ask me for my social and, argh! It's very frustrating. These things hit me. It's very sad. I just want to go to school. I got to go. I am getting the money.

Though it is impressive to examine the resiliency these students possessed to find financial means to pay for their college education, the risk that they may end up working under the same conditions as their parents was most troubling, threatening to keep these students in the same cycle of exploitation that many of their parents endure as undocumented workers. It is important to keep in mind that schools are powerful agents that assist with the reproduction of social and economic classes in the United States (Bowles & Gintis, 2011). Yet despite undocumented students' ability to break, or attempt to break, this cyclical process imposed by schools, Susana

shows that their undocumented immigration status made it that much harder for them than students from other marginalized communities.

There is certainly nothing wrong with hard, physical work. Working-class jobs provide ample opportunities for both cognitive and non-cognitive learning to take place (Rose, 2005). However, when these types of jobs are the only ones that certain people, especially the underclass, are provided with, then it is wrong. Specific to the population in this study, undocumented students, by working in the underground economy, risk being trapped in a systematic reproduction of an underclass of people from which they may never escape. Hence, the threat that undocumented students may not be able to break the cycle of poverty is greater for them than for other marginalized but not undocumented students who can legally work in this country. Nonetheless, the undocumented students in my study remained hopeful.

Findings III: Clubs and Organizations as Sources of Support

In addition to their and their parents' hard work, undocumented students found hope in clubs and organizations that could help them make it to college. In these organizations, students developed and sharpened their social skill, which resulted in creating greater social capital or "networks of people and community resources" (Yosso, 2006, p. 45) that they could then turn to for help in making it to college.

Students mentioned many organizations and programs helping them get to college. Some of the most recognizable were AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), MESA (Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement), and MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán). The student who best captured what each of these programs did for them was Agusto when he said, "MEChA helped me to stay organized because we organize events. MESA helps me with Math and Science — how to bundle things. AVID helped me to stay on task. That way I don't have a lot of work at the end." Several students described their involvement in at least one of these three programs as being beneficial. One thing common across all three of these programs was that these academic programs did not have social security requirements attached to them unlike many other academic programs. The social security requirement prevented many qualified undocumented students from joining other programs, while the absence of this requirement provided enormous benefits to undocumented students. Such was the case with Oscar.

Oscar's Story: Oscar is originally from Baja California, Mexico, and came to the U.S when he was two months old. His family told him that there was no border back then since they lived in Mexicali at the time. The family settled near Phoenix, Arizona where Oscar attended public schools and had recently graduated from high school. His younger sister is a U.S. citizen, and the rest of the family (Oscar and his parents) are all undocumented immigrants. Oscar's goal is to become a dentist and open up his own dentist practice where he can help his community. Oscar describes a program that provided opportunities for students like him to take college courses while he was still in high school: "It's helped me in paying for my college courses while I have been in high school. I have programs that help me pay for school. This program was in place before Proposition 300, when they didn't get in the way. Now with this law, some of my friends can't do it."

Oscar went on to explain that even though this program was no longer able to help him take college courses, the program continued to help undocumented students. Similar to MESA,

MEChA, and AVID, this particular program did not require participants to have social security numbers. This provided opportunities for undocumented students like Oscar. However, Arizona's Proposition 300, passed in 2006, required undocumented students to pay out-of-state tuition, and Prop 399 made it too difficult for programs like this to keep providing services to undocumented students. These programs required proof of residency for students to qualify for in-state tuition. These programs found it too expensive to pay for undocumented students given the higher out-of-state tuition rates they would have to pay for each of them.

Undocumented students in my study used involvement in programs as a way of making up for denied opportunities. For example, when Monica was informed that the internship she had been awarded was not going to be possible once they discovered that she was undocumented, she set out to find other opportunities to make up for opportunities denied her. The following excerpt from my interview with Monica demonstrated her resourcefulness:

> *Monica:* You have to work with what you have. Even though I have been denied from the internship, I am involved in other things. I have had to network more. I have been active in clubs. I met a lot of people that might be able to help me. I get involved with people who might be able to help us. Like the Hispanic club, where we had different people in it. Native Americans, African Americans. We even had a scholarship fund. I couldn't get it because I was an officer. But we gave it to another undocumented student. I also met with the MEChA at ASU. I try to get by.

> *Jaime:* Any other programs that help in making up for this lack of opportunities?

> *Monica:* Like my Hispanics student association helped me find scholarships. And the MEChA at ASU helped to get sponsorships and clubs I could get in contact with. It helped me because I can put it on my resume. I had all these experiences ever since I was a freshman. I was friends with the dean of students and the president of the college. It felt good to be recognized.

Despite being disappointed for being denied a fellowship she had been awarded once they found out she was undocumented, Monica did not let it stop her from becoming very involved in a variety of other clubs and expanding her network of allies across the college campus. By knowing people like the dean of students, Monica was able to increase her social capital and the network of people who could help her and other undocumented students.

Along with the long-standing programs listed above, new programs have surfaced as the movement to pass the Federal DREAM Act has grown. Regional and state DREAM organizations have provided opportunities for students to be embedded into the networks that run deep into the undocumented student population and its allies. Raul discusses how his involvement in DREAM Team LA helped him learn about the DREAM Act and has given him an opportunity to join the fight for their rights as undocumented students. Raul said,

> Me uní al DREAM team LA. Conocí a un estudiante de Cash for College y ahí conocí al estudiante de DREAM Team LA. Y así es como recibí más información del DREAM Act. Y con DREAM Team L.A. he peleado con ellos para nuestros derechos. [I joined DREAM team L.A. I met a student from Cash for College and that is where I met the student from DREAM Team L.A. And that's how I got more information on the DREAM Act. And with DREAM Team L.A., we have fought together for our rights.]

Raul had previously been quite emotional about being denied an internship opportunity, but he was able to bounce back when he discussed his involvement in DREAM Team LA. Organizations such as this are crucial for providing a space of solidarity for undocumented students like Raul, and many other students in this study. In fact, 13 of the 16 students interviewed (81.3%) reported being active in an organization that advocated for undocumented students.

The important role that clubs play is not limited to providing valuable services, which many do, but also in their ability to introduce undocumented students to a network of similar students who have successfully navigated the educational system into college. Participation in advocacy organizations increases the social capital of participating students, which enables them to further their own navigation to college and the navigation of others, which leads to a sense of (em)power(ment), which can result in funding opportunities for their college education, which ....

Conclusion

My study shows the different ways that undocumented students were generating funds to pay for college, which they viewed as the most pressing challenge on their road to higher education. Scholarships and creative fellowships became valuable sources of funding despite the scarcity of these types of aid for undocumented students. With most of the students being scholarship recipients, the students I interviewed pointed to the importance that scholarships hold for this population of students whose immigration status excludes them from most forms of public aid and many private scholarships. Students also worked in the underground economy to help save money for college and, at times, for the economic survival of their families. The concern for students working in the underground economy was the threat that they would remain in this type of work and not break the cycle of exploitative jobs that many of their parents were stuck in as undocumented workers. Though it was impressive to see the lengths that undocumented students would go to pay for their college expenses, it is disconcerting to know that these students may be part of the social reproduction that would limit them now and in the future. Nonetheless, the students benefited from this source of revenue and have used it to save money for college. The ability to generate an income is very important for undocumented students.

My subjects' use of networking showed how involvement in different organizations and meeting new people helped introduce them to the network of people and organizations that advocated for and/or supported undocumented students. This permitted the students to increase and use their social capital to help discover new resources that would eventually help lead them to college. A combination of old organizations that have traditionally helped underserved students and new DREAM organizations that specifically help undocumented students, provided important sources of college assistance that undocumented students used to become more informed about how to get to college. Networks of clubs, organizations, and programs that did not require proof of residency helped undocumented students continue along their road to college. The students in the study showed that organizations and programs like MEChA, MESA, and AVID helped students receive college resources that were denied them in other programs. By participating in these programs and others like them, undocumented students extended their network of people and resources that could help them make it to college. This was especially true when it came to organizations whose focus was advocacy for and with undocumented students. DREAM organizations are especially effective at introducing students to a large network of

undocumented students and allies who actively advocate for undocumented students at regional, state, and federal levels (Orner, 2017). These clubs, organizations, and programs increased the social capital undocumented students needed as they prepared to enter college.

To close, I remind the reader that the purpose of this article is to shed light on creative ways, complicated as some may be, undocumented students pay for their college education. The ideas, practices, and recommendations the undocumented students in this study shared were intended to provide real, practical advice for other undocumented students and those who work with them. Through this sharing, I hope those who are not undocumented students come to realize that those practices that may seem unfair will continue to exist until we have comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) that provides a pathway to citizenship for these many, deserving students. As immigrant rights advocates continue to fight for a fair and just CIR, I hope we realize we can do two things at once: 1) fight for CIR and 2) help undocumented students with fundraising strategies shared in this article. We can "walk and chew gum at the same time."

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APPENDIX: Circle of Funds

Disclaimer*: The following model is not intended to apply to every undocumented student, nor should undocumented students ignore any safety concerns they may have in using any measures listed below. The best advice is: Consult with an immigration attorney that can best understand each undocumented student's immigration status before attempting any suggestions listed below.*

The Circle of Funds (Figure A, below) is a model, created by the author, for raising funds for college for undocumented students. It is based on (1) the author's extensive years of working with undocumented students directly, (2) the sharing of ideas between undocumented students and their allies, (3) the author's own research on the college matriculation of undocumented students, and (4) his running of an organization, CORE (Chicano Organizing and Research in Education) <www.ca-core.org>, that provides scholarships to undocumented students.

This paper, though rooted in theory, is also highly practical for undocumented students and those working with undocumented students such as counselors and teachers. The Circle of Funds has been presented at numerous conferences and workshops where undocumented students have convened. Here is the model followed by a breakdown of each quadrant:
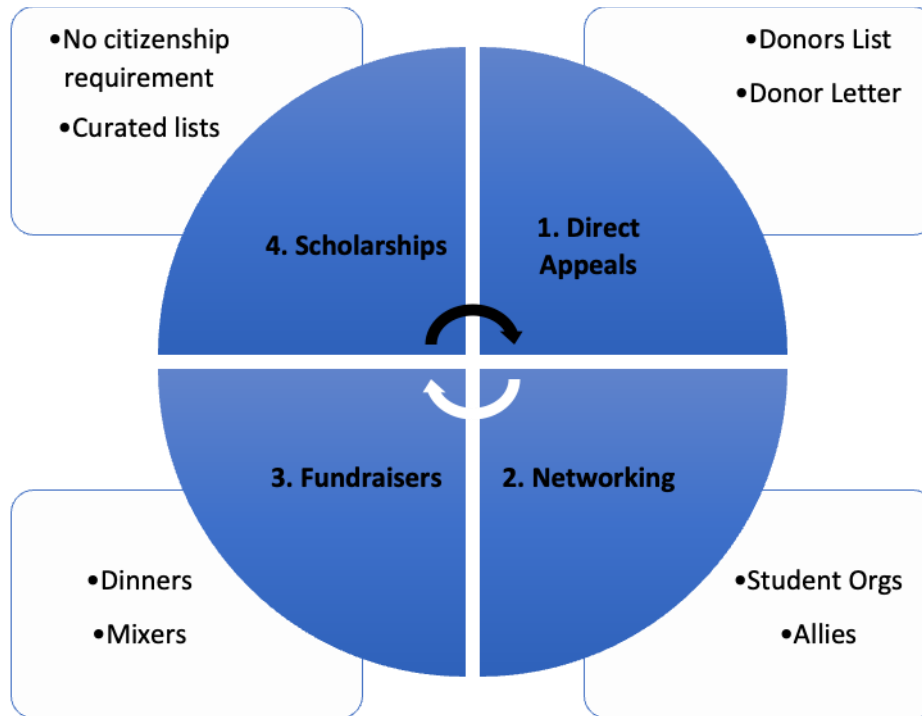
Figure A — The Circle of Funds

1. Direct Appeals — Draft a letter describing who you are and where you are going for college, then send it to a list of trusted individuals and/or organizations who can help you out.
    a. For the letter:
        i. Describe your situation.
            1. Your challenges in going to college as an undocumented student
            2. How immigration status presents unique challenges
            3. Discuss your hardships and how you are trying to overcome them.
            4. Talk about your financial need.
            5. ASK FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE! Ensure you include this ask. This is usually the hardest part of the letter but remember, there are people who believe in you and what you represent and want to help out. Let them.
    b. Create a list of people you trust and add to this list as you meet new people. (See Networking Quadrant below.).
    c. Send your letter to people who you think might be able to help you and that you feel safe sharing it with. (See Disclaimer above.)

2. Networking with Undocumented Students/Allies/Advocate Groups — Now that you have asked some people for funds, join/create an organization that supports undocumented students.

a. Make new friends and learn new fundraising strategies from them. Also, you might meet new donors. (See Direct Appeals above.)
b. Keep in mind that these organizations and people have:
> i. INFORMATION. There might be programs you can benefit from but are not aware of These organizations/people might know and will want to share information with you.
> ii. SUPPORT. You are not alone, and we need reminders of this fact. Generating funds is certainly the most important but so is support by those who believe in you. These folks and organizations exist, find them.
> iii. ADVICE. There is a network of undocumented students that have gone through what you are facing or at least similar to what you are facing. Learn from them and the advice they are willing to give.
> iv. MOTIVATION. You are an inspiration. Allow yourself to be inspired by others, in similar situations, who have achieved what you are trying to achieve.
> v. NETWORK OF ALLIES. Most of these organizations and folks have others they know in their network of friends that want to help. The key thing to keep in mind is that you do not need to go this alone, but you might, if no one knows you need help. Networking can be one of the most important things you can do to increase your funding opportunities for college.

3. Fundraising Events — Do a fundraiser for yourself! Don't be shy or embarrassed. Ask your friends to help you by asking them to promote and lead the event. Big or small it will bring awareness of your situation which may lead to new donors. (See Direct Appeals above.)
a. No event is too small or too big.
> i. Examples of fundraising events have included dinners, lunches, concerts, parties, and donated art and artistic performances. All ranging in size.
> ii. Promotion is most important. So, make sure that word of the event gets out while keeping in mind that this should include only trusted individuals. (See Disclaimer above.)
b. No donation is too small or too big.
> i. Remind people that any amount will help and be grateful for any amount.
c. Don't be shy about letting yourself be the center of attention. People want to help you even those who do not know you.
> i. As previously mentioned, people believe in you and what you represent.
d. Create a plan. Execute it. Learn from it. And do another one.

4. **Scholarships** — Apply to as many scholarships as you are eligible for. Write about your efforts to ask for direct appeals for funds (See Quadrant 1 above.); Your involvement in student organizations (See Quadrant 2 above.); and Your organizing of fundraisers (See Quadrant 3 above).
a. Scholarship organizations want to award funds to students like you. Be that student! `
b. Look for scholarships that do not require an SSN such as:
> I. MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund) Scholarship Resource Guide
> https://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resource-guide-2022-2023/
> ii. Scholarships A-Z https://scholarshipsaz.org/scholarships/
> iii. Immigrants Rising

https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/list-of-scholarships-and-fellowships/
iv. If you are entering college for the first time, apply to CORE's Que Llueva Café
Scholarship www.ca-core.org
c. The hardest part of applying for scholarships is starting.
i. Start by saying that you are going to work on the scholarship application for 10
minutes. A little every day goes a long way over weeks and months of work.
ii. You have nothing to lose and the scholarship to gain. If you apply, you have a
chance. If you do not, you have no chance
1. If you are not awarded the scholarship, use the essay to apply for other
scholarships.

The four quadrants listed and discussed above are not a definitive list since there are other methods to fundraise that may not fit this model. The intention here is to list four areas, four quadrants in the model, to get started and/or continue to fund your own college education as an undocumented student or to fund the college education of someone else you know who is an undocumented student. I hope you find it useful.

Voices from Chinese International Students about
Racism in Higher Education in the United States

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Abstract: This qualitative study aims at understanding the experiences and feelings of Chinese international students enrolled in higher education institutions in the United States regarding racism in their learning careers. The researchers found three differences that may guide future research. First, gender might influence one's experiences, feelings, and attitudes toward racism. Second, students from different majors might have different experiences and feelings toward racism. Third, different socio-economic backgrounds might influence individuals' experiences and feelings regarding racism. It is hoped that the findings of this study can be useful for stakeholders. like policymakers, professors, and administrators, in making modifications to the higher education experiences of Chinese international students that may help to ease concerns about racial bias.

Introduction

The United States is known as a country where students from diverse cultural backgrounds and different countries come to pursue their studies (Shen & Herr, 2004). Mitchell, Steele, Marie, and Timm (2017) cite statistics collected by the Institute of International Education (IIE) showing the population of international students in the United States is massive. Statistics also show that the enrollment of international students in higher education institutions in the United States is increasing rapidly. In 2020-2021, more than "710,000 international students were enrolled." Chinese students constituted the largest population (317,299) with students from India a distant second (167,582) (BestColleges, n.d.).

Racism is a social and political issue in the United States worthy of discussion and in need of tackling. As Museus and Park (2015) point out, there are various studies regarding racial issues experienced by Black, White, and Latinx students. However, regardless of the massive population of Chinese students in the United States, few studies exist regarding racism specifically from the perspectives of Chinese students. Yet, racism related to Asian students, including Chinese international students, is a nuanced and multiform area of study. Museus and Park's (2015, p. 551) study of 46 Asian college/university students revealed nine types of racism experienced by study participants, including "racial harassment, vicarious racism, racial isolation," and so forth. However, Museus and Park looked at Asian students in general. Such studies leave a gap in research about racism focusing on Chinese students.

Our qualitative study contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it helps fill in the gap in the literature regarding racism from the perspectives of Chinese international students in higher education in the United States. Second, the findings of this study help guide further research toward a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of Chinese international students in higher education institutions. Third, this study provides stakeholders such as policymakers, professors, and administrators at higher education institutions data with which to inform decision-making regarding what discrimination Chinese international students in higher education are experiencing and how they interpret their feelings regarding racism.

Meanings of Racism

'Racism' is a word derived from race. Literally, the root of racism is 'race' and '-cism' (unfavorable). Racism starts because of race differences. The related words/phrases of racism, racial bias, racial inequality, stereotype, and prejudice are sometimes alternatively used. In the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (n.d.), 'racism' is explained as "the unfair treatment of people who belong to a different race or violent behavior towards them." However, researchers have offered various interpretations when defining the term 'racism'. For example, Wong (2021, p. 359) defined racism as "verbal, emotional, physical and symbolic forms of abuse or violence" towards people from different ethnic or race groups, rather than defining it simply as the extreme action of physical harassment or violence. Racism is also defined in systemic and structural terms. Systemic racism is used to describe the ubiquity of racism in society while structural racism refers to the concrete expression of systemic racism in specific contexts (Braveman et al, 2022). For our discussion in this paper, racism will be analyzed in terms of structural aspects of higher education and its relationship to Chinese international students.

Racism in Education Affects Chinese International Students

The topic of race and racism is heatedly discussed in the field of education. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was intended to address, even in the field of education, (in)equality issues among people of different colors, and promote the advancement of people from minoritized racial groups (Palmer, et al., 2013). However, racial inequality is still a fact in spite of the protection of the law. Vidal (1996) observes that scholars and researchers normally have a misunderstanding that racial diversity contributes to racial equality. However, the fact is racial diversity does not change racial discrimination.

In the field of education, racism may not be manifested explicitly in verbal or physical discrimination, but subtly. For example, it can manifest in the quantity, preferences, or availability of resources for certain race groups. When searching the keywords 'Black racism in higher education' using online library databases, there were over 4,000 peer-reviewed target papers in journals throughout the period 1967-2023, while fewer than 700 resources were found during the same period when searching the keywords 'Asian racism in higher education'. Similarly, Franklin (2012, cited in Harper, 2016) also claims that the lack of school reading materials for marginalized groups could be an expression of subtle racism. As Harper (2016) found in Delgado's (1984, 1992) work, when researchers and experts who are White wrote on racial inequality topics, they were inclined to use papers from their same race groups for reference they were inclined to neglect perspectives of scholars from other racial groups, which can cast doubt on the comprehensiveness and trustworthiness of their research.

With the matriculation of international students in institutions of higher education in the U.S. approaching ¾ of a million and Chinese students making up nearly half that number, Singh (2021) has correctly pointed out that the revenue contribution from international students in higher education is huge. Take Fordham University as an example of private schools in the United States. Any student in the graduate school of education pays $1,560 for each credit, no matter if they are international students or local students (Fordham University, n.d.). For public schools, however, take Queens College as an example. Pursuing a graduate degree at Queens College costs $5,545 for New York State residents per semester (enrolled in 12 or more credits), while for international students, it is $855 for each credit or $10,260 per semester for 12 credits (Queens College, n.d.). Chinese international students are making a greater percentage of

contributions to higher education revenue in the United States through the form of tuition than are local students (Lee, Jon & Byun, 2017).

International students pursuing degrees in the United States not only have to adjust to the new environment financially but culturally and academically, as well (Heng, 2018). They might experience culture shock and feelings of exclusion as cultural differences might extend to racial bias. Some administrators recognize this issue and have tried to provide international students with some support. However, as the statistics from the report of IIE (2022) illustrated, 97 percent of support provided to international students involved advising and academic learning while other kinds of support were for basic living. It is noteworthy that no support or assistance helped the international students deal with racism in their learning journey, which may cause mental health problems such as depression and anxiety (Lian & Wallace, 2020; IIE, 2022).

According to Moosavi (2022), East Asian students (including Chinese) are inclined to be treated, labeled and stereotyped negatively. For instance, academic or language delay, plagiarism, or lack of critical thinking were some of the labels attributed to Chinese international students. Additionally, Moosavi (2022) notes that language oppression or discrimination is very common in classrooms. For example, international students are requested to write their names in the English language convention or to speak English rather than their native language. Moreover, the past three years have been an even harder time for Chinese international students. Yu (2022) explains that Chinese students are experiencing an even worse hostility because of the global virus, COVID-19. Despite experiencing negative racial bias, Chinese students still tend to remain reticent. Therefore, in order to hear the experiences and feelings of Chinese international students in higher education, our study is essential.

Theoretical Framework and Methodological Considerations

Our study is guided by Critical Race Theory (CRT), which holds that racism permeates American society in many respects including law and education. As described by Abrams and Moio (2009, p. 251), CRT includes six basic tenets: "endemic racism," "race as social construction," "differential racialization," "interest convergence/materialism determinism," "voices of color," and "anti-essentialism/intersectionality." These six tenets are closely related to our study. For instance, "voices of color" refers to providing oppressed groups with power in society. Our study aims at creating a platform for a minority group, specifically Chinese international students, to express their experiences and feelings regarding race in higher education.

We, the authors of the paper, are Chinese international students who hold advanced degrees in Education. Both of us obtained our master's degree in the United States. One of us is currently in the third year of doctoral study in New York. Both of us have experienced some racism or uncomfortable exclusion in our learning process. However, the degree of feelings toward racism is different between the two researchers. One of the researchers has more direct and personal experiences related to racism than the other.

A benefit of the positionality that we hold relative to our research project is that we can understand the feelings and experiences of our participants. Moreover, as Chinese international students, most of our participants trust us and are willing to share their experiences and feelings with us. However, our positionality might cause some issues regarding the interpretation of the findings of our study. First, the researcher who had negative experiences regarding racism may

have brought some negative assumptions to bear on the findings. Second, we might tend to focus attention more on participants who said that they had experienced racism or exclusion in their learning career. In order to minimize the influence caused by our positionality, we not only invited participants who said they had experienced racism or exclusion, but we also sought out participants who said they did not experience any racism or exclusion. Meanwhile, we sent what we coded and wrote in the findings back to the participants for member check to assure that our analysis and interpretation of their responses were valid and accurate.

Participants had to meet the following criteria: 1) nationality is/was Chinese, 2) pursuing/had pursued education in universities and/or colleges in the United States, and 3) have experienced racism during their study in higher education. Those who met these three criteria were invited for an interview. Those who met the first two criteria but replied 'no' to the third criteria were asked if they would like to participate in the interview as well. Eligible participants were contacted to schedule an interview. The participants were read the consent letter and were given a chance to ask any questions about the study. They had a week to decide whether or not they would like to participate. It is important to highlight that this study *only* focuses on the learning journey in higher education. What participants might have experienced outside school, such as in their job or personal life, was not included in our study.

Six individuals with experience as Chinese international students participated in this study. All participants earned master's degree issued by universities in the United States. Five women were in education majors and the sixth participant, a man, majored in Music. One participant studied and lived in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the other five studied and lived in New York. They are all native Mandarin speakers and came to the United States as international students. Of the six participants, four indicated they had experienced some racism or heard of racist experiences from friends, and the other two said they had not experienced any racism in their learning career. Among these six participants, five came from majors in Liberal Arts, while one of them majored in Performing Arts. The data were mainly collected through Zoom video recordings of the interviews. One of the participants recorded the responses using the recording function on a cell phone and sent the recordings to us. The video and audio recordings were stored in a Google Drive account accessible only to the two researchers completing the study.

The video and audio recordings collected were first transcribed into a Microsoft Word document and then translated into English for data analysis. The researchers checked the transcription back and forth several times to ensure accuracy. N-Vivo coding was conducted during the transcription process. After transcription, the researchers conducted an inductive coding process to generate key concepts based on the data collected. Similar concepts were combined into themes for analysis.

Findings
When participants were asked about the racial composition of the cohort of students with whom they studied, five out of the six participants said that the Chinese population in their cohort ranged from 30% to 100%. One participant said that she was the only Chinese/Asian student of the 30 students in her cohort. In this section, findings are listed and summarized for analysis from the themes of participants' understanding of racism, course materials, inclusion and exclusion, and expectations of teacher training/culturally responsive classrooms. All names mentioned in the following are pseudonyms.

Participants' Understanding of Racism: Though all the participants had their own definition of racism, they all believed it to be a negative term and one word they mentioned in common is 'race'. They all maintained that the target of being discriminated against was usually the race group as a whole instead of an individual. However, it was interesting to recognize differences in their understandings of the origin of racism. Lisa viewed racism as a malignity deep inside someone's heart that becomes more explicit behavior in a diverse culture. Lily believed racism is caused by misunderstanding stemming from political and historical reasons. People sometimes are educated differently, which may also lead to misunderstanding. Julia and Lucy viewed racism as a stereotype towards a specific race group. As Julia explained: "It is sometimes a behavioral aggression and verbal abuse. However, it could be an inner impression that exists in one's mind…. He (or she) may not express it out loud." During the process of the interviews, we found that sometimes the participants were sometimes unsure whether or not a specific behavior was an expression of racism.

Course Materials: The reading materials assigned to the participants in their coursework barely touched on the race of Asians. One of the reasons is that for some of the majors or courses, race was not viewed as relevant. In John's case, as his major was performing arts specializing in Western musical instruments, he wasn't asked to read any literature related to Asians. From John's perspective, he does not think there is a connection between his major and racism. Likewise, in Julia's case, racism was not mentioned in her coursework toward her major in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. racism was not mentioned in her coursework. Therefore, the topic of racism was outside the curricula studied by John and Julia.

However, for the courses that do mention or assign course readings that involve or focus on race, studies focusing on Asians were rarely assigned no matter the population of Chinese or Asian students in the classroom. Lisa mentioned there was only one time her professor assigned reading about Asia. It was a book based on the immigration history of Japanese women. She mentioned how this book was outdated and how the in-class discussions based on that book were superficial and narrow. No other reading materials regarding Asians were assigned, but readings were assigned about other race groups. This experience was similar to Lily's, Lucy's, and Sarah's stories. Referring to the resources Sarah studied in one of the courses she took, she said: "We read a lot of articles about race and racism. But the thing is, for most of the literature, most of them are about Latino students or Black students. But I have to say we may have some [readings about Asians] but I couldn't remember that clearly. We may have some articles about Asian students but they are not a target population here [for the class] ... there might be some times that we mentioned about Asian in the in-class discussions though." Similarly, Lily recalled, "...sometimes we read some literature about racism, but they are all about Black or Latino. Asian or Chinese are not mentioned in the literature we read." Lily explained: "…there were only a few [of the readings related to Asians assigned to the class]. It might be one or two parts that mentioned Asian in the assigned specific chapters or readings. For example, [in those readings or chapters, Asian might be mentioned by the researchers] when summarizing their studies of different countries…." Thus, for some courses or majors, reading materials about race were never assigned. For some coursework in other majors, Black and Latinx races appeared in assigned reading materials; but reading materials regarding Asians were seldom assigned.

Inclusion and Exclusion: Some participants mentioned feelings of being stereotyped or subject to bias in some of the courses when the teachers mentioned China or Chinese culture. When China was mentioned in the class, usually the negative side was mentioned and discussed. For instance:

"Sometimes the professor took China as an example [for class discussion], but that's China in his/her own perception, which, from my point of view, is not true or accurate. However, my words may sound flat if I try to explain (for my country) because that is what he/she recognizes and believes about China. I wonder why they don't avoid using China as an example. There are many racial groups and it is better to talk about all the racial groups from an equal and objective perspective" (Lily). Lisa and Sarah shared Lily's experience of being stereotyped. They all mentioned their experiences of being negatively affected by the unwarranted assumption that Chinese international students are weak in spoken English but good at Math. For example, the professors tend to interact or communicate more frequently or actively with students whom they perceive to have better fluency in English.

Apart from that, most participants mentioned feelings of exclusion. For example, when Lily read the literature on topics related to Black, Whites, Latinx, etc., she said the materials are sometimes beyond her understanding, due to the fact that she was not familiar with the history and culture of the race groups other than hers. When it came to discussion in class, she worried that what she said might offend others. As a result, she didn't feel comfortable talking about races that she was not familiar with and ended up silent in the discussions. Lucy also feels excluded to some extent. On the one hand, Lucy's experience is similar to Lily's in that she didn't understand the culture and history of the race group the class was discussing. On the other hand, being from a country that didn't have as diverse a racial group composition as the United States, Lucy was not sensitive to the topic of race.

However, it is a totally different story for John and Julia, who majored in performing arts and teaching Chinese as a foreign language, respectively. For example, as John described: "My professor is really nice, and he is the kind elder who treats his students equally regardless of their races… I think my professor really respects each individual, and this is what he values… Anyway, I guess it is probably because of the inclusiveness and openness of the nature of music… most of my classmates are from different culture backgrounds."

To conclude, how the participants experienced their learning journeys depended on their majors and individual professors to a certain extent. Of the six participants in this study, four out of five who have Liberal Arts majors sometimes felt excluded as they were exposed to literature materials, topics, and discussions of mainstream American culture, which they, as Chinese international students, were not familiar with. Two out of the five participants who majored in liberal arts, contrary to two other participants, had positive experiences in their learning journey. John had a positive experience in his learning journey majoring in Performing Arts, which, from his point of view, was an internationalized major. Overall, each individual may feel different when the design of their major is more or less internationalized and inclusive.

Teacher Training/Culturally Responsive Classroom: Some participants mentioned expectations of a more culturally responsive and inclusive classroom even if there was only one Chinese student in the class. They thought some instructors were not culturally well-prepared, especially for teaching Chinese international students. As Sarah said: "Like, for example, if you [the teacher] have a diverse group, at least you can do some homework before the class and to know more about the students, and know more about their culture. Or if you have to prepare something sensitive [like race] related to culture, I think you [the teacher] at least… do the research… at least do some research on that [different culture of the students]. Lucy stated a similar expectation: "…I think our professors should also have the awareness of not having prejudice

against students of other races... I basically think most of the professors did a good job and they took care of most of the students… I think they should care about all groups of students."

While a pre-established cultural mindset is comfortable and convenient for most people, keeping an open mind and eliminating stereotyping was another expectation mentioned by the participants. As Lisa stated, "I hope that everyone can get rid of the stereotype regarding international students… because if you think about it, no matter what school you are in, everyone has been enrolled... you may have to make some policies that are better for international students… By contrast, John and Julia had very positive experiences in their learning journey and said that their professors are inclusive and culturally responsive already and they hoped their professors would continue in the way they treat their students.

In short, most participants advocated for more training for the teaching faculty on culture, diversity, responsiveness, and inclusiveness. They wished the teachers would be well-trained to meet the needs of different race groups, including Chinese international students, and could be more inclusive and considerate of all students in the class. They also hoped the faculty would understand Chinese culture more comprehensively and objectively.

Discussion

What was found in this study can be valuable. Bringing together perspectives of participants who had completely different experiences and feelings about racism in their learning career in higher education increases the comprehensiveness of this study. The varied ways that participants defined racism influenced their sensitivities and feelings toward the concept of racism as well as real-life racist practices. Due to the diverse understanding of racism, some participants were not sure if some behaviors/exclusions can be categorized as racism. Thus, one might identify a certain behavior as racism, while another might treat it as normal social action.

We found three important differences that may guide future research into perceptions of racism among Chinese international students enrolled in institutions of higher education in the United States. First, sex might influence one's experiences, feelings, and attitudes toward racism. Only one male student was included in this study as a participant, his experiences and feelings regarding racism in higher education were positive. We wonder if the same result will happen for the majority of Chinese international male students in higher education and if the opposite trend for Chinese international female students might be confirmed with further study.

Second, students from different majors might have different experiences and feelings toward racism. In this study, four of the six participants came from similar majors (liberal arts) and had experienced or heard about their friends' experiences regarding racism, while two out of the six participants came from completely different majors and claimed that they had never experienced any racism in their learning career. Thus, if we were to expand our investigation to various majors, we wonder whether similar results would be generated.

Third, social-economic background may influence an individual's experiences and feelings regarding racism. As mentioned earlier, one of the participants said that a lot of Asians who can enter higher education are at a relatively high socio-economic status. Whether this is accurate is still in need of examination, but the higher cost of higher education in the United States for international students does seem to indicate the validity of this observation. Thus, we would like to confirm if the chances of being racially biased or excluded might relate in some way to an individual's socio-economic status.

Conclusion

As the largest international population pursuing higher education in the United States, Chinese students are non-negligible and should be treated well and fairly. Through this qualitative study, which invited participants to share their perceptions on racism in their learning careers, two research questions are answered: 1) What experiences and feelings do Chinese international students have in higher education in terms of racism? and 2) What perspectives or opinions do Chinese international students hold about higher education in terms of racism? Our study contributes to understanding the experiences and feelings of Chinese international students in United States higher education racial bias, exclusion, labeling, and stereotyping that exists for Chinese international students in higher education institutions in the U.S. However, it varies across individuals by sex, academic field of study, and socioeconomic status of students. Our study contributes to understanding experiences and feelings of Chinese international students in United States higher education and provides stakeholders, such as policymakers, professors, and administrators, guidance on how to make modifications or adjustments in curriculum and teacher training to minimize feelings of bias among Chinese international students.

Limitations

Our sample only consisted of six participants, all of whom attended college in the eastern United States. Therefore, their views cannot represent the whole group of Chinese international students. This limits the statistical integrity of our findings. Our findings are not generalizable to all. We also concede our research is insufficient in its comprehensiveness since five participants are females and only one is male. We need to interview many more students to discern if our initial findings about sex differences in regard to perceptions of racism are valid for the general population of Chinese international students. Furthermore, only one participant is majored in music, while other students are in areas of liberal arts. Students majoring in liberal arts reported more experiences indicating structural racism than did the participant in performing arts. Additionally, the experiences of students in STEM and other fields have yet to be examined.

Implications

In developing further research studies, a more comprehensive approach to the topic, one incorporating more participants from both sexes, various majors, and different areas of the United States, should be taken. In addition, based on the advice of our participants, American-born Chinese (ABC) are another group that should be identified and investigated as to their feelings and experiences regarding racism as United States citizens. Last but not least, there should be more studies focusing on Asian immigrants of all age groups and nationalities to discern similarities and differences between/among the experiences of these groups and those of Chinese international students enrolled in institutions of higher education in the U.S.

Nonetheless, for policymakers and administrators, the implication of our study is to initiate programs of staff training, curriculum design, and lesson planning so that professors and administrators can elicit and hear the inner voices of international Chinese students to better understand cultural differences and create more culturally responsive learning environments. For international Chinese students themselves, it is essential for school administrators to organize workshops or orientations which not only provide students with assistance in academic learning and living, but also equip them with the capability to deal with racism when encountering

exclusion, labeling, stereotyping, or neglect. Workshops about what racial bias is and how to confront any kind of racism need to be provided to the students.

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Acknowledgement

Teaching and Learning the Value of Scientific Knowledge

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Abstract: Scientific knowledge can be taught and learned in elementary and secondary school to achieve two objectives: understanding what makes it reliable, and how it is intended to serve a variety of purposes that reflect a variety of cultural values. Separating scientific knowledge from the cultural context in which it is produced and applied fails to adequately show how scientific research is actually carried out. Factual representations in science are products of information processing that is inevitably selective, imaginative, practical, and affected by cultural values. The paper combines the frameworks offered by science pedagogy and science studies to demonstrate the educational importance and the strategy behind teaching and learning the value of scientific knowledge.

The Value of School Education in Peril

The contrast between enhancing and suppressing the development of students' reasoning and intellectual abilities has probably been an issue of concern to educators throughout the history of formal schooling. However, it was only during the nineteenth century that scholars began to use the distinction between "education" and "indoctrination" to elucidate the contrast. According to the Merriam-Webster English dictionary, when the verb "indoctrinate" first appeared in seventeenth century texts, its meaning was derived from the Latin verb *docēre* - to "teach" or "instruct". At that time, indoctrination was understood to be simply what professional teachers were supposed to do.

Then, during the nineteenth century, "indoctrination" began to be used in the pejorative sense of causing someone to uncritically accept certain beliefs or principles and become, thereby, ill-informed and closed-minded. During the early part of the twentieth century, the pejorative meaning of the word entered common parlance as a synonym for "brainwashing".[1] Since then, education has been contrasted with indoctrination to denote forms of instruction that enhance — rather than undermine — students' intellectual growth and critical thinking.

Why did the meaning of "indoctrination" undergo such a change? The rise of liberal democracy was a decisive factor affecting the growing need to distinguish between education and indoctrination. The rights of citizens to exercise political sovereignty, to be adequately represented by government, and to effectively critique government decisions, depend on access to education dedicated to developing children's ability to think for themselves. However, in modern society political government is also charged with maintaining and regulating a highly complex system of social and economic infrastructures. Formal education is a crucial part of the human/social infrastructure of the modern state. Schools must fulfill their responsibility to ensure a common culture, which effectively facilitates communication and cooperation among the citizenry across diverse political and economic institutions, passes from generation to generation.

Viewed, then, from a political perspective on education in a democratic state, public schools face the problem of providing education that must meet two divergent imperatives: schools need to provide students with instruction that conforms to a government-mandated curriculum, and at the same time to defend civil liberties by enhancing the growth and development of each child in accordance with their individual needs and aspirations. Accordingly, the teacher in a democratic

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[1] https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/indoctrinate

state is assigned the task of reconciling and integrating government-centered instruction with the promotion of citizen-centered learning.

The key ingredient of instructional content that is widely considered to accord with the teacher's twofold assignment is factual knowledge supported by empirical evidence. Empirical facts are easily distinguishable from doctrines, ideologies, and debatable beliefs or opinions. Teaching empirical facts seemed, therefore, to be as far removed from indoctrination as possible. Moreover, the prominence of science in modern higher education and in society as a whole, and the popular association of the achievements of science with the discovery of empirical facts, lend credence and professional respectability to the pedagogical notion of a school curriculum based on empirically-supported factual knowledge that would prepare students for adult life. Thus, the question of what students should learn at school — a question centered on the values of education — could be replaced, for all practical purposes, by the question of what facts they should know.

The Problem of Confining Academic Content to Factual Knowledge

A closer examination of the content factual knowledge is intended to communicate shows that the pedagogical use of factual knowledge as a solution to the political problem comes at the expense of student learning and, in effect, increases rather than eliminates school indoctrination. Factual knowledge typically functions as a representation of a situation. However, a factual representation is a product of information processing that is inevitably selective, imaginative, practical, and affected by cultural values. As the diagram below illustrates,[2] the act of representing (depicted by the person's drawing with a pen) consists of choosing to highlight certain data (depicted by the black dots), discarding other data (depicted by the white and grey dots) as irrelevant, insignificant, or negligible, and then composing the selected data into an intelligible form (depicted by the black line). The form is an imaginative construct that is anchored, but not determined, by the data.

The rationale behind a representation pertains to the purposes it is intended to serve, and these purposes are value-laden. Consider, for example, a map representing a geographical region. The map is more accurate the nearer it approximates a full scale of the region, but absolute accuracy is, obviously, impractical: the image would be as large as the terrain it maps and require endless revisions to reflect how the landscape keeps changing. Hence, decisions must be made in selecting which landmarks should be represented and which can be disregarded, and these decisions depend on human values rather than the objective characteristics of the region. In turn, users' attempts to decipher and interpret the map presuppose the belief that it is intended to serve a purpose that is commensurate with theirs.

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[2] https://www.pngwing.com/en/free-png-tpdfu

Much like a geographical map, the factual knowledge taught at school is intended to be valuable to students. Teachers should therefore provide students with explicit instruction on how factual knowledge functions as a means to desirable ends and should explain the rationale for using it to analyze and explain phenomena, predict and anticipate events, and solve problems. However, pedagogical programs that seek to confine instruction to matters of fact implicitly suggest that teachers may exclude the rationale for the use of knowledge from their lesson plans. A pedagogy that withholds information about value judgments that are involved in representing the world in one way rather than another manipulates students rather than educates them. Moreover, students — especially in an elementary school setting — are likely to assume that statements of fact taught by the teacher correspond to what happens in the world. The effect of withholding from students information about the rationale behind factual knowledge combined with their disposition to accept it uncritically is indoctrination. It undermines students' understanding and suppresses the development of their reasoning and intellectual abilities.

How Science Students Are Indoctrinated

To envisage the process of indoctrination more concretely, consider, for example, teaching fifth graders about the force of gravity. In numerous school districts across the United States, learning standards are specified by Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). According to NGSS, teaching about the force of gravity at the fifth-grade level is part of a unit on forces and interactions and centers on the Disciplinary Core Idea (DCI) that "the gravitational force of Earth acting on an object near Earth's surface pulls that object toward the planet's center."[3] DCIs, whose introduction to science education is one of NGSS' pedagogical innovations, are intended to provide students with the basic tools for making sense of a variety of natural phenomena. It could be expected, therefore, that NGSS would specify the scientific rationale for using the idea of gravitational force as a key tool for the scientific analysis and explanation of natural phenomena. As the quotation above shows, however, the explanatory tool is presented as a factual statement about the causal process in the natural world. In this context, students' confusion between valuable ideas and value-neutral facts is hardly avoidable and may in effect be encouraged by teachers who are inclined to affirm the credibility and authority of scientific knowledge in their classrooms. However, encouraging students to accept a scientific idea as a fact of nature only obstructs their understanding and appreciation of the perspectives and tools science offers for making sense of the natural world.

Science education in the United States has been the subject of relentless reform at least since the late 1950s, when the Soviet launch of Sputnik was viewed in the U.S. as a wake-up call to revitalize science education and prepare American youth for science-based careers. Critics often claimed that teaching factual knowledge encouraged students' rote learning, and science teachers were accordingly urged to use pedagogical approaches and strategies to enhance student-centered learning. The latter, according to research on science education, should include teachers taking into account students' preconceptions and background knowledge of the natural world, and organizing ideas within broad conceptual frameworks to facilitate understanding, retrieval, and application of specific facts. In addition, student-centered learning has come to be associated with project-centered lesson plans and experiential learning, and instruction on cognitive and

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[3] https://www.nextgenscience.org/pe/5-ps2-1-motion-and-stability-forces-and-interactions

metacognitive skill.[4] Throughout the decades of debates and reforms, it has primarily been intended to supplement the teaching and learning of factual knowledge. But, despite its pedagogical benefits, student-centered learning does not address the problem of withholding information students need to understand scientific ideas, and, therefore does not eliminate indoctrination from the classroom. As the example of NGSS on teaching the idea of Earth's gravitational force indicates, the notion that ideas can be taught as facts has become a central pedagogical dogma. And yet, it is precisely this dogma that is most likely to suppress students' understanding of the rationale behind the development and use of scientific ideas.

From Indoctrination to Education

To directly address the problem of indoctrination and meet their responsibility to promote students' intellectual growth, teachers should teach science as a source of valuable explanations of natural phenomena rather than as a source of statements telling students what happens in the natural world. Examining scientific ideas in a historical context provides teachers with insights on how to achieve these pedagogical objectives. Consider, again, the example of the core idea of Earth's gravitational force primarily associated with Isaac Newton's contributions to the mathematical study of natural philosophy. Newton began to develop his theory of gravitation during the 1660s as a student at the University of Cambridge and published it in 1687 in his *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (Latin for "Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy"). Historical evidence shows Newton intended his explanation of falling bodies to serve at least three related purposes. First, he sought an explanation that accorded with the principle of inertia proposed by Rene Descartes several decades earlier as a foundational principle of motion. Newton's second purpose was to propose a unified theory of celestial and terrestrial motion. A unified theory would enable scientists to integrate diverse research projects that focus on relatively narrow empirical domains and gradually create a coherent and comprehensive body of knowledge, research methods, and techniques. Newton's third purpose pertained to the language used to articulate a causal explanation of change of motion. When Newton began his career as a natural philosopher, the common view among leading specialists was a falling body uniformly accelerated along a line perpendicular to the surface of Earth. This phenomenon was described in mathematical language also used to describe astronomical phenomena. Newton, accordingly, sought to articulate the idea of force in terms of mathematical relations between physical magnitudes of time, distance, spatial trajectories of moving bodies, and matter.[5]

The historical evidence shows, then, Newton's achievement was not confined to gaining empirical knowledge of the natural world. The idea of gravitational force tended to serve purposes valuable to the community of specialists to which he belonged. In other words, the idea of gravitational force, as published in the *Principia,* was the product of Newton's endeavor to gain knowledge that would be publicly recognized as socially and culturally valuable. To illustrate the meaning of Newton's contribution to science, consider, once again, the figurative display of the metaphor of "connecting the dots." In this case, the human figure holding the pen

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[4] Donovan, M. S. and Bransford, J. D. (2005). *How Students Learn: History, Mathematics, and Science in the Classroom.* Washington, D. C.: The National Academic Press.
[5] Westfall, R. S. (1988). *The Construction of Modern Science: Mechanisms and Mechanics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-42, 139-59.

represents Newton. Each dot represents a datum available to Newton through his own scientific observations as well as his studies of the published works of other scientists. Thus, though the data originate in the physical world, their selection and configuration are Newton's ideas and, as such, reflect his choices, preferences, and values.

Based on this brief historical account, a unit dedicated to teaching fifth graders the idea of Earth's gravitational pull and the rationale behind would begin by introducing students to a qualitative and simplified version of the principle of inertia. Drawing students' attention to any inanimate object in the classroom (e.g., a chair, or a book lying on a desk) and appealing to students' intuitive reasoning, teachers can explain that a body would change its position in space only by an external force. Teachers would then introduce the puzzling effect of a falling body that, seemingly on its own, moves toward the surface of Earth. Students are now motivated to search for an explanation in terms of a force generating the downward motion. The next step would introduce students to a quantified view of a falling body as uniformly accelerating, using, for instance, high-speed photographic representations of the increasing velocity of a ball dropped on the floor. Additional steps towards a quantified understanding of gravity can be based on students' intuitive notion that similar effects are generated by similar causes. By raising the question of why bodies always gravitate to Earth rather than in a different direction, a teacher would encourage students to consider the Earth's massive size and introduce the variable of distance and its inverse relationship with force and acceleration.

Thus, by providing students with an explicit account of the rationale behind the idea of Earth's gravitational pull, the lesson plan enhances their understanding of the value of the idea and how to use it to make sense of phenomena. More broadly, the lesson plan outlined above helps students understand science in a cultural context by explaining how scientific knowledge is based on empirical data and yet is intended to serve a variety of purposes that reflect a variety of cultural values.

Conclusion

Viewed in the context of public education in a liberal democratic state, the pedagogical notion that scientific knowledge is founded on evidence and reason reinforces the message that school science predominantly aims to provide students with reliable information. However, suppressing students' understanding of the role of cultural values in guiding the construction of scientific knowledge in effect undermines liberal democratic values of education. Given the growing influence of science on society and the economy, schools ought to enhance students' ability to address scientific research and its outcomes in a context that is sufficiently broad to include their own cultural values, interests, and concerns. If schools teach science because it is valuable, then teaching and learning how valuable it is should be a central element in the classroom.

The Case for Preparation:
Why and How Teachers Should Learn to Teach Controversial Issues

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Abstract: This paper makes the case for preparation with a call for the creation of online teacher consortiums. Through the construction of a hypothetical curriculum, the first section reviews three books on teaching controversial issues. The second section explains the contained risk-taking approach. The third section introduces the political, epistemic, social, and theoretic criteria of controversy. The fourth section looks at the directive, soft-directive, and procedurally-directive approaches to teaching controversial issues. The paper ends with a charge for teachers to decide if they want to prepare to teach controversial issues.

The 1619 Project (Hannah-Jones, et al., 2019), the George Floyd Protests, the 1776 Report (The President's 1776 Commission, 2020), and the Capital Riot set off renewed policy interest in American civics education. Since January 2021, 44 American states have introduced legislation that limits how teachers and students can discuss racial or sexual issues in the classroom. Either legislatively or administratively, 18 states have banned or limited the discussion of certain controversial issues in the classroom (Schwartz, 2022).

Legislation that bans or limits controversy in classrooms assumes teachers teach controversial issues. Most American teachers, however, steer clear of classroom controversy due to a lack of preparation or fear of punishment (Gardner, 2020). Most American citizens, nevertheless, support the discussion of controversy in classrooms (Saavedra et. al., 2022). Considering legislative efforts to restrict controversy, unprepared and fearful feelings of teachers about teaching controversy, and popular support for teaching controversy in classrooms, there is an immediate need to prepare teachers to teach controversial issues where it is still legal to do so.

While there is a need, American teachers today have too few opportunities to learn how to teach controversial issues. Educators and policymakers, in response, have argued for university-based teacher education to prepare novice teachers to teach controversial issues (Pace, 2021). But in our current sociopolitical climate, American educators and policymakers must think beyond teacher preparation programs and create opportunities outside university-based solutions.

I make the case for preparation with a call for the creation of online teacher consortiums. Compared to university programs, three reasons stand out in favor of teachers creating their own online consortiums to learn how to teach controversial issues. First, being online increases the number of pre- and in-service teachers able to join. Second, teachers can autonomously run the consortium. Third, costs are significantly lower than university-based programs. The rest of my paper, then, illustrates the case through the construction of a hypothetical curriculum for an imaginary online teacher consortium. My case for preparation rests on two assumptions. First, good democratic education requires teaching controversial issues. Second, the more teachers know about teaching controversy, the more often they will teach controversial issues.

Section I: Three Books to Get Started

Before teachers worry about how to teach controversial issues, they need space to explore why teaching controversial issues is a good idea. In the curriculum for a teacher consortium on controversial issues imagined in this paper, I suggest teachers begin their studies with three books. First, *The Case for Contention* (2017) by Emily Robertson and Jonathan Zimmerman, which makes the case for teaching controversy within a deliberative democratic framework. Second, *Teaching Controversial Issues* (2017) by Nel Noddings and Laurie Brooks, which argues for controversy within a participatory democratic framework. And, third, *How to Disagree* (2019) by Darren Chetty and Adam Ferner, which argues for teaching controversial issues within an agonistic democratic framework. After reading each book and exploring the competing democratic frameworks, teachers can then decide for themselves which democratic ends they will teach controversial issues.

In *The Case for Contention* (2017)*,* Zimmerman and Robertson argue that discussing controversial issues encourages students to form their own reasonable arguments for or against an issue. The book traces the symbiotic relationship between war-time fever and public charges of indoctrination. For teachers to teach controversy, then, is not a matter of collective democratic will. Rather, they conclude, controversy in the classroom can only exist if local school boards craft policies to protect teachers' professional discretion to teach controversial issues.

In *Teaching Controversial Issues* (2017)*,* Noddings and Brooks differ from Zimmerman and Robertson. Teaching controversial issues for a participatory democracy combines concern for feelings and character while deliberation prioritizes reasonableness. Critical thinking, for Noddings and Brooks, means not only the construction of reasonable arguments but a critical search for meaning which leads to social action. To encourage the teaching of controversial issues, the authors suggest the creation of a high school course that brings together students from all grades to discuss various moral and social issues, including religion, race, gender, poverty, and patriotism, all of which they outline in the book.

In *How to Disagree* (2019)*,* unlike the other authors, Chetty and Ferner do not study teaching controversial issues specifically but look philosophically at disagreement. Deliberative democratic education aims for consensual reasonableness. Participatory democratic education aims for making sense to inspire social action. Agonistic democratic education, on the other hand, protects difference and maintains disagreement. When teaching for agonistic ends, Ferner and Chetty argue, teachers ought to dwell with students in discomfort and eschew consensus for wrestling with disagreement.

Whether the aim is deliberative, participatory, or agonistic democratic education, all the theorists agree: Navigating disagreement in the classroom is essential for sound education in any democracy. But is preparation a worthy goal for democratic education? John Dewey, in *Democracy and Education* (1916), notes the futility of preparation as an educational aim. Teachers, though, cite inadequate training as a reason for not teaching controversial issues. The heightened political intensity surrounding the topic, moreover, begs for teachers to become familiar with both theoretical and practical knowledge of curriculum and pedagogy. While preparation may not be a worthy educational aim on its own right, it is — right now — necessary. What, then, can be said about preparing teachers to teach controversy?

In *Experience and Education* (1938) Dewey expands on his argument against preparation by distinguishing two different senses of "preparation." Dewey holds firm against the assumption

that learning something in the present is somehow an automatic guarantee of its usefulness for future experience: "When preparation is made the controlling end," Dewey says, "then the potentialities of the present are sacrificed to a suppositious future." That's when "preparation" becomes "a treacherous idea" (19 and 20). But Dewey continues his discussion about "preparation" by asking: "What, then, is the true meaning of preparation in the educational scheme?" He answers by saying, "… it means that a person, young or old, gets out of his present experience all that there is in it for him at the time in which he has it" (20). A student who gets as much out of present experience as possible is most likely to carry lessons learned usefully into the future. In the case of teachers teaching controversy, understanding there is controversy about teaching controversy prepares teachers in two ways in the educationally sound sense described by Dewey. First, teachers will be prepared in the sense that they have resolved for themselves a meta-controversy — meanings of democratic education — connected to their curriculum. Second, they will be prepared in that they will have developed a principled approach to teaching controversy to guide them toward planning and execution of successful instruction.

Section II: The Contained Risk-Taking Approach

Once teachers in the imagined consortium think through their why, they can begin thinking about the how. The second section of the curriculum introduces the contained risk-taking approach. In *Hard Questions* (2021), Judith Pace re-centers the question about teaching controversy on issues of pedagogical practice: Given the academic consensus and clear democratic imperative to teach controversial issues, how can we best prepare and support teachers to teach them? To answer, Pace conducted a qualitative cross-cultural study in Northern Ireland, England, and the United States to construct a framework for teacher educators and teachers to use when preparing to teach controversial issues. The contained risk-taking approach provides teachers with eight steps for how to teach controversial issues.

> First, cultivate a supportive classroom environment through a mutual establishment of norms, appreciation of dissent, affirmation of differences, and encouragement of humor.

> Second, select materials and a plan that outlines a clear purpose, addresses identity and considers place and space.

> Third, think through the positionality of discussants and anticipate the pros and cons of the issue.

> Fourth, proactively communicate with students, parents, fellow teachers, and administrators to help thwart charges of indoctrination.

> Fifth, progressively select controversies, first cold then hot issues.

> Sixth, choose resources and select a pedagogy that challenges presuppositions, amplifies diverse voices, and fosters critical inquiry.

> Seventh, practice facilitating conversation in a respectful and meaningful way.

> Eighth, especially when dealing with hot issues, emotions must be addressed and processed using self-awareness and de-escalation techniques.

The steps listed by Pace contain risk when teaching controversy by 1) warming students up to deal well with progressively hotter and hotter issues (First, Fifth, and Seventh steps),

2) settling stakeholder issues before beginning to teach the controversy (Fourth step), 3) choosing curriculum material likely to access but then challenge student voice (Second, Third, and Sixth steps), and 4) channeling emotional response to controversy into deeper understanding of the sources of controversy (Eighth step)

In the ideal teacher consortium, teachers can test out the framework as they learn from their own teaching and discuss successes and challenges with participating colleagues. To enact the framework, though, steps five and six — selecting authentic issues and choosing a pedagogy — require further study. What makes an issue controversial? Once we've decided on the nature of a given controversy, how should a teacher teach the issue? The next two sections of the paper further develop our imagined curriculum for teaching controversy, first, by presenting criteria to distinguish among issues in terms of their ripeness for controversy and, second, by discussing instructional approaches from among which teachers may choose when they teach controversy.

Section III: Understanding Controversial Issues

What makes an issue controversial is itself controversial. Educational theorists hold different, sometimes contradictory positions, on the nature of controversial issues. The third section of the curriculum reviews the political, epistemic, social, and theoretic criteria for deciding whether an issue is controversial or not.

> The political criterion (Anders & Shudak, 2016) marks an issue as controversial if it is related to state-based values. Private or public moral issues that go beyond liberal-democratic concerns, ought not — under this criterion — be taught as controversial.

> The epistemic criterion (Thorndike, 1937) classifies an issue as controversial if reasonable people backed by valid evidence disagree. An issue is controversial if disagreement itself is not predicated on unreasonable terms (Hand, 2008). Compared to the political criterion, the epistemic criterion teaches moral and social issues as controversial.

> The social criterion (Anders & Shudak, 2016) labels an issue controversial if existential significance exists. In other words, the issue must be of deep concern in the lives of the students inside and outside the school. Unlike the political criterion, the social criterion teaches both moral and state-based issues; like the epistemic criterion, the social criterion can only be met if multiple minds recognize a given controversy.

> The theoretic criterion (Anders & Shudak, 2016) makes an issue controversial if it is socially important and experts disagree on sound interpretations of valid evidence. The theoretic combines parts of the social and epistemic criterions to ensure the issue meets the theoretical and practical dimensions of education. Compared to the political criterion, the theoretic criterion does not make a moral distinction.

Rather than consider these criteria as exclusionary of one another, however, think of the criteria as aids in deciding if a controversy is worthy of teaching. That is, when an issue meets the Social criterion of existential significance to the lives of students, especially if the controversy involves government action in a democracy (Political criterion) and when an issue

meets the Epistemic criterion of valid evidence, especially if the evidence emanates from experts (Theoretic criterion), then the issue is ripe for controversy. But to fill out the list of criteria for identifying controversy it should be noted that the Theoretic criterion creates the possibility of Meta-theoretic controversy. That is, there may be controversies still searching for a clear meaning of 'valid' and 'expert' when deciding which evidence applies to a controversy. The goal of teaching a Meta-theoretic controversy would be to make the controversy meet the Theoretic criteria of agreed-upon meanings of 'evidence' and 'expertness'. Of course, real-life controversies likely come connected in some degree or other to each of the criteria. Best, then, to think of the criteria as filters through which to run an issue to size it up for likely success when using it to teach controversy.

There's a larger debate that includes criteria beyond those briefly reviewed here. Nonetheless, an online teacher consortium would allow teachers to define, debate, and reflect on which criteria seem most salient for a given issue and most appropriate to local teaching contexts. Scholarly disagreement can be acted out in real time. Consequently, teachers not only become familiar with the materials but also experience criteriological disagreement and become part of the dialogue among educational researchers. Once teachers explore and test criteria for different issues online with other teachers and educational researchers, they can move to explore pedagogical stances for the issues they choose to teach.

Section IV: Pedagogical Approaches

Like the debate over what makes an issue controversial, scholars also disagree on the best approaches for teaching controversial issues. The fourth section of the curriculum reviews the directive, the soft-directive, and the procedurally-directive approaches to teaching controversy.

> The directive (Gregory, 2014) approach encourages the teacher to direct student thinking on controversial issues. The directive, consequently, maintains the teacher's authoritative power to point students to view issues a certain way.

> The soft-directive approach (Warnick & Spencer, 2014) uses student discretion to steer thinking on controversial issues. Unlike the directive approach, soft-directive works with students and their thinking about how to view certain controversial issues.

> The procedurally-directive (Gregory, 2014) puts the emphasis on the teacher to show the student how and why the experts disagree on an issue. Instead of relying on their own authority, the teacher turns the students to the debates had by experts. If students hold controversial views, the teacher should bring in the disciplinary debate that surrounds the issue to resolve the tension.

As with the criteria, there are more pedagogical approaches than the ones reviewed. But these, I think, are a good place to start. Together they describe the range of pedagogical options available to teachers of controversy, from authoritative to facilitative to mediational. For teachers who are interested in more approaches or more criteria, the hope is the consortium will be flexible enough to not only encourage self-directive learning but also allow teachers themselves to insert or redact curriculum. Nevertheless, for any teacher, no one stance and no one criterion will work for all issues. Rather, the teacher consortium is designed for collaborative intellectual and pedagogical exploration of best options for instructional action in actual contexts of teaching.

Section V: Is It Worth It?

Given the outsized political and professional risks of teaching controversial issues, is it even worth it? This question can only be answered by teachers. Teachers themselves will make their own case for preparation through the creation of an online consortium. My paper, thus, presents only one possible track teachers can take to prepare for teaching controversial issues. But it is a track that brings together from all over teachers interested in teaching controversy. It is also the sort of plan that could be maintained and operated by a college of education with social foundations/social studies doctoral programs or, perhaps, even a teachers' union would find it worthwhile to sponsor consortiums like the one I've described. The litmus test of the waters of teacher interest in teaching controversy is to set up the sort of web-based system I've described. Once in place we will see who uses it and get ideas from users about how to improve the consortiums to attract more users and meet user interests.

Americans expect schools to create citizens, to instill literacy and numeracy, and to mold children into good adults. Devoid of dealing with controversy, teachers have enough to do. But if a teacher sees dealing with controversy as a necessary component of education, then — at minimum — they should have the opportunity to learn how to teach controversy. Surveying America's current sociopolitical landscape, teaching controversial issues will itself remain controversial. But a good way to resolve that controversy is to provide interested teachers an online forum to work through a curriculum like the one described in this paper. Should a strong trend towards learning to teach controversy develop, then controversy may in time become part of the regular curriculum. The best way to deal with controversy, especially for teachers, is to learn about it and learn to teach it.

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Utilizing Discourse Analysis to Disrupt Traditional Narratives
in High School Social Studies Courses

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Abstract: Discourse analysis recognizes the power of language to deliver messages in subtle ways. Language used in tertiary sources like Social Studies textbooks and review guides is subject to discourse analysis. Applied to tertiary sources, discourse analysis teaches students to examine neutrally phrased textbooks written about the past by curriculum developers in the present. High school students can critically analyze traditional texts to increase culturally responsive education in their own learning and improve their chances of passing standardized assessments that increasingly focus on contextualization, critical thinking, and historiography. Required textbook readings provide ample opportunity for teachers and students to apply discourse analysis to traditional classroom materials to create lessons rich in critical thinking and comprehensive course content.

New York State's Education Department committed kindergarten through twelfth-grade public schools to culturally responsive education with the Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education (CRSE) Framework of 2019. In this document the state recognized past inequalities and systems that have advantaged some groups and disadvantaged others, stating that inequities must be "clearly understood" (CRSE, 2019, p. 6). Understanding inequities related to background, gender, race, and other categories is an important responsibility in Social Studies classes, where past political, social, and economic developments are the content pillars in mandatory Global History and United States History courses.

A popular learning activity in Social Studies education is deep analysis of primary sources. Students learn content and historical analysis methods, such as point of view and role of the audience, in this activity. New York State (NYS) recently adopted analysis protocols from the College Board, such as assessing point of view, audience, and purpose in primary source documents. Beginning in June 2019, these strategies were required on the redesigned NYS Global History Regents standardized examination (NYSED, 2022). To succeed on this exam, students must contextualize historical messages, think critically, and engage in historiography.

This emphasis on analyzing primary sources in Social Studies courses is presented as a deeply critical activity. However, analyzing primary sources from diverse groups is not nearly enough to "directly challenge" (CRSE, 2019, p. 6) inequities. There are systemic oppressions embedded in tertiary information materials. These learning materials, unlike primary sources, are presented as neutral, without a point of view or purpose. Freire (1993) wrote about this in his acclaimed book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* explaining that an oppressed pedagogy occurs when an oppressor's perception of reality, which is a subjective reality, is presented as the one, true reality. Subjectivity masquerades as objectivity. This practice still occurs in modern Social Studies textbooks and other standardized Social Studies instructional resources. For example, a seemingly generic passage on slavery in a review book is not a highlighted primary source that presents for consideration the perspective of a historically important author. When reading such nonspecific material students are not analyzing information from a critical lens. Rather they are uncritically absorbing that as information; and both student and teacher might unknowingly continue the cycle of passing down oppressed histories. Freire (1993) wrote, "The teacher talks about reality as if it were motionless, static, compartmentalized, and predictable" (p. 44). Many

purportedly objective textbook passages present reality precisely in this way. Rather than rejecting or casting off these sources, which is unrealistic, there is an opportunity here for teachers to use discourse analysis to leverage these sources for both critical analysis and knowledge building.

Researchers at New York University's (NYU) Steinhardt Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools recently analyzed the content in Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) English Language Arts resources (Khan et al., 2022). HMH is a popular textbook company which is why this recent report from NYU takes a close look at materials published by HMH. The findings of the study in regard to what the researchers called 'culturally destructive curriculum' are alarming. In summary, the research found that HMH failed to meet standards of culturally responsible curriculum; they superficially included mixed race and identity folks in their stories, while absolving culprits of historic power struggle and oppression (Khan et al., 2022). For example, a section on World War II internment camps glossed over who was responsible for displacing millions of American citizens in the 1940s — It was the United States government that was responsible, by the way. — and instead focused on the survival and endurance of Japanese Americans. Khan et al. (2022) found that White Americans were allowed to feel and experience emotions in a diverse array of situations in HMH texts. Nonwhites were relegated to complying with and overcoming their struggles, while the cause-and-effect realities of those struggles were dishonestly obscured and omitted. While NYU conducted a deep dive with multiple and diverse researchers in a college research setting, classroom teachers can also introduce this method of analysis to their students. High school students can critically analyze traditional texts to increase culturally responsive education in their own learning. Discourse analysis is how teachers can make this happen in their classrooms.

Discourse analysis takes seriously the power of language to deliver messages in subtle ways. For example, in his book on methods of discourse analysis, Fairclough (2003) explains that researchers can analyze three things: process, the representation of concrete and abstract events, and the inclusion and exclusion of certain developments. There are many layers to this analysis, such as the use of nouns versus pronouns, the use of past and present tense, and the use of the timeless present to shift accountability. The best way to illustrate is with an example. Fairclough (2003, p. 149.) wrote that "they lost their jobs" and "someone fired them" deliver different messages. "They lost their jobs" is an intransitive statement; it presents the situation as somewhat inevitable and absolves the responsibility of the employer. "Someone fired them" is transitive and recognizes responsibility. Although these two sentences may seem interchangeable, the difference lies in how the power dynamics are situated. These subtle word choices matter because they convey important realities to teachers and students.

Teachers themselves are products of their educational environments (Marx & Larson, 2013) and, therefore, teachers alone may not be able to uncover where oppression exists in seemingly neutral spaces, like textbook passages. I was a political science major in college and, when I began teaching Regents US History and Regents Global History to New York City high schoolers, I did not feel entirely prepared to construct lessons from the 1500s to the present. Yes, I had conducted deep dives into specific topics during graduate school, like immigration in the United States in the 1920s. Yes, I wrote a 20-page paper on "The United States in Latin America during the Cold War" for my bachelor's degree. However, I was unprepared for the vast array of content required to plan units crossing centuries in US History and crossing millennia in global history. As a result, I relied heavily on tertiary sources of information like textbooks and review

books. I had to learn the basics as quickly as possible in order to adequately plan lessons each day for 180 days. Many Social Studies colleagues share my reliance on review books to obtain content overview, especially in their early years of teaching survey history courses. For these reasons it seems wise to think about retooling Social Studies teaching materials for easy use of critical discourse analysis in class discussion. However, traditional textbooks are already filled with unintended opportunities for critical discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is one method that high school teachers and students should be encouraged to employ to disrupt the dominant, oppressive narrative that continues to find expression in tertiary sources about history.

Teachers can employ discourse analysis strategies with students and challenge them to find more examples of oppressive discourse as they read and process lesson content in ways required to pass the contextualization, critical thinking, and historiography challenges on the Regents exam. Discourse analysis becomes critical in nature when it assumes that the power dynamics between different groups might still be present in what is being uncritically accepted as objective spaces. Amsco's popular textbook guide, *Advanced Placement Edition World History: Modern [1200-present*], is a core source of information for students and teachers (Cox et al., 2022). While this review book is aligned with the nine units of the AP World History: Modern course (College Board, 2023) and is helpful for newer teachers grappling with so much content, the language in certain sections contains oppressive discourse that is centuries old. For example, Unit Four in the College Board's AP World History: Modern curriculum covers the global slave trade across the Indian and Atlantic Oceans from 1450 -1750 (College Board, 2023). One of the excerpts from a section about cash crops and forced labor reads, "Sugar cultivation in Brazil demanded the constant importation of African labor. African laborers were so numerous in Brazil that their descendants became the majority population in the region" (Cox et al., 2022, p. 211). A question for students could be: Can sugarcane speak and ask to be cultivated? The answer, of course, is no. Sugar cultivation does not and cannot demand anything. Rather the demands were made by Spanish *conquistadores* that, for their own profit, stole the land by claiming it and enslaving Native and African people to grow sugar. Another example from the same section states, "Because of the *engenhos'* [slaves'] horrible working conditions, plantation owners lost from 5 to 10 percent of their labor force per year" (Cox et al., 2022, p. 211). Even though the sentence recognizes the poor quality of the working conditions, the verb "lost" still utilizes the dominant perspective. The loss of labor for conquistadores is the focus of the sentence, rather than the dehumanization, enslavement, and torture of human beings. 'Lost' is not a higher level, technical historical term, but rather a basic verb that even small children use in their vocabulary. That simplicity serves to obscure its power in this context. In further analysis of this sentence, these people were not lost, they were forced to labor in deadly conditions. They were killed.

In a Global History Regents review book (Goldberg & DuPré, 2018), the section on the Mexican Revolution excluded the full depth of the United States' relationship with the long-standing government of Porfirio Diaz, who ruled Mexico from 1884 to 1911 and permitted United States businesses to invest and profit from Mexican resources. A sentence reads: "The [Mexican] wealth went to a small upper class as well as to foreign investors" (Goldberg & DuPré, 2018, p. 18). One of those investors was the United States, with two billion dollars of wealth tied up in Mexico (Schoultz, 1998). But that is not mentioned anywhere in the review book in the section on the Mexican Revolution. The meeting between President Taft and Porfirio Diaz which occurred in 1909 was also excluded from the review book. In this meeting, President Taft was hoping to ensure the viability of the Diaz administration as revolutionary sentiment was

growing among the exploited classes of Mexicans (Schoultz, 1998). The exclusion from discussion of those economic and political relationships among the Diaz government, the US president and US businesses, prevents students from connecting the dots and understanding that the United States government, for fear of interference with US investments and US profits, was actively seeking to subvert revolutionary activity in Mexico. A subsection of the review book on Pancho Villa mentions his alliance with peasants in his fight against economic imperialism, reading: "When the United States supported the Mexican government against Villa, conflict erupted across the border between Villa and the United States government in 1916" (Goldberg & DuPré, 2018, p. 18). Using discourse analysis, students can dissect the intentionality of the passage by analyzing the verb "supported" as one that denotes positivity. Its use in this sentence serves to obscure the role of the US government in obstructing progressive action in Mexico. The same situation with a reverse verb might read: "The United States *opposed* the efforts of a revolutionary leader fighting for the rights of his people against an oppressive dictator allied with foreign powers, mainly the United States."

Discourse analysis recognizes there is not one true perspective on reality, but rather historical studies rely on an incomplete collection of multiple perspectives. This methodology changes the nature of Social Studies education. By including discourse analysis techniques, students can think critically about texts beyond the primary sources to the primary texts that are carefully curated for them by curriculum writers or state boards of regents. Critical analysis of the curriculum as they study it makes students active participants in a truly student-centered classroom, which New York State advocates for in its culturally responsive framework. Disciplinary permission to critically examine required textbook readings is just the sort of encouragement many teachers need to live up to state standards regarding culturally responsive instruction.

The addition of discourse analysis to the high school classroom is significant because educators across the state have pledged to involve students more actively in discovering the complexities of the past. Teachers are employing historiography with primary sources, but there is further space for students to interrogate texts beyond the curated canon of primary sources. Analysis of tertiary sources is different from primary source analysis because it focuses less on authors and point of view and more on interrogating the use of language to convey a dominant point of view currently in existence. This strategy is also accessible to all students because the language examined in discourse analysis is straightforward with basic tier one level words, such as "lost" and "supported," as illustrated in the examples above. With basic directions, explanation, modeling, and examples from their teachers, students can apply discourse analysis to discover more perspectives and critically examine how historical developments are presented to them by the required curriculum. History class becomes a conversation about the past, its expression in the here and now, and our plans for (re)writing future understandings of it.

The use of discourse analysis is an accessible option to empower students to pass the Regents exam and to change (their understanding of) the world. It employs critical thinking and creates spaces for students to be partners with their teachers in historical research. As students understand and employ discourse analysis, they are also understanding that point of view is everywhere. As Freire (1993) wrote, a dynamic pedagogy is "not content with a partial view of reality, but always seeks out the ties which link one point to another and one problem to another" (p. 47). Perspectives live and breathe in curricular spaces that have for centuries been unwarrantedly presented as objective. The practice of discourse analysis can teach students to

examine not just the inflammatory speech of some popular autocrat from the past, but also the neutrally phrased textbook in front of them written in the present by some curriculum developer. Tertiary sources may not be purposely asking to be analyzed when they purport to present the impossible idea of "One Truth." However, the impossible idea of the "one truth" traditional textbooks try to perpetuate is pedagogically important because it is exactly what creates the universal possibility of using discourse analysis in high school Social Studies courses to disrupt traditional narratives about history.

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Teacher Autonomy:
Towards "Permanent Truce" in The Reading Wars

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Abstract: Teacher autonomy gets lost in hegemonic power struggles between Phonics and Whole Language. Theory on both sides of The Reading Wars produces inadequate results because theory fails to incorporate local knowledge. Teachers either need Phonics and Whole Language to share the conceptual space called 'literacy' or teachers need to be free to bring both theories to bear on instructional practice. When what researchers tell teachers comes across as mixed messages or half the story, theorists need to turn the issue over to practitioners to settle ideological debate in empirical terms. While teacher autonomy may not end The Reading Wars at the theoretical level, it may help create conditions for permanent truce between Phonics and Whole Language at the level of practice.

Literacy plays a fundamental role in educational aspects of student development and begins in early childhood. There has been an ongoing argument on how to approach English Language Arts using two conceptualizations of the process of learning to read: Phonics and Whole Language. The debate over these specific methods is known as The Reading Wars. Courses using Phonics have been associated with repetitive types of structural reading, memorizing sound, and associating sound to shape of a letter. These tasks are typically completed through less appealing rote learning resources. Unlike Phonics, the method of Whole Language offers little structure in building comprehension of sounds associated with letters. Rather, Whole Language highlights natural forms of communication using oral methods to engage student interest in pursuing reading levels individually. School districts typically mandate use of either Phonics or Whole Language but never together or at the same time. However, if the overarching goal is to ensure student success reflected in state examinations, then we must ask ourselves: Why are teachers prohibited any type of autonomy in determining how to use Phonics in conjunction with Whole Language and why should they be required to only teach one of these? A solution to this situation is to encourage teachers to use both methods in the classroom to facilitate instructor ability to enhance student learning in literacy. The outcome of this would greatly impact how English Language Arts is being directed within the educational system and could eventually result in ending The Reading Wars by partitioning, along meta-theoretical lines, the academic territory of literacy instruction.

The Reading Wars in Historical Perspective

Strauss (2018) suggests what we nowadays call "The Reading Wars," a debate still raging among theorists of literacy which pits the "Science of Reading" or Phonics against "Balanced Literacy" or Whole Language, may reach as far back as the 1800s. Horace Mann, known as the Father of American Public Schools, advised against initiating reading instruction by teaching the alphabet as a phonetic code of sounds associated with letters. Instead of this traditional approach to the teaching of reading, Mann favored teaching beginning readers how to identify whole words first and then teaching them the component parts of those words. But systematic statement of the phonics approach to reading instruction did not come to fruition until more than a century after Mann with the 1955 publication of *Why Johnny Can't Read and What You Can Do About It*

by Rudolf Flesch. Flesch criticized the American school system for *not* teaching phonics to beginning readers and found in this failure the source of reading inability in American public-school students. Central to Flesch's argument was the claim that written language was an accomplishment of humans different from achievement of oral language, with orality educed from innate vocalizations and literacy produced as inculcated responses to sets of symbols. Opposition to phonics finally found equally systematic treatment in Ken Goodman's 1986 publication of *What's Whole in Whole Language?* Goodman conceived use of written language as just as "natural" as oral communication and emphasized the necessity of immersing students in the meaningfulness of reading rather than instructing them in mechanical processes such as letter and word recognition. By the 1990s these two theories of reading instruction had become diametrically opposed to one another. Theorists of literacy instruction increasingly either prioritized phonics "first, fast, and only" (Review of Education, 2022, 1) or emphasized sentence-level information virtually to the exclusion of word-level information in literacy instruction (MacKay, et al., 2021). Battle lines were being drawn in what has become known as The Reading Wars (Wyse & Bradbury, 2022).

The Reading Wars in Ideological Perspective

Systematic Phonics is also referred to as Synthetic Phonics, but often is simply directly referenced as Phonics. The teaching objective of phonics is the study of the alphabetic code in which students first encounter reading instruction through identifying shape and sounds of letters to make a whole word. This course of study engages students through understanding the purpose of each letter to produce syntactic awareness in forming sentence structures (MacKay et al., 2021). Study of the alphabetic code features exposures to specific rules and guidelines on how the alphabet is applicable in formulating sentences and associating words to meaning. Stahl & McKenna (2019) have articulated a model of the phonics approach to literacy instruction for reading comprehension:
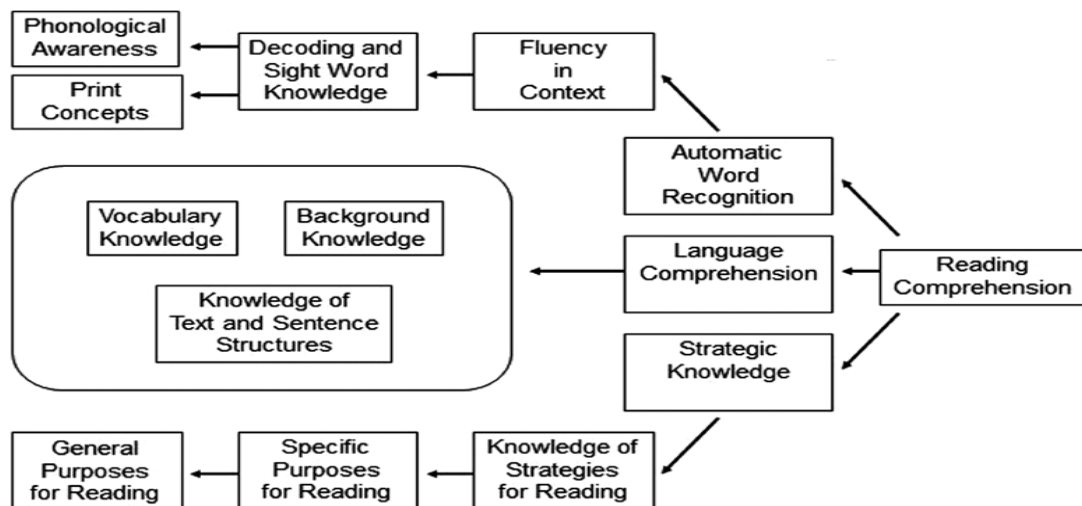
This design of literacy incorporates objective elements of systematic phonics and examines the approach in assessing reading instruction on how to strategically extend these concepts to determine how students will selectively utilize phonemic awareness in reading. What is to be

said about Phonics is that it is a necessary practice to incorporate in literacy instruction. In its constructs, it holds formal and informal elements of reading that persist throughout cognitive stages of development as a reader learns to function more fully in society. Despite criticism of Systematic Phonics from a Whole Language perspective, studies have measured significant gains by students of syntactic awareness and reading comprehension across the elementary years, especially in the areas of word reading, phonological awareness, verbal working memory, and other areas of the mechanics and technicalities of literacy (MacKay et al., 2021). Systematic Phonics seems to facilitate the integration of three major components of literacy: automatic word recognition, language comprehension, and strategic knowledge (Lee, 2012).

Whole Language (also referred to as Balanced Literacy) theorists point out the insufficiency of Systematic Phonics: "The logic of phonics instruction is that letters can be coded as sounds or sounds as letters. These can be blended to produce reading and writing. But that doesn't produce meaningful language – it only produces strings of sounds or letters," (Goodman, 1986, p. 11). Also, as Phonics became associated with pedagogical practices of repetitive drills of decodable texts often unrelated to the interests or cultural diversity of students, it became seen as a method of instruction that did not allow children to make day-to-day connections to the significance of learning how to read. On the contrary, evidence provided by linguists and child psychologists argues against teaching literacy in separate parts via drills. Rather, from the perspective of Whole Language, best practices to develop literacy involve the use of stimulating reading and engaging students in discussion about texts meaningful to them (Peterson, 2021). Often Whole Language theorists contend this approach emphasizes the natural oral components of language vital to enhancing how children navigate and utilize communication in literacy. It is a strategy for educating children to read, not through phonemic awareness, but through identifying how some system of language contributes to creating or making meaning (Morin, 2021). Here is a model of the Whole Language approach (Pembelajaran, 2013):

This practice theorizes significance in engaging literacy by encouraging non-systematic instruction executed through relatable examples in a variety of "real" books (texts not specifically designed to facilitate any type of literary guidance) that range across genres (Wyse & Bradbury, 2022). The general idea behind using these methodologies is to have teachers use literature as a resourceful teaching tool to provide students opportunities to recognize whole words rather than sounding out each individual word. On the Whole Language approach, the formation of literacy arises from everyday purposes of making lists or writing notes rather than having to understand the alphabetic code or how to decode words (Morin, 2021). Ultimately, Whole Language erects structural systems of making meaning through utilizing word functions correlating to real-life contexts of language use (Reading Horizons, 2022). This validates practical language use in real-life contexts by incorporating into literacy instruction scenarios about what the children are experiencing in the world around them. Ideally, this creates the essential goal of developing intrinsic motivation to learn literacy effectively.

The Reading Wars in Comparative Perspective

Perhaps the biggest observable difference in the models is that Phonics uses individual arrows to describe the process of attaining reading comprehension and Whole Language uses interlinked circles to tie together the elements of their model of reading comprehension. This reflects an essential difference between the two theories: Phonics sees literacy development as a causal process vs. Whole Language sees literacy as an emergent process. Yaden, et al. (2021) argue correctly that this is not enough to make them incompatible with one another. Instead, it opens up the possibility of seeing Phonics and Whole language as complementary and mutually supportive of one another. When Whole Language and Phonics work together our idea of 'literacy' expands. We can see literacy as a kind of learning that involves both causal and emergent processes. No surprise then that both views are able to cite convincing evidence for their positions and equally convincing evidence against the other. Each studies its own separate ideas and finds the competing theory inadequate to ideas it was never meant to deal with. How we view Phonics and Whole Language, as either contradictory or complementary, makes a fundamental and far-reaching difference to instructional practice. If the theories are complementary, teachers need to know how to use both to make the most of literacy instruction. So, it becomes important to find out what is keeping teachers from being able to use both approaches in their quest for student success.

The Debilitating Politics of Standardizing Methods of Literacy Instruction

Certainly, multiple factors prohibit the development of unifying solutions in any problematic situation. But in the case of The Reading Wars political agendas play a major role in shaping and carrying on the struggle. Media presentation of The Reading Wars has tended towards the portrayal of the two approaches as mutually exclusive of one another and led to the development of vested interests among professional, business, commercial, and parental lobbying groups advocating privileged use of only one approach or the other (Soler, 2016). Advocacy of this kind has, to make matters worse, led to pendulum swings between which approach has dominance at any given time in any given place depending on who has most recently won the lobbying competition (Pearson, 2004). Swings in pedagogical policy and practice have led, in turn, to charges of inconsistency and contradiction in literacy policy and practice (David, 2020). Under such circumstances, teachers feel frustration and resentment at district-wide dismissal of their experienced-based knowledge about how young children learn to read (Adcock, 2001).

A politics of opposition played out in an educational system increasingly reliant on standardization of instruction has inhibited teachers from being able in the contexts in which they teach to offer timely provision of necessary resources from both Phonics and Whole Language to effectively carry out literacy instruction. Forces pushing schooling towards standardization of teaching include mandated high-stakes accountability tests and demand for continuity in technological developments affecting teaching. All educators are part of formal institutions, regardless of the subject being taught, and, as such, are constantly tasked by overarching policies to measure developmental growth of students against set-in-stone standards designed (1) to verify which students were most likely able to meet the objectives in the assessment and (2) to verify which of those objectives would require more practice (Dewitz & Graves, 2021). Although standardized benchmarks can help to facilitate the quality of what is being learned and/or to evaluate students who will need support, the problem lies in systematizing how instruction is being executed at scale among a widely diverse populace of learners.

Forces tending towards standardization of literacy instruction find pushback in underlying social justice issues that have been brought forth due to analyses in performance results of standardized instruction. MacPhee, et al. (2021) find a source of these issues in the fact that reports on literacy research often assert an impossibly direct connection between basic research and instructional practice. Without sufficient translational research that attends to a variety of instructional contexts and student populations, standardized instruction may perpetuate inequities. Inequities would much less likely be a result of literacy instruction if the Phonics/Whole Language debate were reframed in terms of conversation and collaboration rather than challenge and conflict. Goldberg and Goldenberg (2022) wisely suggest that moving forward to a demilitarized approach to literacy instruction will require marshaling the combined resources of both researchers and practitioners. Important in this process will be diffusing national curriculum policy into centers of control at much more local levels where pedagogy and assessment can be tailored to specific populations of young readers (Wyse & Bradbury, 2022).

Transformative Literacy Instruction for Meta-Theoretical Reconciliation

Local control of literacy instruction, understood as teachers in classrooms engaged with students who together make mutually agreeable decisions about group and individual literacy needs and interests, may be the most direct and least arduous path to the non-binary, relational meta-theoretical reframing of The Reading Wars recently called for by Yaden, Reinking, and Smagorinsky (2021). However, attempting to reframe The Reading Wars conceptual battle by conceptual battle, as Yaden and his co-authors suggest, risks intensifying fighting around specific issues at the expense of reaching rapprochement on general principles. Rather than teasing out and working through the set of binary oppositions currently characterizing thinking about literacy, literacy theory may be best served by giving both Phonics and Whole Language the best run for their money where they are supposed to have their greatest impact: the classroom (Harrison, 1999). Examples of instructional activity at a variety of levels — systemic, classroom, and individual teacher personal-professional development — indicate how this process may run.

Burnett (2007) points out, that for all practical purposes, Waldorf-Steiner schools long ago resolved the issue at the heart of The Reading Wars. Instead of thinking of literacy as involving two incompatible approaches to reaching the single goal of reading comprehension, Waldorf schools encompass both Phonics and Whole Language into literacy educations by teaching two separate subjects: Reading/Writing and Spelling. Burnett makes the promising suggestion that

systematic study of literacy instruction in Waldorf schools will provide insight into how combatants in The Reading Wars may better understand how to disentangle the threads of their respective theories. The suggestion is promising because Waldorf schools seem on the face of things to provide a context of study relatively bias-free of prior theoretical commitment to either side in The Reading Wars. However, even on less neutral testing grounds study of teacher use of the two theories is possible. For example, Connor, Morrison & Katch (2004) studied how patterned instructional activities predicted growth in first-grade students' decoding ability. They found four important trends. First, students with low, initial decoding scores benefitted most from explicit decoding practice managed by the teacher. Second, students with high, initial decoding scores showed no growth from explicit decoding practice. Third, children with initially low vocabulary scores initially benefitted more from teacher explicit instruction, but as their vocabulary improved, they transitioned to instruction more student-led and implicit. Fourth, students with initially high vocabulary scores saw their decoding scores go up most when they experienced student-led, implicit instruction. In the first-grade contexts in which Connor, et al., did their study teachers needed to be responsive to student literacy needs to make students better at decoding. Some students needed phonics first. Some students were already meaningfully reading. Along that range, each student needed the teacher to use the right mix of Phonics and Whole Language. The findings of the Connor study coincide with Shirley A. Carson's (1999, p. 222) description of her growth as a literacy teacher over a multi-year career. Wading into the reading wars while an instructor in the Department of Education at East Central University, Carson offered three conclusions drawn from her experience as a literacy teacher: 1. In The Reading Wars, "the pendulum always swings too far in each direction." … "2. Teachers must go through stages of constructing their own learning. [and] 3. We need to be teacher-researchers who assess and document how students learn best." A multiverse of students requires a multidimensional reconstruction of literacy curriculum at the classroom level.

The key to integrating Systematic Phonics and Whole Language is not new research, or a new idea, or even a meta-hypothesis to support claims on how both theories complement each other. Rather, the key to integrating the two approaches to literacy instruction is providing educators the autonomy to use both effectively. Unlike theorists who may see ideas as concepts competing over hegemonic sovereignty, teachers are more likely to see theories as tools, as recommended methodologies for achieving desired goals with students. Any skillful craftsperson will want a well-stocked tool bench and understandably will become mystified if told to use only half of the tools on the bench that will be needed to get the job done. Theorists of literacy have reached an impasse from which to move forward they must give way for teachers of literacy to work out in actual processes of literacy instruction details of the relation between Phonics and Whole Language. New developments in literacy theory are still welcome; but must be put in the hands of teachers as tools to employ to determine their usefulness. A permanent truce of this sort, in which theorists on both sides of the war agree to turn their ideas over to teachers for the final test, may allow the fog of war to clear sufficiently to support more permanent reconciliation via more precise (re)mapping of the territory over which The Reading Wars are being fought.

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Play Will Carry Us Through:
On Play and Games in Higher Education Classrooms

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Abstract: Play, understood as aesthetic experience in an academic field, permits students to engage emotionally with subject matter, permits students to *feel* what they study. Play presents opportunities to imagine and learn from future, discipline-related scenarios and situations, to engage creatively with the unknown, not just play by the rules of a pre-established game. My students set up schools on new, previously uninhabited planets, and other such adventures. This way of structuring the semester is fertile ground for reimagining grading and assessment in our own, present circumstances, and lets us relate to each other with a playfulness that does not happen when writing/grading papers is at the core of course development.

Introduction: I Won't Tell You That

"But you didn't tell me that!" one of the audience members exclaimed, on the verge of upset, in the Q&A part of my conference presentation. He had just asked a question about students who could potentially be too shy to actively participate in an in-class game, and I was mentioning how I give my students plenty of options regarding participation in my play-based courses. "I didn't know that!" he continued. To be fair, I had indeed said nothing of the sort in my presentation — and it had been my choice to not do so.

This happened at an education conference where I presented about play in higher education. Specifically, I talked about how I transformed my courses into semester-long narrative games that invite students to play throughout the semester. However, more than talking to my audience, I invited them to play. In my allotted 20 minutes, I could either play, or talk about play — and I chose the former. I invited audience members to play an early version of *Playtocracy,* a game I have been developing to help faculty design courses as semester-long narrative games (Cabral, in press). Although I knew that this strategy would leave much unaddressed, it was important to me to allow participants to *feel* what it is like to play, more so than hear about play. After all, I was trying to convey the importance of play in the higher education classroom and why I find it fundamental to involve students in play.

Like Brown, "I hate to define play because it is a thing of beauty best appreciated by experiencing it. Defining play has always seemed to me like explaining a joke — analyzing it takes the joy out of it" (Brown, 2009, pp.15-16). So, that day, I decided to play. In this paper I somewhat go back to talking about play as I explain what led me to narratives games in higher education and how I contextualize these practices — but I do invite you to play *Playtocracy* alongside this reading, along with any other narrative games you develop in your own teaching and learning practices.

Learning from the Past, Reacting to the Future

When we think of a classroom in American higher-education, we often think of a group of students and a teacher working together (or not!) to expand the students' knowledge. If, as Davidson argues, "the infrastructure, curriculums, and assessment methods we have now were developed between 1860 and 1925" (Davidson, 2017, p.4), this is what many of our classrooms have looked like for a long time. Although there are many different iterations of this model,

some more progressive, others more conservative, we mostly live in predictable classrooms. These are also the classrooms we train our future teachers to teach in, even if we don't know much about the needs and characteristics of future schools and their students. In many ways, we train our teacher candidates to teach "in the past." Take grading and testing scores, for example: every time there is a low on national tests, we double down on drills, well add more math and literacy time, we reduce the arts and anything connected to living in our physical bodies — regardless of all the research that shows that that is not how true learning happens. What we do in teacher preparation classrooms has repercussions for years (decades?) to come — and yet, we often keep using models that are based on what worked (or, often, did *not* work) in the past. But thankfully, that is not always the case.

Reacting to the Past: Role-playing Games for Engaged Learning (n.d.) is an active learning pedagogy developed by Mark C. Carnes, a history professor at Columbia University's Barnard College in the late 1990s. It consists of elaborately designed role-playing games in which students embody specific character roles that are "informed by classic texts in the history of ideas" (n.d.) and through which they must persuade others of their arguments. Given that each student is assignment their role, they do need to align their arguments with the philosophical ideas at stake, but they are free to create and deliver them in a variety of public and playful ways. The goal is for students to engage with the past and react to it as they learn about it. Students have the opportunity to emotionally engage with the content under study in powerful ways, which naturally impacts their learning. In this roleplay, students learn as they take on specific identities and passionately support or attack ideas that they may have not been familiar with prior to class. Stepping outside of themselves and their realities, students learn about themselves and their realities, as well as their roots in the past. According to Carnes (2014) this approach has been transformative for many college students — not just in their learning of content but also, and maybe most importantly, in their social and emotional experiences on campus.

In the art world, an example of experiencing the past while imagining different futures is *Before Yesterday We Could Fly: An Afrofuturist Period Room*. This exhibition opened in 2021 at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met) in New York City, as a space that "examines the present and future rather than offering a filtered perspective on the past" (Hollein, 2022, p.3). This space turns to Afrofuturism to envision what the future could have looked like if Seneca Village, a predominantly Black mid-nineteenth century community that thrived in what is now Central Park (just West of where The Met was built), had not been displaced in 1857 to make room for the park itself to be created. Afrofuturism, a term coined by cultural critic Mark Dery in 1994 and defined as a "larger aesthetic mode that encompasses a diverse range of artists working in different genres and media who are united by their shared interest in projecting Black futures derived from Afrodiasporic experiences" (Yaszek, 2006, p.42), is applied "as a coherent mode of critical inquiry" (Yaszek, 2006, p.42) to question and imagine possible worlds. Using "informed speculation about the past" and "an ingenious design for the future" to provide both a visionary leap forward and a radical counterpoint to so much historical oblivion" (Alteveer et all., 2022, p.12), this exhibition is not a showing of the past, but a construction of the future(s). Afrofuturism, "predicated upon both realist and speculative modes of storytelling" (Yaszek, 2006, p. 41) has long offered ways for Black artists to envision possible futures from within the Afrodiasporic and science fiction communities, opposing the (often openly) racist stories imagined by much of the mainstream science fiction in its earlier years, in which racial issues were not meaningfully addressed (Yaszek, 2006).

In the business world, J. Peter Scoblic (2020) uses strategic foresight and scenario planning to help organizations learn from the future. Or, better said, from plausible futures. Scenario planning was first used as a strategic tool for businesses in the 1970s. It is maybe the most recognizable tool of strategic foresight, which was first identified in a post-World War II U.S. Air Force think tank grappling with the need to develop strategies to deal with the possibility of nuclear war — a plausible future for which there were no experiences to draw from (Scoblic, 2020). The goal of strategic foresight is to help us think about the future by forcing us to creatively imagine multiple possible futures in ways previously unimagined, acknowledging the inherent uncertainty as its own outset. Although schools and universities have obviously different missions and face different operational challenges than air forces and oil businesses, there's something to be said about planning for uncertain futures for which we have few true analogies — which certainly is a challenge we educators face.

The Octavia Project offers an example of how education can help us envision new futures that shape our present realities. Inspired by the work of Octavia E. Butler, an Afrofuturist author herself, the Octavia Project uses speculative fiction and blends different art forms to help young women, trans, and nonbinary youth explore possible futures with a deep commitment to social justice — a commitment that many of this youth do not experience in their current worlds. In their own words, "The Octavia Project uses the creative power of science fiction and community to envision new futures and greater possibilities for our world" (website landing page, retrieved June 2023). In this way, "young folks [not only] explore how the world around them is created by a series of choices that can be remade or replaced," but they also imagine futures that they may, with their own choices, help create. "As its name implies, Afrofuturism is not just about reclaiming the history of the past, but about reclaiming the history of the future as well," Yaszek (2006, p.47) writes. And that is just what the youth of The Octavia Project do.

College students and school children today are very different than a few decades ago, or even just pre-COVID-19 pandemic. The world they live in would be in many ways unimaginable to their family members of just a few generations ago. Yet, many of our colleges are still designed in outdated ways, our grading systems are still trapped in no-longer relevant ideas, and we still often teach for realities that no longer exist. We do have centuries of classroom experiences to lean on and draw from, but that may, in many ways, be the problem itself: the past analogies we have for what a classroom looks like are not necessarily fit or valid to think about the classroom sin which our teacher candidates will teach (will there even be classrooms?). In this way, we are not only starting from scratch, but perhaps even farther back, as we need to convince ourselves of the futility of perpetually iterating the ways in which we (and generations that preceded us) were taught.

This is not to say that neither our experiences nor all the research, philosophical thinking, and scientific understandings from previous generations of educators are irrelevant — that would be a foolish and detrimental thing to argue. But precisely because of these new experiences, we know that the world evolves, and we know that the future will be different than what we know now — even if we don't know in what ways. It is certainly crucial to learn the past, with the past, and from the past. It is equally important to learn from the future, in ways that directly impact what we do in the present. If we are able to imagine futures that could have been had the Seneca Village not been decimated, we may be able to act and teach in ways that will lead to a future that is more just than the ones we may have if we are not.

Thinking of different futures in this way is not completely unlike what economists call narrow bracketing: according to Sussman (2022), we often think of one-time expenses as unpredictable lines in our budgets that cannot be accounted for nor, therefore, budgeted. These "un-budgetable" expenses, however, are often the (unnecessary) cause of havoc in our budgets — unnecessary because although the specific expenses are indeed not predictable, the predictability of the existence of such expenses is very much a reality.

Similarly, we don't know what changes are coming to the world, to education, and to our classrooms — but we know "unpredictable change" is coming and we need to understand what we can do now that will equip us to educate teachers who will teach in that unknown future. In teacher education we don't just *prepare* for the future, as we would if we were planning for something we know will happen — we effectively *create* that future.

Play Is Not All Fun and Games

One way to imagine scenarios is to play — and play is serious business. But there is a distinction to be made between play that is free of predetermined outside-imposed rules, and play that is dictated by, for example, the rules of a board game. Several languages, such as, for example, Portuguese and Danish, have different words for these two types of play: in Portuguese *jogar* means playing the type of play that has predefined rules and structure, such as board game or sports (the Danish word for this is *spille*); and *brincar* means the free, open-ended play that you see in children's imaginative pretend play, with no explicit or premeditated goal (the Danish work for this is *lege*). For example, if we said *jogar* soccer we would mean to actually play the game of soccer, whereas *brincar* soccer would mean something like a soccer-themed pretend-play. Playing Monopoly would be *jogar*; playing in a mud-kitchen would be *brincar*. It is no coincidence, as both Resnick (2017) and Lange (2020, p. 41) point out, that the brand-name for LEGO, a popular toy that invites us to build creatively (although, as we will see, not always!), comes from a contraction of the Danish words *leg* and *godt*, meaning "play well."

Bears (2012) and Resnick (2017) also distinguish between these two ways of play, namely in the form of playpens versus playgrounds. As Bears describes it, although both are designed with play in mind, they offer very different possibilities: while the playpen physically limits the space and opportunities children have to play, a playground does the opposite — it is a landscape of all real and all imaginary possibilities at the disposal, whim, and hands of the player. Playpens can offer a space to *jogar*, but playgrounds offer a world where one can *brincar*. As an example, Resnick describes how sometimes children play in the LEGO playpen — following step-by-step directions to build the model shown on the box — while other times they build freely and creatively in the LEGO playground, constructing new and unscripted compositions.

"Like digestion and sleep," Brown (2009, p. 15) argues, "play in its most basic form proceeds without a complex intellectual frame." This free, unscheduled play that Resnick (2017, p. 134) defines as "one of the four P's of creative learning" is a fundamental way to be, to learn, and to relate to the world and others around us. "The beneficial effects of getting just a little true play," Brown (2009, p. 7) maintains, "can spread through our lives, actually making us more productive and happier in everything we do." Even just a small bit of play can change a classroom, and that can certainly happen within a game.

Long before they play any organized sports or board games, young children play in ways that help them imagine possible worlds and determine ways to act and react in such

circumstances. Alison Gopnik (2009) talks about how fictional worlds are a luxury for adults, who have to deal with the serious stuff in life, stuff that is practical, and useful and needs to get done — say building houses, making lattes, or putting down fires. But children are "completely useless in what comes to adult responsibilities and spend much time emerged in the imaginary worlds doing what we label as "just play." As they play, they are, however, "computing a wide range of possibilities" that help them (re)think themselves and the world, and "bring new worlds into existence" (pp. 71, 72, and 21, respectively).

I have always incorporated short games in early childhood classes I teach, one-off playful activities that are peppered throughout the sessions and the semesters, in hopes of engaging students and making classes more fun and exciting. As an early childhood educator, I am convinced that play is a fundamental way for students to develop and own their learning, and to create knowledge that has meaning, importance, and relevance to their lives. Although that idea accompanied me in my transition from the early childhood classroom to full-time teacher education, the same was not true for the way I used play in my higher education teaching: yes, I consistently used short games in my classes or encouraged less traditional types of assignments and materials, and I certainly advocated for the imperative that play is essential in the early childhood classroom; but I did not place play at the core of my teaching, nor did I give my adult students enough agency in the designing of their own learning paths, until I fully turned my courses into narrative games in which students are invited to take charge of their learning journeys.

This shift happened during the abrupt transition to remote learning forced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Without the physicality of engaging in games together in the classroom, and with the added stress of lockdowns while the world around us was wrapped in uncertainty, the one-off games were just not enough to carry us through a semester of learning. We needed to engage in narratives and stories, more so than press buzzers on keyboards or complete bingo cards. We needed to engage creatively with the unknown, not just play by the rules of a game. We needed a playground, not a playpen.

Off to Unknown Planets: Narrative Games in Higher Education

The shift to a more immersive, semester-long experience that invites students in my teacher education classes to not only *jogar*, but also to *brincar* was transformative. Games were fun and important, yes. But they did not offer the sustained exploration of possibilities that officializes playful thinking and playful being in the classroom that is needed to genuinely envision ways of being in unknown future possibilities.

I knew this to be true because, in my training as an early childhood teacher, I had learned the importance of experiential ways of learning by doing such as the ones developed and theorized by authors such as Dewey (1997), Vygotsky (1978), or Kolb (1984). I had argued for the need for higher education to learn more from early childhood practices, and I had written about play-based learning and artmaking. Cognitively and theoretically, I knew this to be true. But, alas, I did not start practicing this way of teaching in higher education until I *felt* its benefits myself, for myself, and for my students. As an instructor of art methods to future classroom teachers who have little to no familiarity with art, I know this need for experiencing to be fundamental: in my experience, I can lecture teacher candidates on the importance of art all semester long, but if they don't *feel* how impactful it can be *to them*, they rarely see the need to bring it to their own students and classrooms. Arguably, the same goes for play — no amount of talking about it will

do. As Brown (2009, pp. 20-21) puts it, "there is no way to really understand play without also remembering the feeling of play. If we leave the emotion of play out of the science, it's like throwing a dinner party and serving pictures of food."

My way of offering a playground in the classroom was with a narrative game, aiming to bridge *jogar* and *brincar* within the realm of course material. On the first day of the semester, I asked my students if they were willing to take on a mission to set up schools on new, previously uninhabited planets. They decided on the routes to take, the tools to develop along the way, and what schools in the new environment would look like. There were games and tasks, but there was also the imaginary of unscripted narrative *brincar*. Importantly, this way of structuring the semester was fertile ground for reimagining grading and assessment in our own, present circumstances, and gave us opportunities to relate to each other in nonstandard ways, with a playfulness that does not happen when writing/grading papers is at the core of course development. Shared experiences allow for shared goals, and playing together helps putting each of us "in sync with those around us" (Brown, 2009, p.63).

Thinking of educational settings, Bisz & Mondelli (2023, p. 4) define "a basic learning game as a fun exercise where players practice skills under the constraints of the teacher's rules so they can succeed at an academic outcome." In this definition, it is important to point out the role attributed to "teacher's rules" and to the ultimate goal of achieving academic success, which is different from the freedom (both in rules and in expected outcomes) of unstructured play. But, as pointed out by Brown (2009), even just a bit of play in the context of a structured activity or game is enough: "We don't need to play all the time to be fulfilled," Brown (2009, p. 7) argues. "The truth is that in most cases, play is a catalyst. The beneficial effects of getting just a little true play can spread through our lives, actually making us more productive and happier in everything we do."

Coding, for example, can be seen as an activity in which parameters need to be followed for something to work. However, Bers (2018), observing children exploring coding and coding programs, observes how even in such a context play is fundamental and elicits greater executive functioning outcomes than coding by following directions. And, even in free play, there are rules galore. If you have observed a group of preschoolers play day in and day out, you will know that there are often strict rules in place — rules that the children themselves determine and mercilessly enforce. If the floor is lava, then you certainly cannot think you can ignore that fact and just walk around– except of course if you have lava-proof shoes on, are on a boat, or any other such rule, but one prescribed and administered by the players themselves. Even free-play is not a free-for-all.

These rules that grow with the play and shape it as it grows are fundamental in the playground that (hopefully!) the classroom is, and can provide contextualization and groundedness while pushing the creative process further. This is not unlike what Scoblic (2020) describes as "prim[ing] the imagination and maintain[ing] the guards of reality" in the context of scenario planning. This "pushing but not tearing the envelope of plausibility" allows us to play with futures drastically and radically different from now, but still plausible and imaginable. Like *Harold and the purple crayon* (Johnson, 1995), a book where a child's scribbles become the world he lives in, climbing mountains, eating pies, and running from disasters that he uses his own crayon to draw, plausibility is maintained by adhering to strict rules of reality: when Harold falls off a boat, he needs to swim, or climb onto another boat; when he climbs up the mountain he drew, he proceeds with care lest he slide down the hills of his very creation (Leher, 2012).

This is also how I invite my students to think about the courses we share: although the "rules of reality" still apply (I cannot escape assigning them a letter grade by the end of the semester; work still needs to be turned in with enough time for me to provide feedback before the grades are due; the days assigned to the class are the days in which we meet; and other such constraints) we navigate the course through the lines we ourselves scribble, drawing our adventures as we go. If, as Lehrer (2012, p. 23) posits, "the difficulty of the task accelerate[s] the insight process" (why else, he asks, would poets adhere to such strict forms of writing as haiku or sonnet?!), reality-imposed limits become our springboard.

Reflecting on interactive fiction in "computer story-games" and choose-your-own-adventure game-stories, Buckles (1985, p. 27) explains that although "by taking part in creating the story, the reader takes on some of the functions of the author," it is important to remember that "the reader cannot actually determine what will happen, but [they] can choose from alternatives implicit in the story and [have] the illusion of control over the events." In the classroom, to some extent, this is both reality and fiction — again, it is not a free-for-all. The instructor is still in charge of maintaining a community that is safe for all, respectful, and inclusive; there is still a commitment to helping students productively engage with course content and learn along the lines of the fields at stake. But, within this, the students' control of what happens is certainly not an illusion.

In the play-game courses my students and I share, they are in charge of the syllabus and the "grading" as much as I am. Ungrading (Blum, 2020) and other ideas on ways of engaging and empowering students in the classroom (Davidson and Katopodis, 2020) offer unlimited possibilities for how to use class procedures as a spark to play. Yes, I give my students parameters (to use these examples again, the semester ends when it ends and the students do not control that, there is no tolerance for harmful behavior regardless if the students like that rule or not, and there are sets of course content that we need to address regardless of them being on the top of students' lists of interests). And yes, my students decide on the types of assignments they want to do, when they turn them in, and how much work they want to do.

Most importantly, playing offers students possibilities to interact not just more, but *differently* — with course material, with each other, with the instructor, and with the world around them. Carnes posits, as he talks about how role-immersion games have transformed the college experiences of many college students, this connection with others is crucial not only for academic success but, fundamentally, for student well-being (Carnes, 2014). Portnoy (2020, pp.110-111.) summarizes the case for play as an effective form of instruction by saying:

> What we have known for ages is that learning is social and requires practice, or play. Play has the potential to tap into the best of situated cognition. While students may not be able to leave the country or even the classroom, they can still try on different roles, and in trying on these new roles, they begin to take different perspectives. In our current system of compulsory universal public education, this model is often posited as situated cognition. Research has acknowledged that constructing knowledge within the environment where that knowledge will be used is key. With research showing the importance of applied practice, which feels an awful lot like role play, one has to wonder why this type of learning is still not regular practice in classrooms nationwide.

Conclusion: Unanswered questions

More so than learning by experiencing, play allows us to learn by feeling. Knowing what it feels like to play, to make art, to connect, to *feel* is what gives us the ownership to push learning further and farther, and to bring it to every classroom we can. "You had me playing a game, I'll give you that," that same participant continued, noting how remarkable it was that he, an academic with (presumably) no inclination for playing, had participated in the game we played during my conference session. I wondered if he was convinced. Portnoy's question — Why do we not play in all classrooms? — is not an easy one to answer.

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Pre-Service Teachers' Perspectives and Opinions on Outdoor Learning: Towards Tightening Research Protocols

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Abstract: Consistently promising results of research into preservice teachers' attitudes towards outdoor learning are mitigated by some methodological looseness in those studies. When researchers tend to use their own students for studies on the effects of ongoing instruction, bias is likely to creep into the data. Studying your own students also tends to turn your attention away from potentially important variables, especially demographic variables. Program evaluation, especially of unique programs, cannot support arguments for the general validity and usefulness of outdoor learning. I've designed and piloted a study that addresses these issues by moving research on outdoor learning from the parochial to the general and from the descriptive to the explanatory.

In 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, two prominent grassroots organizations, Children & Nature Networks and Green Schoolyards America, advocated for students and teachers to return to schools set up for outdoor learning in all climates. For over three decades combined, these two organizations have worked to educate policymakers, administrators, teachers, students, and parents about the myriad benefits, including increased physical activity, better academic results, and emotional well-being, that students gain from outdoor learning year-round. These organizations promote the advancement of outdoor learning, nature-based education, and the reconstruction of concrete schoolyards into green spaces. Learning outdoors is not an anomaly during times of health crisis in the United States. In the early 20th century, during the flu pandemic and tuberculosis outbreak, many open-air and outdoor learning spaces were established in schools.

After hearing these ideas, I began to think about how more children from all backgrounds and experiences could benefit from having more exposure to nature. With technology and excessive screen time, concerns about childhood obesity, lack of focus in classrooms with the rise of social media, and the test-driven environment of schools, many students are struggling. I wondered if using the natural benefits of being outside for learning could make a difference and stem the negative consequences that cripple academic outcomes and students' (and teachers') excitement and wonder in the world of learning (and teaching).

As I formulated my research question on outdoor learning, I accepted a short-term job offer at a local community farm to be a Field Trip Farmer. I gave a 20-minute interactive outdoor presentation to over 30 different classes with a total of approximately 800 students who were preschoolers through 3rd-graders and homeschoolers on field trips to visit a farm and pick a pumpkin. This allowed me to teach in ways that tap into the benefits of presenting information in an outdoor educational environment, such as showing the students the pumpkin patch, parts of a pumpkin vine, apple orchards, and the surrounding environment that supports agricultural enterprises. This experience demonstrated to me the power that outdoor learning has to excite and energize students about nature, which indoor learning lacks. I began to imagine what it would be like to incorporate outdoor learning throughout all curricula, just as pre-service teachers learn to do with culturally responsive teaching and social-emotional learning.

These ideas and experiences led me to research the views, attitudes, and opinions of pre-service teachers in a community in upstate New York about outdoor learning. My definition of

outdoor learning is learning activities that are curriculum-based and conducted outside of the classroom (on-site or off-site, e.g., schoolyard, gardens, field trips to nature parks, farms, etc.) during regular school hours. Via surveys and interviews I generated quantitative and qualitative data to answer the question: "What are pre-service teachers' perspectives and opinions on outdoor learning?"

Promisingly Positive Pre-Service Perceptions of Outdoor Learning

My study is backgrounded by the fact that, in recent years, interest in integrating outdoor learning into the curriculum for students of all ages has increased worldwide. From research on benefits to students and educators garnered from different outdoor learning strategies, to ways to accomplish outdoor learning in a variety of settings for different disciplines, to perceived and documented obstacles to establishing outdoor learning in the curriculum, outdoor education is receiving research interest (Shume & Blatt, 2019). That literature gives clear indication of positive attitudes towards outdoor learning among students and teachers, both in-service and pre-service. But the research tends towards parochialism and description rather than generalizability and explanation. My study seeks to establish a model for research into pre-service teachers' perceptions of outdoor learning more likely to discover how to bring preservice teachers on board with outdoor learning.

Torquati and Ernst conducted a research study to ascertain the likelihood that pre-service early childhood education teachers would use various outdoor settings to teach their future students. The researchers focus on the concept that "nature teaches" as they explore the following hypothesis: "the ability of early childhood educators to capitalize on the opportunities afforded by natural environments is dependent upon their perceptions of those affordances" (Torquati & Ernst, 2013, p. 192). The authors believed that if pre-service teachers (PSTs) recognized the benefits and importance of children spending time in natural environments, even manmade outdoor environments, such as parks and playgrounds, then PSTs would plan to use these areas for outdoor learning activities. Torquati and Ernst (2013, p. 196) used surveys from 110 PSTs in a Minnesota university early childhood education program to find out "perceptions of natural settings, intention to use natural settings in teaching, knowledge of nature benefits for children, and nature relatedness."

The study participants preference-ranked photographs of 16 natural settings of the Spring season that could be found near the university, which teachers could use when teaching young children, including "water, woods, open field/grassy area, and park" (Torquati & Ernst, 2013, p. 196). These outdoor areas were either natural or built up/maintained by people. Participants answered open-ended survey questions about photograph selections. There was a rating scale to indicate how likely they were to use different types of outdoor settings for teaching activities. And questions on participants' opinions and knowledge about benefits of being in nature.

The PSTs' responses indicated that "their intention to use natural environments in their future teaching [was] quite high," and most of them did not believe it would be "difficult" (Torquati & Ernst, 2013, p. 204). Most responded that they would use natural environments maintained by humans (i.e., parks, playgrounds) for future outdoor learning activities over choosing non-maintained natural settings (i.e., forests, open fields). The researchers also discovered that respondents were more likely to use "unstructured play for physical, health, or social benefits in the park area" (Torquati & Ernst, 2013, p. 204). The responses indicated that participants were uncomfortable, concerned about safety hazards, and did not know how to use

the "more natural nonhuman-maintained settings" (i.e., forests, water, open fields) for structured or unstructured outdoor learning activities. These teachers were not trained to provide children with the tools for learning about nature, and they needed "professional development [to] scaffold knowledge about the rich affordance for… less-maintained environments" (Torquati & Ernst, 2013, p. 204). Most respondents said they would need more adults to help supervise students and more resources for students' outdoor learning activities in any setting. Although the PSTs responded positively about planning to use outdoor learning, the authors believed that PSTs' responses to the photographs demonstrated hesitancy and lack of commitment to outdoor learning activities in natural settings.

James and Williams (2017) used a qualitative, phenomenological research methodology and focused on participant observation, contextual note-taking, and individual interviews of middle school students and their pre-service and in-service teachers during and after an outdoor education experience. The participants were 56 middle school students, with eight PSTs and three in-service teachers at a Rocky Mountain West U.S. school that gives students from kindergarten through ninth-grade some opportunities to participate in increasingly "challenging" outdoor education activities.

James and Williams focused on discovering the perspectives of students, PSTs, and in-service teachers, first, using an in-class unit theme of studying water in the environment with videos, lectures, and text readings. After the in-class teaching, the students had experiential outdoor activities to contextualize the learning with real-life data collections of water, soil, and plant samples. They also did "team-building activities, archery, nature hikes, nighttime astronomy, campfire cooking, tent pitching, and camping" (James & Williams, 2017, p. 61). This outdoor learning experience was referred to as a "camp" because the students were together for two days and one night. The PSTs and in-service teachers were facilitators and mentors during the in-class preparatory learning activities and the outdoor learning camp.

After doing follow-up, clarifying questions, as well as sorting the responses into themes, James & Williams (2017, p. 64) discovered that most participants' responses in all three categories (students, PSTs, and in-service teachers) "indicated that the outdoor education camp was worthwhile." The researchers found that the students highly valued the hands-on learning experience and that being outdoors allowed various students, some with special needs or behaviorally challenged, opportunities to take on leadership and active roles in outdoor learning activities. This theme also was prominent in the pre-service teacher responses. James and Williams pointed out that one respondent said, "it is more hands-on, and the students can see and learn from real things. It is a different avenue for learning with more engagement…." The eight preservice teachers' responses highlighted the "benefits of connecting in-class concept learning to application in the field" (James & Williams, 2017, pp. 65 and 66, respectively).

Twenty-nine pre-service early childhood education teachers at a Bangkok, Thailand, university were given an open-ended questionnaire about their experiences with STEM outdoor learning and about their "perceptions on how to implement outdoor learning in STEM education." The participants "had experienced teaching STEM in the real classroom" (Khwaengmek et al., 2021, p. 2). The researchers gave the participants a 10-item questionnaire individually and used interpretive methods to analyze the respondents' answers by putting responses into categories, codes, and themes.

Khwaengmek et al. discovered that only 5 of the 29 participants had not had experience in setting up some outdoor learning STEM educational activities. Based on their experiences, PSTs indicated on the questionnaire that they used various strategies to incorporate STEM outdoor learning, such as "hands-on activities… as project-based learning, place-based learning, and science experiments" (Khwaengmek et al., 2021, p. 6). In addition, the PSTs' responses to the questionnaire highlighted three themes in their reflections and views about implementing outdoor learning in STEM activities. First, the PSTs believed it was important to use "the local place" of nature in their communities, such as markets, farms, and gardens, to solve problems and learn. The second theme from the research was the importance of going outside the classroom and working with people in the community who have expertise in utilizing STEM topics outdoors, such as farmers. Finally, the third theme that emerged from the research was the importance of learning how to combine STEM classroom topics with what is related to nature in the students' community to make the learning more applicable and fun, as well as giving students an opportunity "to explore their communities" and "solve problems in their communities" (Khwaengmek et al., 2021, p. 5).

Shume and Blatt (2019) did a study focused on how PSTs viewed their outdoor experiences in their youth, their plans to incorporate outside activities when teaching future students, and perceptions of the obstacles they would encounter with these plans. Participants were 95 pre-service elementary teachers in a public university in the Midwestern United States. These participants all took an elementary science methods course with an assignment that was used for the research. The participants had to read Louv's (2006) seminal book, *Last Child in the Woods*, which focused on the scarcity of children spending time outdoors or, as the author coined the phrase, "nature-deficit disorder." After reading the book, the participants responded to essay prompts on their outdoor experiences, their reflections on the book and their science education ideas, and the challenges they expected to encounter with implementing outdoor learning. The researchers used qualitative inquiry for data collection. They triangulated that data with interviews with some participants several months later while participants were doing their student teaching.

The researchers discovered that the majority of participants had "meaningful outdoor experiences in their youth" and had "positive intentions for taking their own students outdoors" (Shume & Blatt, 2019, p. 1354). As for obstacles to outdoor learning, the researchers discovered three themes from the participants' responses. First, the participants were concerned about the "logistics of organizing outdoor experiences" related to school policy hurdles, safety issues, weather and availability of proper outerwear, monetary needs for resources, proximity to natural areas, and the time needed for organizational efforts to implement outdoor learning. The second theme found PSTs believed that stakeholders (i.e., administrators, other teachers, parents, and students) would not be receptive to students going outside for activities. The participants' responses indicated that they were concerned about not receiving the necessary logistical support from colleagues in the school; that parents would not cooperate with paperwork and volunteering; and that their students, who are in a "digitalized world," would also not be cooperative while doing the outdoor activities. Finally, the third theme that emerged from the research was that it would be challenging to incorporate outdoor learning activities into an already packed curriculum schedule that included the "pressures of test preparation… and a plethora of standards and content" (Shume & Blatt, 2019, p. 1359).

R. Richards et al. (2018) were interested in gaining insights into pre-service physical education teachers' views on outdoor education that focused not on traditional sports and skill development but also helped their students in "affective areas" of development in pursuit of life-long physical activity. Thus, Richards et al. collected data for a study that reported on the perceptions of 13 pre-service physical education (PE) teachers' outdoor education participation in an assigned three-day and two-night field experience, teaching 40, fourth-grade students from a suburban elementary school nearby to the university the participants attended. Most primary students had never spent time in the woods before this Outdoor Education experience. All of the pre-service teacher participants in the study were enrolled in a required Outdoor Education Methods course at a U.S. Midwestern regional university. The PSTs were given a great deal of preparation and instruction before the field experience with the fourth graders, including in-class instruction and a weekend on-site, in which the pre-service PE teachers were instructed to do the activities they would be teaching the elementary students. These activities included "pioneering, orienteering, survival skills, birding, campfire, and forest ecology." The researchers used qualitative research to collect data through several "focus group interviews, non-participatory observations and informal interviews, and guided reflections" (R. Richards et al., 2018, p. 376).

The study's results highlighted the pre-service PE teachers' mixed negative and positive opinions about the field experience as they shared views on required preparation, execution, and relevance to their field of study. In addition, the non-participatory observations recorded similar information that aligned with the participants' comments. The researchers reported the following data themes in the study: PSTs felt they did not have enough freedom to be creative in teaching the students during the outdoor education experience; they did not get the feedback they needed during the experience to understand their roles during the experience; they felt they sometimes had management responsibilities more like a camp counselor than a teacher; they gained valuable confidence in teaching in an outdoor field experience environment; they did not believe the field experience related enough to being PE educators, although they said the experience helped them to use class management techniques learned in other courses; and finally, they believed the outdoor field experience helped them to be more adaptable as teachers (R. Richards et al., 2018).

Methodological Examination of What's Been Found

While offering a favorable prognosis for PSTs and outdoor education, the studies discussed above more resemble program evaluation than empirical research, lean towards the descriptive and away from the explanatory, and neglect an array of seemingly important variables. Variables consistently neglected include pedagogical costs and benefits of outdoor learning in man-made versus non-maintained outdoor environments, discussion of opportunities for outdoor learning in all four seasons, investigation into the usefulness of structured versus unstructured activities for outdoor learning, and demographic variables, especially participants' experiences with school-based outdoor learning by frequency, type, intensity, and duration. These variables are crucial for understanding teacher readiness for outdoor education.

A reason for the neglect of these variables is that much of the research evaluates ongoing outdoor education programs. Using your own students for your research can carry a high cost. Participant responses may be biased with a positive spin because of the perceived power differential between researchers and participants. Also, a program evaluation approach to outdoor learning research tends to limit studies to a single grade level and to specific curriculum topics. Consideration of opportunities for outdoor learning across ages, disciplines, and school

settings is ruled out by program evaluation studies. Research into PSTs and outdoor learning could benefit greatly by going where outdoor learning is not the norm. Even when research concerns itself with the evaluation of ongoing outdoor learning efforts, that research tends to miss opportunities to examine important constructs. Few use pretest/posttest models to examine the effects of instruction. When in-class instruction is used in combination with outdoor learning activities there is a tendency to avoid looking at differences between indoor only instruction and combined indoor/outdoor learning. The result is a good description of what's going on with outdoor learning in a variety of specific contexts of instruction, but a lack of clarity about what works and does not work to bring PSTs in a variety of grades, subject matters, and settings on board with the aims, strategies, and techniques of outdoor learning.

My study attempts, in a preliminary way, to fill in some of these gaps in research on PSTs and outdoor learning. I make it a point to collect data on participants' school-based experiences with outdoor learning, both as students and as teachers, across settings, grades, and disciplines. In addition, while most studies rely almost exclusively on interview data, my study triangulates PST response to close-ended and open-ended survey questions with data collected via in-person, follow-up interviews.

Restructuring Research Protocols

For my research study on outdoor learning and PSTs, I wanted to gain a better understanding of PSTs with different educational specializations and their opinions about outdoor learning and how it could be a part of the kindergarten through 12th-grade curriculum. I first developed a survey which I emailed to PSTs who attended higher education institutions in an Upstate New York county with a population of over 700,000 people. Then, the PSTs who chose to participate in the survey emailed their responses back to me through Google Forms. This survey was conducted using the free online service Google Forms which allows users to create questionnaires, surveys, and other forms to collect information, responses, and different types of data to evaluate. Since the data was gathered via email, the responses were automatically collected in Google Forms and displayed through graphs, charts, and spreadsheets.

When the survey was emailed to potential participants with the Google Forms link, they were informed that the survey was confidential and voluntary and was being used for a graduate research project. Second, the questions in the survey were developed to be unbiased and non-offensive to gather quantitative data on the participants related to such demographic information as the name of their institution, major, and year in their program, as well as qualitative data on their specific comments on outdoor learning experiences as students and as school employees. Third, the survey asked the participants questions about their opinions on the benefits and concerns of outdoor learning, and finally, the respondents had the opportunity to express their opinions on whether outdoor learning should be integrated into the curriculum.

The survey participants were given 10 days to complete the survey after receiving the email. On about the 5th day, the participants were sent an email to remind them of the impending deadline to complete the survey. The PST emails were gathered from email lists of PSTs who were in my graduate classes and those who were also in my undergraduate/graduate workshop classes that prepared students for Student Teaching. Two of my professors also agreed to email out the survey to students in their other classes, and the survey was also emailed to colleagues that I knew in PST higher education programs in the community where I live. I would estimate that over 65 PSTs received the survey via email, and 16 PST teachers returned the completed

survey by the deadline they were given. Thus, the results of my research question "What are pre-service teachers' perspectives on outdoor learning?" are based on the quantitative and qualitative research information from the 16 PSTs who completed the survey. I also conducted 30-minute, separate, in-person interviews with two PSTs who were emailed the survey and took the opportunity to complete it.

Results

The first few questions in the survey gathered demographic information about participants. The majority of PST respondents were students at one college in Upstate NY, and over 80 percent were graduate students. Furthermore, the PSTs' majors varied from Inclusive Childhood & Adolescent Education, Art Education, and Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL), with 60 percent specializing in Special Education and over 20 percent in Social Studies. Two of the survey participants were enrolled in Speech Pathology programs because these students take education classes to train to work with clients in school environments. When asked to give a brief description of their experiences working in kindergarten through 12th-grade classrooms (Question #5), an overwhelming majority of the respondents gave specific information which indicated that they had experience working in classrooms for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Some of the participants said that they served in roles such as substitute teachers, teacher assistants, pull-out/push-in teachers, and teaching in nature camps.

As for responses to a prompt about the benefits of outdoor learning (Question #6), 100 percent of respondents believe that outdoor learning provides better mental and emotional health for students. Over 80 percent believe outdoor learning provides students with opportunities for collaboration, creativity and active learning. Moreover, 75 percent of respondents believe that outdoor learning engages students in authentic learning experiences and students are not on screen as much as inside the classroom.

The greatest concern that the participants of this study had about implementing outdoor learning into the kindergarten through 12th-grade curriculum (Question #11) was that the weather could be a barrier. In fact, 50 percent of respondents listed the weather as a concern. In contrast, about 38 percent of the participants had the following three concerns: not enough time to include outdoor learning in the curriculum with mandated testing considerations; educators are not trained to know how to incorporate outdoor learning into the curriculum; and students will not have appropriate clothing for the weather. Closely following these three concerns, approximately a third of respondents were concerned about safety and that schools did not have resources to set up outdoor learning in the schoolyard or offsite.

Asked about their experiences with outdoor learning when they were K-12 students (Question #7), 75 percent of respondents indicated that they engaged in outdoor learning as students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Those respondents who answered "Yes" to having outdoor learning experiences as a student listed a variety of outdoor learning which included the following; in English class going "outside as a change of scenery on a nice weather day," in high school going on "urban sketching adventures to draw outside all-day," in science classes going to a "wood area" when discussing environment systems," reading outside for various classes, or in elementary schools doing "regular lessons outside (math, writing, etc.) or learn about weather." Furthermore, a majority of respondents (81.3 percent or 13 participants) believe that it is important to integrate outdoor learning into the curriculum for kindergarten through 12th-grade students.

Analysis

One of the most striking results of this research on PSTs' perspectives on outdoor learning is that 100 percent of the respondents believe that outdoor learning provides better emotional and mental health for students. This may be an indication of PSTs' beliefs that outdoor learning can benefit today's emphasis in schools for students to have direct instruction in Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Because of the pandemic leading to many difficulties in education over the past two years, SEL has become a high priority in many schools. Also, the survey results are from PSTs who are being trained in a variety of educational disciplines and will be teaching students from kindergarten through high school. So, these PSTs are not just from one discipline or grade level, and they all indicated that outdoor learning has mental and emotional benefits for all students. Moreover, the majority of the respondents have had experiences working in classrooms with students of various ages and 75 percent even engaged in outdoor learning as students themselves from elementary through high school. Thus, the survey results are not focused on just using outdoor learning in one educational area or specialty, and also, PSTs' responses give a wide breadth of outdoor learning experiences from different perspectives. Even the speech pathologist respondents' insights on outdoor learning are valuable because they also have opportunities to engage students in therapy and beneficial activities outside of the classroom setting.

It is no surprise, perhaps, after reviewing the demographics, school and outdoor learning experiences of the PSTs, and opinions about the benefits of outdoor learning, that the majority of respondents, over 80 percent (Question #9), believe it is important to integrate outdoor learning into the curriculum for all ages. The PSTs' answers to the open-ended questions on the survey, Questions #5, #8, #10, and #12, are insightful and give a more detailed understanding of the reasons the PSTs overwhelmingly reported positive reflections on the benefits and importance of having outdoor learning as part of students' overall experiences in schools. For example, those respondents who believed that it is important to have outdoor learning as part of the curriculum further explained their opinions with the following information: "[outdoor] learning beyond testing outcomes would benefit children's spirit and overall wellness;" "outdoor learning gives students a chance to get fresh air"; "helps students to retain more information as they focus more"; and "gives students opportunities to learn hands-on and more in-depth with topics."

Despite the overall positive beliefs about outdoor learning, the PSTs still had some concerns about integrating outdoor learning into the curriculum. Since these PSTs live in Upstate New York, which is known to have a long winter season, it is understandable that the biggest concern, 50 percent of respondents, is that weather is a barrier and over 30 percent are concerned that the students will not have proper outerwear for all weather conditions. It is interesting that although an overwhelming majority of the PSTs believe that outdoor learning should be integrated into the curriculum, almost 40 percent of the respondents do not believe they have the training to do outdoor learning and there is not enough time in the curriculum to do it. These results reveal a tension between PSTs recognizing the value of outdoor learning to their students, but not knowing how to overcome the many obstacles they see to having it be a part of their teaching. For example, a couple of comments about obstacles included, "I am so concerned with the time limits that we have throughout our school day. District leaders just want us to prioritize state test prep…We need a full shift in what we view to be the purpose of education" and "I think outdoor learning is essential for students' all kinds of development."

Limitations

Small sample size is the foremost limitation of my study. I was only able to get responses from a limited number of PSTs and the majority of these respondents were graduate students at one higher education institution. Genuinely unbiased results would require data collection from a broader, more differentiated set of participants. Second, time constraints kept me from doing follow-up interviews with all respondents to the survey. This follow-up research would have added exactitude to triangulation between quantitative and qualitative data collected via the survey. Third, Questions #6 and #11, which asked respectively about perceived benefits and perceived concerns about outdoor education, provided lists of options to check. While the content of the lists of benefits and concerns was gleaned from research on the topic, it would have been beneficial, especially for discussion in follow-up interviews, to garner respondents' own ideas about the promises and problematics of outdoor education, via open-ended responses, and without prompted responses from which to choose. This would be a great way to ensure research was tapping into participants' real thoughts about the benefits and drawbacks of outdoor learning. Finally, expanding the email list of PSTs at a variety of institutions would extend the scope of the project and, potentially, turn this regional study into a national one.

Discussion

This research was prompted by my interest in ascertaining PSTs' knowledge and ideas about incorporating outdoor learning into classroom instruction for every student age and every subject matter from kindergarten to high school. I focused on PSTs because I wanted to discover how much they had reflected on the idea of outdoor learning as part of the curriculum as they prepare to become in-service teachers. I was encouraged by the results indicating that PST respondents did not view outdoor learning as another educational "gimmick" to incorporate during this difficult time in education in the U.S.; but instead, the majority of PSTs who responded appeared to believe (because of their own outdoor experiences as students and from work they had already done in schools) that outdoor learning is an important and vital instructional strategy for all students. Although all of the respondents recognized the SEL, creativity, collaboration, and less screen time benefits of outdoor learning, they also recognized obstacles to implementing outdoor learning, such as weather and students' access to proper outerwear, lack of teacher education in strategies of outdoor learning, and lack of time with test prep constraints. Overall, the respondents of this survey gave a thorough overview of their perspectives of outdoor learning.

There are other research studies that highlight the overall landscape of outdoor learning in schools worldwide and specifically, Canadian elementary schools (Oberle et al., 2021; Waite, 2020). Although there is more educational research, nationally and internationally, on outdoor learning and advocating the benefits to students (and sometimes teachers), there are still many obstacles, such as school funding, administrative support, training for educators and pre-service teachers, and time constraints because of testing requirements. More research is needed in the United States on outdoor learning in various settings that focus on student benefits, the training needs of educators, and best practices for implementation. Stakeholders in our educational system need to become more informed and aware of why outdoor learning needs to be considered a viable, powerful influence to support our students' learning. That's why research on outdoor learning must move beyond program evaluation studies and into empirical research about how to overcome perceived obstacles to widespread implementation of outdoor education.

Conclusion

Compared to the literature reviewed above, my study of PSTs and outdoor learning gives a broader view because my participants came from a variety of disciplines and grade levels they are preparing to teach. Also, the PSTs I surveyed and talked with were not involved in my evaluation of some field experience or any teacher training related to integrating outdoor teaching into the classroom curriculum. My study had no stake in the evaluation of ongoing programs like the literature reviewed above. I also collected data on participants' previous experience with outdoor learning both as students and as educators. More research needs to be conducted on what outdoor learning strategies are being taught in U.S. teacher training. Where outdoor education is part of teacher education programs, we need to study changes in the views of PSTs after experiencing these activities. In addition, stakeholder views on outdoor learning need to be researched, including the perspectives of higher education faculty, school administrators, in-service teachers and parents on integrating outdoor learning into the curriculum. PSTs see the benefits of outdoor learning and with further research we can ascertain best practices for preparing them for the use of this promising learning strategy. As well, we can do more research to improve the feasibility of incorporating outdoor learning into all school curriculum.

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Therapeutic Professional Development:
Supporting the Mental Health of Teachers

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Abstract: The education system will benefit monetarily and morale-wise if teachers are required, as part of their professional development, to engage in therapy sessions sponsored by the schools in which they work. The solution to teacher burnout is to find ways to help teachers maintain a sense of control at work. Regular mindfulness meditation has proven that schools would be well-served to make ongoing, group therapy a required aspect of teacher professional development. Therapeutic professional development would cost no more than already budgeted for professional development and may even be administered by existing school personnel. The benefits to learning in schools would more than repay the effort put into support of teacher mental health.

Teacher attrition costs school districts a conservatively estimated $20,000 per teacher who leaves the profession. Teacher burnout is a major cause of teacher attrition for both beginning and veteran teachers. Minimizing teacher burnout saves schools substantial amounts of money (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Burnout is defined as a perceived gap between expectations of performance and actual performance, what Friedman (2000, p. 596) describes as "a discrepancy between expected and observed levels of the individual's professional self-efficacy." Teachers, especially first-year teachers, often put pressure on themselves to be perfect in the performance of their job. This tendency has been described as a clash between teachers' irrational beliefs about job performance and what they are actually able to do in the workplace. The result of this clash is that teachers feel a sense of low self-efficacy at work and feelings of low self-efficacy causes teachers work-related stress (Robertson & Dunsmuir, 2013). To make matters worse, teachers with feelings of low self-efficacy also tend to have feelings of depression and anxiety (Paver, 2009). Depression and anxiety are often exacerbated by the negative coping mechanisms teachers sometimes use, such as escape-avoidance, self-blame, and misplaced aggression (Austin, Shah, & Muncer, 2005).

Floden (forthcoming, p. 4) makes the same point without describing teacher beliefs as irrational when he relates burnout to teacher expectations in the following way: "Circling back to expectations for teachers, the positive path forward might be not to lower expectations for teachers, but to have high expectations that are closely aligned with central purposes of schooling. Burnout comes, not from having to work too hard, but from having too much effort put into extra work that does not contribute to core goals [related to psychic rewards of teaching]." If Floden is right then problems associated with teacher burnout, demoralization, and attrition will not be finally fixed until structural changes occur at schools.

Skinner, Leavey, and Rothi (2021, p. 1) point out that traditional approaches to schooling were shaped to some extent by the aspirations of teachers. That is to say, in their operation schools once may have been guided by "a commitment to a social benefit through the development, support and improvement of the pupils, and this commitment used to override workplace challenges and help teachers deal with stress." But Skinner and her co-authors continue to note: A bureaucratized and managerial approach to the operation of schools has contributed to teachers' loss of commitment to the job, erosion of professional identity, diminishment of instructional confidence, and development of a sense of estrangement in

teacher-student relations. Common stressors in this managerial work environment include organizationally established performance targets, increased workloads, increased accountability, and curriculum revision. Student disrespect and inattentiveness also press down on teachers (Beaudoin, 2019). School climates of problem-saturated conversations, especially about students; teacher cliques; and gossip add stress to teachers' work lives, too. These sources of stress combine to make teachers lose a sense of control over events at work (Huk, Terjesen, & Cherkasova, 2019). The solution to teacher burnout, then, is to find ways to help teachers maintain a sense of control at work.

Solutions to the problem of returning a sense of control to teachers in their place of work range from the recommendation by McLeish (2008) that, perhaps against all odds, teachers find personal time for relaxation and revitalization to Creasey's (2019) hope that, despite teachers' inability to accomplish this on their own, schools may morph into cultural centers of social support for all those who work there. However, there is a third way available to tame most teacher stressors, one that runs between individual teachers taking personal time for themselves and groups of teachers trying to revolutionize the whole school culture. Kirk and Walter (1981) suggest that teachers form support groups among their colleagues to address specific problems and thereby form a sense of sharing and assisting in a process of helping each other master workplace stressors. A good way to facilitate this process of formation of teacher support groups is via therapeutic professional development.

Regular mindfulness meditation, of a variety of forms, has proven useful in renewing teachers' sense of self-efficacy at work. Schnaider-Levi, et al. (2017) engaged teachers in an Inquiry-Based Stress Reduction (IBSR) meditation technique. Participating teachers engaged in weekly group and weekly individual meeting for twelve weeks running. In the sessions teachers identified thoughts about work that caused them stress (e.g., "My students don't like me."). Then session leaders guided teachers through questions about their thoughts and a set of turnarounds about their thoughts (e.g., "I don't like my students." or "I don't like me." or "My students do like me."). Following the intervention, participating teachers described a sense of centeredness and a greater ability to accept reality. They reported improvements in setting boundaries, flexibility of thought, and self-awareness. These improvements assisted them in coping with the complex and dynamic nature of their profession. Similarly, Czerwinski, et al. (2021) offered teachers the opportunity to engage in the use of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). In this case, after taking a battery of tests to assess participants' feelings of stress, teachers engaged in group therapeutic coloring sessions. Participants received video training about the usefulness of developing mindfulness through coloring tessellated, mandala images. After the training, participants were given the mandalas and crayons and instructed to color the images during their free time, especially if they were dealing with stressful situations prior to the coloring exercise. The intervention lasted one workweek. At the end of the intervention week, participants retook the battery of tests. Participation in the coloring mindfulness activity decreased feelings of burnout, stress, and anxiety, and increased a sense of resilience at work.

Schussler, et al. (2018) engaged teachers in a mindfulness-based intervention, Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE). Presented as part of professional development for teachers in the school where the study was done, CARE PD aimed to improve teachers' well-being through a variety of iteratively presented pedagogical activities: small- and large-group discussion, direct instruction, mindful exercises, and personal reflection. CARE PD included 30 contact hours in four daylong sessions over a 6-week period and a booster session 2 months after

the fourth session. Participants received a workbook and practice CD to initiate their own personal practice beyond the program. They also received coaching calls on the phone. One year after the booster session, participants were individually interviewed about their participation in CARE PD. Even though a year had passed, teachers showed higher levels of adaptive emotion regulation and mindfulness and lower levels of psychological distress and time urgency on quantitative measures pre-intervention versus post-intervention. Most importantly, Schussler and colleagues (2018) discovered the key to success of the intervention was not in reducing the amount of stress participants' felt. Instead, CARE PD helped participants recast their stress as controllable.

Affirmation of this central principle of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), that reconceptualizing one's circumstances as controllable leads to reduction in stress, was also found by Cheek, et al. (2003). After an introductory session in which participants were informed of the procedure of the music therapy intervention they were about to begin, participants were asked to bring to the next session a song that was meaningful to them both in terms of their career and in terms of three facets of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. For the next five weeks the cognitive behavioral music therapy treatment group listened to individual teachers' music selections. The groups discussed the selections as they related to their current stressors. Discussion also turned to consideration of how the shared musical experiences facilitated participants' relaxation and cognitive restructuring efforts. The group worked through two to three music selections weekly. The study included a control group of participants who received CBT as their intervention without any music therapy involved in the sessions. The music therapy group exhibited greater improvement on the three aspects of burnout — emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of accomplishment — than did the CBT-only group. McKay & Barton (2018) achieved much the same results in their study that used art as the basis of CBT. Art objects and activities were used to increase participants' awareness of personal and contextual resources supporting resilience and well-being. This enabled the teachers taking part in the intervention to reimagine their professional lives in ways leading away from burnout and demoralization and towards resiliency and efficacy. Maag (2008) found a most practical result of rational-emotive therapeutic professional development. It helped teachers stay composed when dealing with disagreeable students. As teachers, repertoire of responses to challenging behavior among students deepened and expanded, feelings of competence and capability replaced feelings of lack of control at work.

The results of CBT interventions carried out by school counselors with their teacher colleagues have also been outstanding. Clemens (2007) studied a group of teachers engaged in consultation with school counselors. The school counselor helped the teachers assess their thinking about problem student behavior, the best ways to respond to stress caused by the disruptive behavior, and how to bring about positive change in the classroom. Improved teacher mental health and emotional well-being at work was the outcome of teacher consultation with counselors. Warren (2013) also chronicled teacher participation in online and face-to-face consultations with their school counselors on topics related to teachers' beliefs about their ability to do their job well. Both online group and individual face-to-face sessions supported teacher mental health, with the face-to-face sessions slightly outperforming online sessions. Improvement in teacher mental health saw, indirectly, improvement in student success. In addition, participation in group therapy sessions tended to facilitate the formation of social support systems among participants, especially in the creation of teacher support groups that minimized feelings of isolation and loneliness in the workplace. In this way, therapeutic

professional development realized Kirk and Walter's (1981) recommendation that teachers form workplace support groups to ward off and overcome sources of stress at work. Working together in mutually supportive ways returns to teachers a sense of control over events at work. This is a powerful antidote to teacher burnout.

Taken together, these scattered successes provide strong evidence that the education system will benefit both monetarily and morale-wise if teachers are required, as part of their professional development, to engage in consultative therapy sessions sponsored by the schools in which they work. Schools would be well-served to make ongoing, group and/or individual therapy a required aspect of teacher professional development. Two hours of CBT therapy per week per teacher, just eight hours per month, carried out in any or all of the versions discussed above, would provide a cost savings to schools and school districts in the form of teacher retention. Therapeutic professional development need add no cost to existing budgets for professional development and may even be administered successfully by existing school personnel. Concerns about stigma associated with explicit services to support the mental health of teachers may be met by mentioning the cost-savings and team-building results of the interventions. As teachers begin to work on their own and in conjunction with colleagues in a strong spirit of mutually supportive morale and the school becomes a place of student engagement and achievement, concerns about "crazy" teachers will likely fade. The benefits of ongoing therapeutic professional development for teachers would more than repay the effort put into supporting teacher mental health. As Friedman, (2000, p. 595) observes, "In-service training for all kinds of professionals has proved to be a potent means of reducing stress and burn-out."

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Charter Schools Are Not State Actors

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Abstract: The Charter Day School dress code case is currently in the hands of the U.S. Supreme Court. The issue at stake — the public-private distinction — is significant beyond the validity of dress code violations in charter school settings. If charter schools *are* state actors, they *may not* impose dress codes. If charter schools *are not* state actors, they *may* impose dress codes. I maintain charter schools are private actors. The court's determination is of national importance. It will have bearing on the legitimacy of public funds received by charter schools.

On June 14, 2022 a critical education case came before the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in North Carolina (*Peltier v. Charter Day Sch., Inc.*, 37 F. 4th 104, 116, 4th Cir. 2022). A main issue in the case pertains to the dress code at Charter Day School in Leland, North Carolina, specifically, whether the privately operated but publicly funded charter school violated the rights of female students by stipulating what they could and could not wear. The ACLU reported, "Girls at Charter Day School, together with their parents, challenged the skirts requirement as sex discrimination under the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution and Title IX."

For general purposes and for purposes of this case in particular, it is first important to appreciate that, while all nonprofit and for-profit charter schools are privately operated, many, including Charter Day School, are also owned-operated by a private educational management organization (EMO).[1] This is another layer of privatization, another level of private ownership and control. In this vein, it is important to grasp that the legal framework that applies to private entities differs qualitatively from the legal framework that applies to public entities. Private actors and state actors operate in different legal spheres. The U.S. Constitution, for example, does not apply to acts of private entities; it applies mainly to acts of government. Indeed, the private-public distinction shapes the laws and institutions of many countries. As a general rule, no public schools in America are operated by an EMO.

It is also legally significant that the parents of the students suing Charter Day School voluntarily enrolled their daughters in the privately-operated charter school. No one is forced or compelled to enroll in a charter school in the United States. Nor is the state compelling, encouraging, or coercing Charter Day School to adopt any particular dress code or educational philosophy for students. As a general rule, privatized education arrangements in America (e.g., private Catholic schools that charge tuition) have always been able to adopt the dress code they want without any government interference. It is generally recognized that, as private schools, they can essentially adopt whatever dress code or educational philosophy they wish to enforce, and that parents are under no obligation to enroll their child in a private school if they do not wish to do so. This has been the case for more than a century. It is one of many expressions of the long-standing public-private distinction in law, education, and society.[2]

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[1] It is also worth recognizing that the non-profit/for-profit distinction is generally a distinction without a difference, that is, both types of charter schools engage in enriching a handful of private interests under the veneer of high ideals; profiteering takes place in both types of schools.

[2] See the works of Jürgen Habermas for further discussion and analysis of the origin and evolution of the public sphere in the Anglo-American world, especially, "The Public Sphere" In Mukerji, C.; Schudson, M. (Ed.):

It is also important to consider that the capital-centered ideologies of choice, individualism, and the free market encompass the notion of doing something voluntarily, i.e., willingly and freely. It is the reason why charter school promoters repeat the disinformation that charter schools are "schools of choice" (even though charter schools typically choose parents and students more than the other way around).[3] This neoliberal logic is also consistent with the "free market" notion that parents and students are not considered humans or citizens by charter school operators, they are viewed instead as consumers and customers shopping for a "good" school that won't fail and close, which happens every week in the crisis-prone charter school sector.[4]

To be clear, charter schools represent the commodification of education, the privatization and marketization of a modern human responsibility in order to enrich a handful of private interests under the banner of high ideals. For decades, neoliberals and privatizers have painstakingly starved public schools of funds so as to set them up to fail. Then they have mass assessed public schools with discredited corporate tests designed to "show" that they are "failing." This is then followed by a sustained media and political campaign to vilify and demonize public schools so as to create antisocial public opinion against them, which eventually "justifies" privatizing public education because "privatization will improve education." Suddenly "innovative" charter schools appear everywhere, especially in large urban settings inhabited by thousands of marginalized low-income minorities.

The typical consequences of privatization in every sector include higher costs, less transparency, reduced quality of service, greater instability, more inefficiency, and loss of public voice. Privatization essentially undermines social progress while further enriching a handful of people driven by profit maximization. To date, whether it is vouchers, so-called "Education Savings Accounts," or privately operated charter schools, education privatization ("school-choice") has not solved any problems, it has only multiplied them.[5]

With this context in mind, let us return to the court case at hand. In a 10-6 vote on June 14, 2022, the Richmond, Virginia-based 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, "found that that the dress code [at Charter Day School] ran afoul of the U.S. Constitution's 14th Amendment guarantee of equal protection under the law." Girls at the K-8 charter school, it was concluded, should have the freedom to wear pants and not just skirts because they have "the same constitutional rights as their peers at other public schools - including the freedom to wear pants." Marking the first time a federal appeals court has ever done such a thing, the Richmond Court found that Charter Day School is a state actor (i.e., it is a public school), which means that the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment does apply to the school.

Consistent with numerous other court rulings over the years, however, the lawyer for Charter Day School, Aaron Streett, maintained that the Richmond court issued a flawed ruling

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Rethinking Popular Culture. Contemporary Perspectives in Cultural Studies. University of California Press (1991), pp. 398-404.

[3] See, Wagma Mommandi and Kevin G. Welner, *School's Choice: How Charter Schools Control Access and Shape Their Enrollment* (Teachers College Press, 2021).

[4] See, Shawgi Tell, "5,000 Charter Schools Closed in 30 Years," *Dissident Voice: A Radical Newsletter in the Struggle for Peace and Social Justice* (September 18, 2021) https://dissidentvoice.org/2021/09/5000-charter-schools-closed-in-30-years/ This is a high number of charter school closures given that there are only about 7,600 charter schools enrolling about 3.5 million students operating in the U.S. today in 45 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam.

[5] See, Allen Mikaelian and Donald Cohen, *The Privatization of Everything: How the Plunder of Public Goods Transformed America and How We Can Fight Back* (The New Press, 2021).

because the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment does not apply to the charter school because the charter school is a private entity and not a state actor like a public school. According to legal precedent, as a private actor, Charter Day School did not deprive any person of their constitutional rights. This view stems in part from the long-standing premise that charter schools are "independent," "autonomous," "innovative" schools under the law, that is, they are deregulated "free market" schools, meaning that they are exempt from most of the laws, rules, policies, and regulations that govern public schools. They do not operate like public schools. They are not so-called "government schools." They are not arms of the state.[6] They are not connected to state authority in the same way public schools are. They are not governed by elected officials like public schools are. Charter schools operate in their own separate sphere. The fact that many charter schools are also owned or operated by private EMOs only adds an additional wrinkle in the social fabric of many institutions affected by the public-private dynamic.

Charter Day School is currently appealing the case to the U.S. Supreme Court, which may hear the case this summer (2023). The issue of whether a charter school is a state actor or not is critical because it hits at the core issue about charter schools. This point cannot be overstated. If it is the case that Charter Day School is not a state actor, as the lawyer for the privately-operated school argues, then the Virginia court's ruling represents a form of "harmful government interference" because the 14th Amendment does not apply to private actors.

Under U.S. law, "state action" is defined as "an action that is either taken directly by the state or bears a sufficient connection to the state to be attributed to it." Alternatively, a state actor is "a person who is acting on behalf of a governmental body, and is therefore subject to regulation under the United States Bill of Rights, including the First, Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments, which prohibit the federal and state governments from violating certain rights and freedoms."[7] As private actors charter schools are not in fact "acting on behalf of a governmental body." Private actors are not controlled or directed by the state, at least not in the way agencies and arms of the state are, which means that the actions of privately-operated charter schools cannot be called actions taken directly by the state. State action doctrine holds that government is not responsible for the conduct of a private actor.

Most of the entities that authorize charter schools are not 'public' or 'governmental' in the proper sense of those words. Many charter school authorizers are operated or governed by unelected private persons. Many of the wealthy individuals who operate or govern such entities are hand-picked by wealthy overseers. The public, as a matter of course, is omitted in these arrangements. The public has no meaningful say in any part of this setup. This is on top of the fact that charter schools themselves are not governed by publicly elected citizens either, whereas public schools are. Unelected private persons governing a deregulated private entity (which may also be owned by another private entity) is not the same as elected public school officials governing a public school that serves no private interests, admits all students at all times, has unionized teachers, can levy taxes, and is accountable only to the public.

Unlike charter schools, regular public schools, which have been around for 180 years and educate 90% of America's youth, are in fact state actors. They are political subdivisions of the

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[6] In March 2023, in a separate case, the US Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (*Heather B. v. Houston Independent School District, 21-20229*) affirmed that IDEA, a charter school operator, is not an arm of the state.
[7] The phrase "state action" does not appear in the U.S. Constitution.

state because they not only carry out a public function but are also explicitly delegated authority by the state to carry out various public responsibilities. "Function" and "authority" are not synonyms; they are different concepts. Carrying out a role is not necessarily the same thing as having power to carry out that role. A role can be carried out by a person or entity that derives its responsibility from a higher political power. Its role can be delegated by a more influential power.

Properly speaking, charter schools are not exercising state prerogatives. Nor do they enter into what may be called a symbiotic relationship with the state. Unlike public schools, they are not state agencies proper, which explains why the state does not coerce, encourage, or compel charter schools to act in the same way it coerces, encourages, or compels public schools to act. The state has more influence and control over public schools than it does over privately operated free market charter schools. In this neoliberal legal setup, the state is not responsible for the policies and operations of deregulated charter schools. Charter schools can do as they please: "no rules," "laissez-faire," "hands-off," "liberty," "autonomy." This usually means no meaningful accountability.

Charter schools are intentionally set up to operate outside the parameters and framework governing public schools. This is what makes them "innovative," "independent," and different. It is worth stressing again that, in the case of Charter Day School, the state played no direct role in creating, directing, or shaping the dress code being challenged by parents who voluntarily enrolled their children in the school. The charter school's dress code policy was not therefore an expression of state action.

Unlike public schools, charter schools fall under private law, specifically contract law. 'Charter', by definition, means 'contract': a legally binding agreement between two or more parties to do or not do something in a specified period of time with associated rewards and punishments. For state action doctrine this means that just because a private entity has a contract with the government that does not mean that the actions of private contractors, like charter schools, can be attributed to the state. Simply "partnering" with the state does not make the conduct of a private entity a form of state action. A private actor does not become public, does not become a state actor, just because it contracts with the state.

The issue of whether a charter school is public or not is often confusing to many because there is relentless disinformation from charter school promoters that charter schools are public schools when, in reality, they are privatized independent entities. Charter schools remain private, independent, deregulated, segregated entities even though they receive public money, are often called public, and ostensibly provide a service to the public. Interestingly, when asked what they think a charter school is, most people say they are not really sure or they think that charter schools are some sort of private school. The average person rarely thinks charter schools are public schools.

To be sure, charter schools cannot be deemed public just because they are called "public" 50 times a day. Under the law, this is not what makes an entity public. Simply labelling something a specific thing does not automatically make it that thing. In the U.S. legal system, merely labeling private conduct "public" does not make it a form of state action. Moreover, receiving public funds does not spontaneously make an entity public under the law. Thousands of private entities

in the U.S. receive public money but they do not suddenly stop being private entities.[8] Only narrow private interests benefit from obscuring the distinction between public and private as in the case of charter schools. Public and private mean the opposite of each other. They are antonyms. They should not be conflated.

Public refers to everyone, the common good, all people, transparency, affordability, accessibility, universality, non-rivalry, and inclusiveness. Examples include public parks, public libraries, public roads, public schools, public colleges and universities, public hospitals, public restrooms, public housing, public banks, public events, and more. These places and services are available to everyone, not just a few people. They are integral to a modern civil society that recognizes the role and significance of a public sphere in modern times.

Private, on the other hand, refers to exclusivity, that is, something is private when it is "designed or intended for one's exclusive use." Private also means:

-Secluded from the sight, presence, or intrusion of others.

-Of or confined to the individual; personal.

-Undertaken on an individual basis.

-Not available for public use, control, or participation.

-Belonging to a particular person or persons, as opposed to the public or the government.

-Of, relating to, or derived from non-government sources.

-Conducted and supported primarily by individuals or groups not affiliated with governmental agencies or corporations.

-Not holding an official or public position.

-Not for public knowledge or disclosure; secret; confidential.

In its essence, private property is the right to exclude others from use of said property; it is the power of exclusion;[9] it is not concerned with transparency, inclusion, the common good, or benefiting everyone. This is why when something is privatized, e.g., a public enterprise, it is no longer available to everyone; it becomes something possessed and controlled by the few. This then ends up harming the public interest; it does not improve efficiency, strengthen services, lower costs, increase accountability, or expand democracy.

Charter schools are labeled "public" mainly for self-serving reasons, specifically to lay claim to public funds that legitimately belong to public schools alone. If charter schools were openly and honestly acknowledged as being private entities, they would not be able to place any valid claim to public funds and they would not be able to exist for one day. This presents a contradiction for defenders of charter schools who want to "have it both ways," that is, be public when it suits them and act private when it serves them. This is the definition of hypocritical and self-seeking.

Clearly, the relationship between the state and charter schools is not the same as the relationship between the state and public schools. This is one reason why the rights of students,

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[8] As a matter of principle, no public funds should flow to any private organization because such funds are produced by working people and belong rightfully to society as a whole.
[9] The right to exclude is "one of the most treasured" rights of property ownership.

teachers, and parents in charter schools differ from the rights of students, teachers, and parents in public schools. Thus, for example, while the vast majority of teachers working in public schools are unionized, charter schools are notoriously anti-union. About 90% of charter school teachers are not unionized. Charter schools energetically fight efforts by teachers to unionize to defend their rights as workers. Teachers in charter schools are considered "at-will" employees, meaning that they can be fired at any time for any reason. This is not the case in public schools where due process, tenure, and some collective security still exist. Conditions are more humane and more pro-worker in public schools, even when these chronically-underfunded and constantly-vilified schools face one neoliberal assault after another. This is also linked to why many charter schools across the country can legally hire numerous uncertified and unlicensed teachers.

Another profound difference between charter schools and public schools is that the former cannot levy taxes while the latter can. A tax, as is well-known, can only be laid for a public purpose, which means that charter schools do not possess the characteristics of a political subdivision of the state; they are not fully exercising a public function. Many other legal differences could be listed. It would be more accurate to say that charter schools resemble traditional private schools far more than they resemble regular public schools, yet they continue to be mislabeled "public schools."[10] In practice, charter schools are quintessentially private schools.

The question of whether a charter school is a state actor or not also has big implications for thousands of other organizations (e.g., hospitals, utility companies, colleges, etc.) across the country because various constitutional provisions typically do not apply to private entities and businesses. This case is therefore of national importance. The public-private distinction at stake in this education case goes beyond the issue of the dress code at Charter Day School.

The Charter Day School case is currently in the hands of the U.S. Supreme Court. The issue at stake — the public-private distinction — is so significant that, on January 9, 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court asked President Joe Biden's administration to give their view on the case. The U.S. Supreme Court states the key issue at stake is: "Whether a private entity that contracts with the state to operate a charter school engages in state action when it formulates a policy without coercion or encouragement by the government." This move is seen by charter school promoters as a positive sign the highest court in the land is willing to consider the case. However, on May 22, 2023, U.S. Solicitor General Elizabeth B. Prelogar filed a brief responding to the Supreme Court's January 9, 2023 request. Prelogar essentially reinforced the June 2022, 10-6 ruling of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in North Carolina. She urged the Supreme Court to view Charter Day School as a state actor and to decline to hear the school's appeal.

In the final analysis, with or without a ruling from any court, as privatized, marketized, corporatized arrangements that celebrate consumerism, competition, and individualism, charter schools have no legitimate claim to the public funds, facilities, resources, and authority that belong only to public schools. No court ruling, one way or the other, will change this fact. Claiming charter schools are public schools for the purpose of laying claim to public wealth that belongs solely to public schools, damages public schools, the public interest, the economy, and

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[10] In *Rendell-Baker v. Kohn, 457 U.S. 830 (1982)*, the court held that "Even when a private school is substantially funded and regulated by the state, it is not a state actor if it is not exercising state prerogatives." For additional analysis of these themes see, Shawgi Tell, "Outlaw Charter Schools: Can A Charter School Not Be A Charter School?" *Dissident Voice: A Radical Newsletter in the Struggle for Peace and Social Justice* (November 23rd, 2022) https://dissidentvoice.org/2022/11/outlaw-charter-schools-can-a-charter-school-not-be-a-charter-school/

the national interest. It does not help low-income minority youth or close the long-standing "achievement gap" rooted in poverty, racism, inequality, and disempowerment.

Charter schools do not raise the level of education or improve society. Thirty-plus years of evidence shows that charter schools mainly enrich narrow private interests. Without charter schools, public schools would have tens of billions of additional dollars to pay teachers and improve learning for all students, especially low-income minority students enrolled in urban schools. This would make a huge difference. A farewell to charter schools would also mean that thousands of students, teachers, and parents would no longer have to feel angry and abandoned by charter schools that close every week (often abruptly).

Neoliberals have never cared about public schools or the public interest; they are masters of disinformation and self-serving to the extreme. Neoliberals have worked ceaselessly over the last few decades to methodically privatize public education in America under the banner of high ideals while actually lowering the level of education, increasing chaos in education, and enriching a handful of people along the way. The so-called "school choice" political-economic project has little to do with advancing education and improving opportunities for millions of marginalized youths and more to do with profit maximization in the context of a continually failing economy. "School choice" has brought immense suffering to public education and the nation. "School choice" does not have a human face.

The only sense in which charter schools may possibly be called state actors is that they are *neoliberal* state actors because they are actively organized by wealthy individuals and groups that control and influence many state positions, levers, institutions, and individuals. In this sense, charter schools are indeed acting on behalf of the *neoliberal state* and are therefore *neoliberal* state actors. This is bound to happen in a society where Wall Street and the state become indistinguishable.

An Adverbial Theory of Skill:
Putting a Kink in the Educational Adoption of Blockchain

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Abstract: "Skills" as commonly used in education discourse refers to tasks performed at minimal, determined-to-be-competent levels. The metaphor for "skill" is the machine learning algorithm: neural nets correctly distinguish between apples/oranges 93% of the time = students correctly distinguish apples/oranges 93% of the time = students have "categorization skills." The metaphor is *humans* modeling *machine* attempts to *model* humans. The machine model, to which humans should be adapted, best orients them to a machine-mediated world. The error here is a category mistake treating "skills" as substantives when "skills" performs in language an adverbial/aesthetic function. We present an adverbial alternative to dominant conceptions of skills that avoids category mistake and advocates for the significance of skilled social action and the role of education in fostering such action.

Take two trends: one is very evident while the other is far less noted. The first trend is the staggering increase in applications of digital technology to education. There is rapid integration of data[1] with new digital algorithmic technologies (so-called artificial intelligence, deep learning, large language models, neural nets, big data, etc.). While Chat GTP has received a great deal of attention, a more mundane but widely heralded and integral part of data intensive algorithmic technologies is *blockchain* (a distributed ledger technology popularized by crypto currency). The adoption of blockchain for educational purposes is accelerating transformation of education to mere preparation for employment.[2] Replacing traditional educational degrees with micro credentials, digital badges, and learning records is central to calls for educational use of blockchain. In turn, these learning records stored in blockchain support a radical restructuring of the existing economic and political system, which critics note will vastly lower the standard of living and further undermine democratic decision-making.

From these new blockchain-inspired credentials systems, the second and less obvious trend comes into view: the word *skills* increasingly dominates educational discourse, framing both the purpose and evaluation of education in terms of marketable *competencies*.[3] This framing is central to what the World Economic Forum has termed the "fourth industrial revolution."[4] This paper explores this trend in relation to the adoption of blockchain by educational institutions in

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[1] Much has been written to problematize "data," with some critical of its "objectivism;" here, we take data simply to be recorded observations, with the understanding that such a defintion does not include the assumption recorded observations are accurate or true. See for example, Martin Dodge and Rob Kitchin, *Code/Space: Software and Everyday Life* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011).

[2] "New Book Argues Education Shouldn't Be the Key to a Job," accessed March 22, 2023, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2023/03/14/new-book-argues-education-shouldnt-be-key-job.

[3] Deron Robert Boyles, "An Argument for the Deletion of the Word 'Skills' from the English Language," *Journal of Thought* 28, no. 1/2 (1993): 95–100; Mark J. Garrison, "Feeling like a Robot: Origin, Critique and Alternative to "Social-Emotional Learning," *Educational Abundance* 1 (2020): 6–18; John Preston, *Competence Based Education and Training (CBET) and the End of Human Learning: The Existential Threat of Competency* (Springer, 2017).

[4] https://www.weforum.org/focus/fourth-industrial-revolution.

the form of digital credentials and or learning records.[5] The nexus between what we term *skillsification*, blockchain technology, and digital credentials has rarely been subjected to serious critique. We hope this paper begins to fill that void.

While we doubt few will challenge the claim that "skills talk" is quite common, a few examples help scaffold our argument. Note that we did not seek out the examples. They were observed in the course of our daily work. Consider each:

- In discussing debates about the heritability of IQ, three psychologists argued that "rather than thinking there is no way to influence intelligence by improving the environment, we think there *is*, in fact, good reason to believe that improving children's environments will improve their cognitive skills."[6] As Deron Boyles asked, does the addition of the word "skills" contribute much here? Would we have lost something if they had written, "improve their cognition"?[7] Might heightened intellectual capacity be a more accurate account than narrow tests of "cognitive skills"?

- According to a KnowledgeWorks blog post about an event discussing the future of education in Nevada, Summer Stephens, superintendent with Churchill County School District, said: "We know we can find a lot of content. What we need is a lot of skills. Durable skills."[8] According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the noun *skill* can refer to "practical knowledge in combination with ability," a meaning dated up to 1980.[9] What value is gained by so forcefully separating, as the quote above suggests, "content" from "skills;" can one really have context- and content-free "skill"? What might be troubling about comparing human ability to stored products which last at least three years ("durable goods")?

- One critical scholar wrote this in a book prospectus: "The point not to be missed is that Social Emotional Learning programs […] do not emphasize learning the social and political skills to interpret and act to change those circumstances." While we certainly agree that current approaches to social-emotional development do not offer youth a chance to be political, we must ask: Is something lost here by suggesting that *being* political is the same as having political skills? Does one *have* political skills? Or does one engage in the world as a skilled politician, a skilled agent of change?

- Spurred by grants from the United States Department of Education and a host of "edupreneurs", *Education Week* reported efforts to embed daily readiness assessments in kindergarten classrooms. "Nearly one-third of the skills [teachers have] been trained to look for are in the domain of 'social foundations,' which includes skills such as expressing concern for others, following multi-step directions, and working cooperatively."[10] Is "expressing concern for others" a skill? Are emotions and their expression properly analyzed in skills-terms? Emotions

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[5] Kerri Lemoie and Louis Soares, "Connected Impact: Unlocking Education and Workforce Opportunity through Blockchain" (Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 2020), https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/ACE-Education-Blockchain-Initiative-Connected-Impact-June2020.pdf.`

[6] Eric Turkheimer, Kathryn Paige Harden, and Richard E. Nisbett, "There's Still No Good Reason to Believe Black-White IQ Differences Are Due to Genes," *Vox*, June 15, 2017, https://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2017/6/15/15797120/race-black-white-iq-response-critics.

[7] Boyles, "An Argument for the Deletion of the Word 'Skills' from the English Language," 96.

[8] https://knowledgeworks.org/resources/nevada-portrait-learner-community-vision/. KnowledgeWorks is a well-funded advocate for competency-based learning, and widescale adoption of for-profit educational technologies.

[9] https://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/180865

[10] Catherine Gewertz, "Kindergarten-Readiness Tests Gain Ground," *Education Week*, October 7, 2014.

might best be understood, according to Margaret Archer, as commentaries on human concerns. One can, for example, emotionally respond to the character of their performance ("I didn't do well.") but such emotional responses themselves are not properly understood as skills as SEL proponents contend.[11]

Each example represents a distortion: human ontology (thinking or feeling or political agency) is reduced to behavior rankings. There is only behavior because this is all that can be digitally and continuously recorded. As we shall see, this behaviorist focus is integral to the demand that extensive digital records of human behavior ("learning") be maintained and constantly updated.

The Movement from "Skill" to "Skills"

It is clear from Figure 1 that the phenomenon of interest is with respect to *skills*, and not simply skill, per se. The use of the word "skill" is relatively stable over the 200 years of published books contained in Google's database; in fact, its usage mostly declined between 1840 and 2019. The trend for the word "skills" is markedly different. The plural form is absent until the 20th century, barely evident until after 1920. Thus, the plural form is significant. It, we believe, suggests "assets in the bank" and not simply "practical knowledge in combination with ability." The move is from one having skill (characterization of a person's work, e.g., skilled carpenter) to one "having skills." "Skills" is the now-preferred nomenclature for discussing labor-power as it functions to mask the origin of value in the labor process itself (and not in capital), setting the stage for rendering all laborers as capitalists (despite owning no means of production).[12]
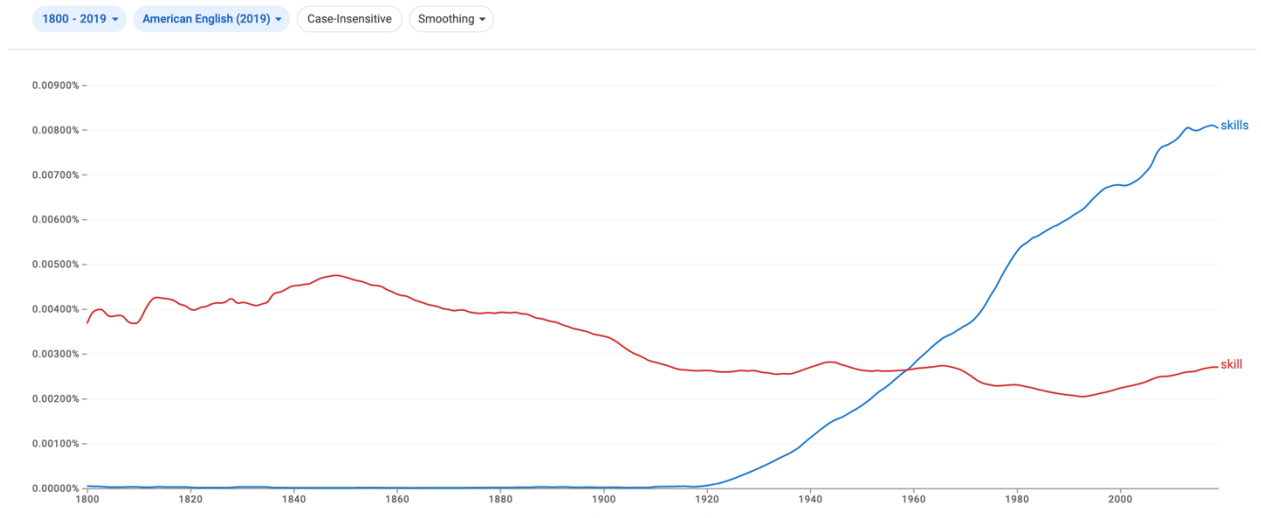
Figure 1: Google Ngram Viewer Comparison of the Singular and Plural Form of "Skill," 1800 – 2019

This newer conception ("skills") refers to tasks that can be performed at a minimal or determined-to-be competent level and includes character traits and social ratings. The metaphor for this notion of skill is not the tradesperson, but rather the machine learning algorithm: the

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[11] Margaret Scotford Archer, *Being Human: The Problem of Agency* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), see chapter 6, "Humanity and Reality: Emotions as Commentaries on Human Concerns," 193-221.
[12] For the classic understanding, see: https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1885-c2/ch20_02.htm#10

neural net can correctly distinguish between apples and oranges 93% of the time = the student can correctly distinguish between apples and oranges 93% of the time = "the student has categorization skills." The metaphor, importantly, is in the direction of *humans* modeling *machine* attempts to *model* humans. On this view, the machine model of cognition and affect is the model to which (most) humans should be adapted, as this best situates them to a machine-mediated world.

Expanding on this line of reasoning, our critique of skills and a proposed alternative draws inspiration from three bodies of literature: (1) critiques of capitalist political economy and associated cultural and political forms accompanying late-capitalist forms of education;[13] (2) conceptions of skill and evaluations of competency-based education and the increasing role data intensive algorithmic technologies play in perpetuating competency-based education;[14] and (3) philosophical investigations into the nature of human agency and consciousness in relation to the development of skillful action.[15]

Origin of Skillsification

While digital technologies and conceptions of artificial intelligence have a much longer history than most realize,[16] skillsification has a long history as well. Figure 1 suggests skills talk began with rise of Taylorism and time-motion studies. The skills talk trend continues through the post-WWII economic boom and increases still more when post-Fordist, human capital ideas were clearly ascendant. The move in focus from "skill" to "skills" is a result of at least two related developments.

The first development is an accounting ideal that tends toward the quantification of everything. Although the "quantification imperative" proceeds capitalist formations, it nevertheless flourishes under them.[17] Weber observes of capitalism: "Exact calculation — the

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[13] Mark J. Garrison, "Resurgent Behaviorism and the Rise of Neoliberal Schooling," in *Handbook of Global Education Reform*, ed. Kenneth Saltman and Alex Means (Hoboken, NY: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018), 323–49; Alexander J. Means, *Learning to Save the Future: Rethinking Education and Work in an Era of Digital Capitalism* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2018); Theodore M. Porter, "Quantification and the Accounting Ideal in Science," *Social Studies of Science* 22, no. 4 (1992): 633–51; Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Routledge, 2001).

[14] Mark J. Garrison, "Confronting the Digital Leviathan in Education: On Cybernetic Pedagogy and Data-Intensive Algorithmic Technologies," in *Handbook of Critical Approaches to Politics and Policy of Education*, ed. Kenneth J. Saltman and Nicole Nguyen (Routledge, 2022), 225–40; Geoffrey Hinchliffe, "Situating Skills," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 36, no. 2 (2002): 187–205; Kamran Khan and Sankaranarayanan Ramachandran, "Conceptual Framework for Performance Assessment: Competency, Competence and Performance in the Context of Assessments in Healthcare — `Deciphering the Terminology," *Medical Teacher* 34, no. 11 (October 8, 2012): 920–28; Artyom Kosmarski, "Blockchain Adoption in Academia: Promises and Challenges," *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity* 6, no. 4 (October 16, 2020): 117; Lemoie and Soares, "Connected Impact"; Preston, *Competence Based Education and Training (CBET) and the End of Human Learning*; Rubí Román, "Micro-Credentials in Education: A Blockchain Application" (*Observatory* | Institute for the Future of Education, July 26, 2021), https://observatory.tec.mx/edu-news/micro-credentials-in-education-a-blockchain-application.

[15] Geoffrey Hinchliffe, "Situating Skills," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 36, no. 2 (2002): 187–205 offers a thorough treatment of the philosopical deadends to which educational analysis of "skills" has tended to lead.

[16] See, Garrison, "Confronting the Digital Leviathan in Education."

[17] Joel Michell, "The Quantitative Imperative: Positivism, Naïve Realism and the Place of Qualitative Methods in Psychology," *Theory & Psychology* 13, no. 1 (2003): 5–31.

basis of everything else — is possible only on the basis of free labor."[18] Such labor is "free" when laborers are kept separate from one another (to preempt collective bargaining and orient production towards piecework). As we shall see, educational adaptations of blockchain are premised on a piecework economy.[19] The capacity of that labor must be calculated, and for this to easily occur, notions of human labor power must be simplified and depoliticized (rendering human capacity as a tool). It is not shocking that as capitalism matured and digital technologies advanced, human performances would be increasingly subject to this accounting logic, that, in essence, human capacity as "skills" would be monetized, and the cost of their production and management a source of profit as "social impact investing."[20] This accounting for and trading of human labor power required a type of reification, where the characterization of a human performance as qualitatively "skilled" leads to it becoming things, "skills," abstracted from human beings. Thus, a simplified and one-sided conception of human capacity results, one that treats this capacity as a mere tool.

Importantly, this drive to quantify human capacity originates in part from capital's drive to reduce the cost of producing labor-power — the second development. The neo-liberal attack on social welfare is an effort to reduce the cost of the production of labor power by, among other things, lowering standards of living and increasing privatization (including education, healthcare, cultural institutions). From the point of view of capital, education is a cost which must be kept to the minimum, or what is now projected as "competency." Education as the development of human power is to be limited to what the market can bear, on the one hand, and suited to the technological restructuring of the economy, on the other. So-called 21st century "skills" evidence a person has been socialized for work in a digitally mediated political economy, including its precarity.

This new socialization demand is directly related to other trends that contribute to skillsification. Key among them are broad changes in the main purpose of education. This shift is characterized as moving from a focus (however limited and limiting) on nation-building and fostering democratic citizenship in the 19th century, to more and more of an emphasis since the latter part of the 20th century on the economic benefits resulting from obtained education credentials. In outlining the argument of his new book, *The Myth of Education as Equalizer*, Jon Shelton summarized the essence of the change that occurred. In the 19th century, he notes, the purpose was not to train future students for jobs, it was about citizenship. "And so, when massive inequality emerged from industrialization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the primary way that working people dealt with that wasn't through arguing for more education; it was through forming labor unions, pushing for reforms that would do everything from reduce child labor to establish workers' compensation." During the 1950s and '60s, the idea of human capital led to the view that "education should do something different, that it should provide the job skills for future working people to be successful." This would, Shelton argued, eliminate the need for social reforms that would reduce profits (e.g., minimum wage, labor rights, progressive taxation). The myth was that education would help to alleviate the inequalities that existed.[21] While Horace

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[18] Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 6.
[19] Veena Dubal, "Digital Piecework," *Dissent Magazine*, October 12, 2020, https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/digital-piecework.
[20] For a critical introduction, see Kenneth J. Saltman, *The Swindle of Innovative Educational Finance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018).
[21] "New Book Argues Education Shouldn't Be the Key to a Job."

Mann made similar arguments,[22] the point about more recent and closer connection between capitalization of education and schooling's turn toward skillsification still stands.

With this shift came an intensified commodification of labor-power, and this is behind much of the skills talk, as is the demand to reduce the costs of its production and upkeep. The AI frenzy is finance capital's means for lowering the value of human labor-power and a mechanism to reduce the quality and extent of what is provided as part of its "upkeep," namely education, healthcare, the natural environment, etc. This intensification entails new arrangements for financialization in the development, trade, and governance of labor-power. Importantly, there is now trading in skills futures and debts incurred in skills development (as securities and wage garnishment) and impact investing in skills development as "solutions" to social problems. That data regarding "skills" is a tradable asset in these myriad ways attests to the significance of these changes, all of which are associated with and to various degrees depend upon blockchain technology.

A final point of origin lies within behaviorist psychology. While certainly not separate from market rationalities, or the purpose given to education, particular conceptions of human psychology have played a very significant role in skillsification. Behaviorist psychology is at the heart of the idea of competency-based (or personalized) education, and behind the idea that education is about getting students to demonstrate competencies. In this view, which predates data intensive algorithmic technologies, skill "is the ability to perform a task to a pre-defined standard of competence." This of course is a very reductive, impersonal, and thus an inaccurate understanding of the complexity and depth of skilled human performance.[23] Advanced capitalism and the radical restructuring of education via data intensive algorithmic technologies requires a narrow and disempowering conception of human capacities. A parallel development to behaviorist psychology was cybernetics. It was concerned principally with human-machine interaction, adopting behaviorist conceptions of control and communication rooted in the dynamics of feedback loops. These models were unmistakably analogies to the "invisible hand," the idea that capitalist markets are naturally self-regulating systems.[24]

Blockchain in Education: The New Digital Tracking Matrix

Narratives used by proponents of blockchain in education are rife with liberatory language. One hears about democracy, security, personal control and convenience. All manner of logistical problems — such as accessing transcripts from shuttered colleges — are used to justify the introduction of blockchain. Yet even a cursory review of the social and educational applications of blockchain reveals a new form of tracking — a digital form of tracking that extends beyond ability grouping and putting students on different educational pathways suited to their "ability." Blockchain is used to record digital assets, not just crypto currency. For example, "The video game industry in coming to rely on blockchain to manage their in-game economies. These token economies are being normalized for children through the widespread adoption of gamified platforms like Class Dojo, ClassCraft, Red Critter, and PBIS."[25]

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[22] Mark J. Garrison, *A Measure of Failure: The Political Origins of Standardized Testing* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2009).

[23] Hinchliffe, "Situating Skills," 189.

[24] Garrison, "Confronting the Digital Leviathan in Education."

[25] Alison Hawver McDowell, "Blockchain Education, a Ticket to Digital Serfdom," *Wrench in the Gears*, September 22, 2020, https://wrenchinthegears.com/2020/09/22/blockchain-education-a-ticket-to-digital-serfdom/.

This tracking system not only includes more information — demographic, behavioral, psychological temperament and disposition, as well as academic history and performance (however reductionist and inaccurate) — but uses the information for objectional purposes. It is important to grasp how the nature of this information and how it is to be used have dramatically shifted towards production and perpetuation of social inequality. That is, what has not shifted is the link between this new tracking system and political, cultural and social disempowerment. In fact, the rise of education via blockchain coincides with historically unprecedented levels of wealth inequality.[26]

Blockchain allows for the ongoing recording of both static (e.g., birth certificate) and fluctuating (e.g., behavioral) data in "real time." Once captured (permanently), this data can be processed by automated algorithms linked to tracking systems which can be integrated into automated decision matrices. These systems, like their predecessors based on IQ tests, are now being tested to both initiate and justify decisions regarding who gets what, where they get it, when they get it, and how they get it. This classic political function of educational assessment[27] has been dramatically expanded with blockchain, and aims to operate at a much larger scale, cover a much broader scope, and do so over a much longer period of an individual's life ("lifelong learning"). Finally, this system is not passive. It functions as a means of governing individual behavior, by way of "nudges," incentives or threats. The entire apparatus is to function as a feedback loop.[28]

At the heart of this blockchain system is the idea of a "digital identity". In the words of parent-activist Alison McDowell:

> Whether we know it or not, when we agree to have our lives linked to blockchain, we are agreeing to live in a behaviorist panopticon. In exchange for convenience and limited privileges, we give up our free will. The future being handed to us is one that will be shaped by surveillance, artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, machine learning, and feedback loops. We risk swapping our vibrant human spirits, beautiful in their passionate creativity and flawed vulnerability, for sanitized digital twins that will be managed as human capital by callous technocrats to profit social impact investors. Before we walk through the door of digital identity, realize it opens onto a maze designed to disorient, confuse, and control us.[29]

Youth and family access to social services and educational opportunities will be determined based on their integration into blockchain identity management systems and successful compliance with system requirements and incentives. Proponents call this a "learning ecosystem" and link it to education in service of the "gig economy" by way of "lifelong learning." These lifelong learning records (e.g., "learning logs") are to be managed via

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[26] "Richest 1% Bag Nearly Twice as Much Wealth as the Rest of the World Put Together over the Past Two Years," *Oxfam International*, February 1, 2023, https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/richest-1-bag-nearly-twice-much-wealth-rest-world-put-together-over-past-two-years.

[27] Garrison, *A Measure of Failure*.

[28] For a discussion of the role of cybernetic logic at the heart of data intensive algorithmic technologies, see Garrison, "Confronting the Digital Leviathan in Education."

[29] McDowell, "Blockchain Education, a Ticket to Digital Serfdom."

blockchain.[30] Blockchain records will be used to "sift and sort children and workers based on demonstrated standardized skills."[31]

Should readers think this critique esoteric or possibly overwrought, we note the following elements of the 2019 NAACP resolution "Opposition to the Use of Black Chain Identity." The resolution states, in part:

> **WHEREAS**, Blockchain technologies are being developed as tools of digital identity management; and
>
> **WHEREAS**, transaction data pertaining to vital records, voting, ownership, healthcare, professional and educational credentials, employment, and financial income can be stored on Blockchain systems; and
>
> **WHEREAS**, global technology interests are placing heavy pressure on governments to scale Blockchain adoption as a financial tool within proposals to privatize public services, including 'Public-Private Partnerships (P3)'; and
>
> **WHEREAS**, governmental interests are exploring the use of 'smart contracts' on Blockchain as a means of delivering public benefits; and
>
> **WHEREAS**, aggregation of an individual's public benefit data within a Blockchain identity system could exacerbate punitive profiling of recipients of services; and
>
> **WHEREAS**, prototypes linking Blockchain systems to profit extraction through social impact investment initiatives have already been developed; and
>
> **WHEREAS**, hundreds of billions of dollars have already been directed into social impact investments by the world's most powerful individuals and financial institutions; and
>
> **WHEREAS**, consolidation of personal data in Blockchain identity systems will position the global poor who receive benefits via smart contracts to become data backbones upon which "impact" metrics would rest, in effect amplifying investment wealth of elite investors on the backs of vulnerable communities; …
>
> **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the NAACP opposes any state or federal legislation that would require an individual to create a Blockchain identity in order to receive any public services or benefits, including but not limited to: education, healthcare, addiction treatment, behavioral health services, law enforcement, housing, and/or food and nutrition.[32]

The blockchain revolution offers a capitalist-inspired reconstruction of schooling. The very name of the system — blockchain — indicates conception of education as a compendium (chain)

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[30] Patrick Ocheja et al., "Managing Lifelong Learning Records through Blockchain," *Research and Practice in Technology Enhanced Learning* 14, no. 1 (December 2019), https://doi.org/10.1186/s41039-019-0097-0.

[31] Alison Hawver McDowell, "Mother of Conscience Gets Bumped by Social Innovators for Explaining How Children Will Be Securitized on Blockchain," *Wrench in the Gears*, March 24, 2023, https://wrenchinthegears.com/2023/03/24/mother-of-conscience-gets-bumped-by-social-innovators-for-explaining-how-children-will-be-securitized-on-blockchain/.

[32] "Opposition to the Use of Black [sic] Chain Identity," NAACP [The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People], January 1, 2019, https://naacp.org/resources/opposition-use-black-chain-identity.

of discrete elements (blocks) strung together as learners progress through schooling or gigs. Through technologies such as "badging" and micro credentials, the Internet is programmed to determine and record the determined value — from birth certificates to school transcripts, credit histories, eligibility for government services and skills badges — and anything else expressible in computer code. The blockchain has been described as a "*Ledger of Everything.*"[33]

While the above offers only a summary of concerns that have been raised about blockchain and its application to education, few have directly challenged a key building block of this application: the assumption that knowledge is reducible to its simplest component parts, that human ability is merely a collection of discrete, behaviorally manifest "skills." Blockchain technology requires human capacity be rendered as "parts" that can only exist as recorded behavior. As such, the behaviorist conception of "skills" dominates, including the idea that social and emotional expression only exist as skills. Blockchain technologies thus enforce conceptions of skill that are inaccurate, philosophically untenable, and ideologically retrogressive. Countering blockchain in education, then, requires more than exposing nefarious political and economic interests — it requires philosophical critique.

An Adverbial Theory of "Skills"

Buttressed by critique of capitalist-inspired rendering of skill, the main purpose of this paper is to present an alternative to the dominant conception of skills, one that simultaneously challenges category mistakes and ontological error and advocates for the significance of skilled social action and the role of education in fostering such action beyond employment goals. The thesis is that there is no such thing as "skills," only things done more or less, skillfully. The error is a kind of category mistake. The category mistake is treating "skills" as a substantive, when what "skill" and cognates of "skills" perform in language is an adverbial and aesthetic function. One cannot have skills like one can have clothes.

Long before the blockchain revolution, but in a decade deepening commitment to skills talk in education, exasperated, philosopher of education Deron Boyles published "An Argument for the Deletion of the Word "Skills" from the English Language."[34] This was in 1993! The source of Boyles' frustration? The ubiquity of skills in education discourse. Appended to everything from "play" to "language acquisition" to "computation" and "critical thinking", "skills" serves as a handy-dandy, all-purpose, sure-fire add-on to anything education. Skills, as Boyles sees it, has become "an enacted *non sequitur* where purposes are shrouded in vague assumptions rather than used to define specific issues"[35] "[I]n order to bureaucratically notate objectives 'met'," Boyles continues, "educators pander to a technorational hierarchy by qualifying their intent and ability to reflect a language of economics." "The problem," Boyles concludes, "is situated with the increasing number of educators who do not make the distinction between education as a process of engaged inquiry rather than education as a static place for indoctrination."[36]

On Boyles' reading, skills may be seen to function in education discourse more like a language particle than a part of language. For instance, skills may function as a discourse

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[33] Don Tapscott and Alex Tapscott, *Blockchain Revolution: How the Technology behind Bitcoin and Other Cryptocurrencies Is Changing the World*, Reprint edition (Portfolio, 2018).

[34] Boyles, "An Argument for the Deletion of the Word 'Skills' from the English Language."

[35] Boyles, 95.

[36] Boyles, 97.

particle. Discourse particles flavor sentences as regards tone or attitude, but do not affect the grammatical structure of sentences. So, for example, when we say things like, "<u>Now</u>, where were we?" or "<u>Well</u>, what have we here." or "<u>Phew!</u> That was a close one." or "What *are* you saying, <u>then</u>?" we express attentiveness, puzzlement, relief, and impatience, respectively; but the sentences all stand perfectly well on their own without the added 'tude.

Skills may work similarly as a marker of importance or *gravitas* associated with an educational topic under consideration. Considered as a discourse particle, "skills" certainly deserves the death Boyles advises. When "skills," is applied as a discourse particle to "math" or "listening" or "decision-making", etc., all that is being said is that math, listening, decision-making, or whatnot are important to some context of consideration. Or, as Boyles summarizes the situation, the subject under consideration is given "a nebulous nod of approval."[37] If that's all there is to "skills" then Boyles is right to counsel deletion. Further, if Boyles is right that in characterizing learners as skillful, skill binds education to some system of collection of competency certificates, not only can we get along without "skills," but we will also be better off when we stop using the word. However, eliminating use of a word without coming to terms with the underlying philosophical problem associated with it seems unwise. Certainly, use of "skills" in educational discourse has become problematic in ways Boyles describes. However, we wish to suggest a use of *skill* that need not be perceived as limiting education solely to a system of certified and digitally recorded competencies. Developing that expanded sense of skill begins with giving a slightly different account of the economic origins of an educational discourse of "skills."

Educators who speak in terms of "skills" are not merely pandering in economic language. They are working in a superstructural context of capitalism that pushes everything, including education, towards assessment in quantitative terms, preferably quantitative terms alone. What has happened to the word "skill" during its development in education-speak into the word "skills" is not so much that it has become meaningless but that qualitative aspects of skill, those aspects we refer to when we ask, for instance, how skillfully someone has accomplished something, have been squeezed out of account.

Skills have certainly become more salable; but not necessarily more useful. This has led to two unfortunate ideas in schooling: 1) the possession of skills is a matter of mere competency/competencies, like having "assets in the bank" and 2) developing skills means having a wide range of behavioral competencies, possession of which is typically marked by certifications achieved via testing or some, in principle, similar ordeal. This dynamic leads to overuse of the questionable pluralized form, "skills," derived from the original, singular form, "skill." Quality has given way to competence; one can perform an action but not have done so skillfully. To get past these impoverished understandings of education we explore a way to return qualitative significance to our understanding of "skill" as *the quality of an enacted human ability*. Restoration of qualitative content to the idea of skill (The plural form is a quantitative reduction.) permits us, in turn, to restore the distinction between education as indoctrination and education as inquiry, but in an inclusive rather than a dichotomous way.

As things stand, however, skills are like tools and machines (which are related to autonomous systems). Tools and machines are used to accomplish tasks. So, with "skills" theory, these "tools" — cognitive and affective — are being abstracted from the worker, and made into a

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[37] Boyles, 98.

tradable commodity, including trading in futures in the form of data about "skills." One acquires skills (tools) and renders their value through market exchange (which requires quantification). But control over the skills does not reside with the person. Skills become property of employers; the idea is, now, relationships between employed and employer are navigated via blockchain. "Skills" are given as abstracted from human persons. What you know is reduced to documented certifications of competencies achieved, while your own claims to know are made irrelevant because undocumented. Some see this development as an existential threat to humanity because memory moves outside persons and becomes something more akin to a "chain of events" controlled and nudged by institutional documentation. This leaves us in the situation Boyles describes: Education enacting a scholasticism of skills and a medievalism of the mundane.

Education is much better served by schooling focused through an aesthetic of the developmental journey of mastery. Focus on considerations of mastery enjoins schooling to consider quality of learning beyond competency expressed by passing a test. Better to discover elements in learning environments and processes of schooling that promote learning to perform educationally important tasks skillfully than settle for lessons that present students with skills to be learned only competently. (We might speculate that the plural form of the word is associated with an overall decline in the value of education as a foundational cultural activity.) Discovery of those elements will create criteria by which to judge the value and quality of learning in any environment. Can these be meaningfully captured in terms of blockchains?

Understanding the problem of skills as an artifact of capitalist quantification, the educational commitment to skills talk is the problem of returning qualitative meaning to the idea of skill. Skill might be more like "fish" than like "dollar", where the plural form makes an obvious difference. To have skill in a domain — "She is a very skilled musician." — entails those things which comprise the domain. That she knows her scales, reads music well, and can execute changes in volume and speed of performance with ease would all be assumed by use of the singular form, skill. "Music skills" adds nothing — other than the pedagogy of education by way of discrete skill drill. If our pianist was lacking in something central to the domain, we would not designate her as being a skilled musician, but a novice or developing one. Similarly, if the musician performed each of these components only competently, we would also deny her the status of "skillful" musician. Breaking musicianship down into all its elements — into its "skill set," or, more precisely, its connoted set of human abilities — can be a useful exercise, but disassembled, one cannot understand what a skilled musician is. As Goethe remarks: "When scholars study a thing, they strive/ to kill it first, if it's alive;/ then they have the parts and they've lost the whole,/ for the link that's missing was the living soul" (*Faust*, Part I, lines 1934-1939).

Skill is a type; skills is a quantity.[38] Thus, resolution of the problem posed by use of "skills" in education discourse cannot be achieved by banning use of the word. (Although we, like Boyles, recommend the practice of *not* using it!) The possibility of returning a qualitative dimension to skill is better actualized by treating skill as a different kind of language particle, an adverbial particle. Adverbial particles modify verbs, expanding meaning by adding extended detail to the action. Adverbial particles often appear in English in the form of phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs are constructs like "driving along" or "eating up." These idioms attach a kind of normalcy to the act of driving or suggest an intensity in the act of eating.

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[38] Stergios Chatzikyriakidis and Zhaohui Luo, "Adjectival and Adverbial Modification: The View from Modern Type Theories," *Journal of Logic, Language and Information* 26, no. 1 (2017): 45–88.

Understanding "skill" as an adverbial particle makes it possible to say there's no such things as skills. There are only things accomplished more or less skillfully. Call this the adverbial theory of skills. When teachers say things like, "We are working on our math skills," what they are (and should be) saying is: "We are seeking to become more skillful mathematicians." It is the quality of mathematical reasoning to which skills refers, not some combination of discrete mathematical competencies. Same with any word or phrase to which skill is appended. Quality of performance is the central concern of adverbially construed skill. On an adverbial view of skill, the business of education is not adding competencies *ad infinitum* to student resumés. Rather, it is about making students skillful beyond mere competence, beyond, essentially, just being able to "do".

In its most developed form education is a matter of turning novices into experts. When "skill" is taken as an adverb it becomes a part of speech that modifies an action. Thus, skill cannot be divorced from the use of means to achieve the end of the action it modifies. Considered as an adverb, skill becomes a range of descriptors between, say, clumsy and deft. Also, as inherently action-oriented, an adverbial understanding of skill cannot be divorced from contexts in which the action modified by skill is undertaken.[39] Finally, on an adverbial theory of skill, schooling becomes understood as motivated by the idea that action can be modified via planned experience. Successful education modifies performance of action so that the performance of it is increasingly subject to favorable evaluation in terms of skill, i.e., how skillfully the student performs an action. Education is not so much about how many blocks you've chained together. Education is more a matter of how many blocks you've been around.

Still, there is a matter of what looks to be a legitimately substantive use of skills. When skills are considered in terms of something like "the smallest component parts of actions," "skills" (or "skill sets") seems to refer to a noun. Boyles offers a good defense against this observation. Using the example of intellectualism, Boyles concedes that "intellectualism depends, in part, on communication, reading, writing, listening, etc." However, that relation of dependence need not be one of composition. It might be one more like implication or *entailment*. If you are going to do action "x" then you also must be able to perform actions "y" and "z" (such as noted above in terms of a musician).

On an adverbial theory of skill, the additional argument can be made that whatever the relation between lower-level and higher-level skills may be, any substantive use of skill is haunted by the question of quality. Whenever a substantive skill — size doesn't matter — is attributed to an individual, a question of quality of attribution is ineradicably raised. Whenever a skill is put to use, we will want to know, not just the detailed description of the skill, but the quality of its application in a specific case.[40]

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[39] For more on this situated notion, see: Hinchliffe, "Situating Skills." Collapse of the act/object distinvction seems a *sine qua non* for sucessful use of adverbial theory. See Alan Thomas, "An Adverbial Theory of Consciousness," *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 2, no. 3 (September 1, 2003): 161–85. Failure completely to collapse the act/object distinction in sensory expereicne is the nemesis of adverbial theories of perception. See Michael Tye, "The Adverbial Approach to Visual Experience," *The Philosophical Review* 93, no. 2 (1984): 195–225; E. W. Van Steenburgh, "Adverbial Sensing," *Mind: A Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy* 96, no. 383 (1987): 376–80; and Ran Lahav, "An Alternative to the Adverbial Theory: Dis-Phenomenalism," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 50, no. 3 (1990): 553-68.

[40] The argument here may find a useful analogy in G. E. Moore's open question argument from his *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 1903).

Reliance on competence, as a measure of skillfulness, offers no hope here. First, it is question begging to define competence independently of context of action. Passing a test may show only a student is a competent test-taker, not that the student is "competent" in the subject being tested. (Note, too, that competence often is simply a stipulation of how many test items were answered correctly.) Context of action is part of the measure of competence. Second, like skills, competencies are neutral as measures of quality. Competencies are minimalist descriptions of how skillfully tasks are performed. While skillful work is, by definition, *competent work, competent work is not necessarily work skillfully accomplished*. Indeed, work merely competent in its level of accomplishment often implies, as noted above, lack of skillfulness in its completion. To borrow an old saw: "A jack-of-all-trades does not a master make." While the block chain may be good at creating jacks-of-all-trades, it is not so good at making masters. But the real point is the way in which the now dominant view of skills pushes a problematic, solely quantitative notion of how we should understand activated human ability.

In contrast to quantitative understanding of human behavior, quality permeates human activity on an adverbial theory of "skills." We may even concede the existence of something substantive to which "skill" may refer, something like component or entailed abilities, and the adverbial function of skill remain intact. Admitting a substantive sense of skill as connoted behavior permits description of education as a two-part process of, in alphabetical order, indoctrination and inquiry. Indoctrination may be said of things like learning conventions — substantive bodies of fact, proven methodological tools, etc. — associated with a subject matter or activity. Inquiry may be said of learning to use and learning to develop/design/critique conventions in a subject matter or area. Inquiry demands you put conventions to use, more or less skillfully, — either in completing a study of a topic in a subject matter or suggesting changes to subject matter conventions — in ways that qualitatively strengthen, deepen, affirm, expand, rectify, etc., the field/area of study.

This is just to restate the age-old distinction between knowing-that and knowing-how, between propositional knowledge and generative knowledge, between remembering facts and coming up with good ways to get new ones. But it helps make clear for educators the distinction, per Boyles' apropos but uncritical invocation of two approaches to schooling, between education as indoctrination and education as engaged inquiry. However, on an ontology that admits the existence of substantive skills understood as connoted abilities, educators must know the difference between indoctrination and inquiry, must know when they are doing one, the other, or some combination of both, and must skillfully teach students both conventions and intelligent use of conventions in contexts of student work. [41] To express both these aspects of education we suggest use in education parlance of the word "smarts" rather than the word "skills."

The Movement from "Skills" to "Smarts"

We make the recommendation about using "smarts" as an alternative expression to "skills" in awareness of evidence that, as currently used in school contexts, "smarts" (and the related idea of "smartness") is embedded in an ideological system of social control seemingly intractably supportive of classism, racism, and sexism. As Beth Hatt observes: "How smartness is defined

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[41] See Kamran Khan and Sankaranarayanan Ramachandran, "Conceptual Framework for Performance Assessment" who distinguish between two differenct processes, observation of performance (competence) and assessment of performance (competency), as a way of addressing concerns of quality in tracking what they call students' "progression of skills (920)."

within schools contributes to low academic achievement by poor and racial/ethnic students."
Jordan Corson puts Hatt's point more generally when he remarks that what is taught and learned
in schools stands in direct relationship to the structure of society in which the schooling takes
place.[42] What must not be kept unsaid about this line of investigation into discriminatory uses of
"smarts," however, is that its primary import is to show that "smarts" is a cultural construct not a
biological certainty or social destiny.[43] This means that schools are sites for the negotiation of
smartness.[44] The basis of those negotiations is competing value systems between schools and
students, a process of negotiation sometimes productive of student resistance to perceived
mechanisms of control, especially when exercised along class/race/sex/gender/etc., lines.[45]

"Smarts" provides a normative core to schooling.[46] First, the way "smarts" gets defined in
some school context or other tells you what bodies of knowledge are valued by that school.
Second, how a school goes about deciding what gets defined as "smarts" tells you who is of
value in the school. Schools are subject to criticism as centers of ideological thinking because
schools tend to define "smarts" independently of the life circumstances of their students. This
seems a likely source of the traditional disconnect between inert school smarts — skills? —and
agentic street smarts.[47]

Another way "smarts" provides a normative core to schooling, particularly in schools as we
know them, is that "smartness" gets articulated in terms of capitalist values when "smarts" is
understood like "skills," as competencies, as commodities one owns. Substantive accounts of
"smarts" project a proprietary notion of "smartness."[48] On this proprietary definition of "smarts"
the whole issue surrounding the adverbial theory of "skills" breaks out again. The issue may be
resolved, again, by noting that "smarts" is at least as adverbial as "skills." "Smartness" is not a
property one has. "Smarts" is an event one helps make happen. To say someone *has* smarts is to
refer, not to a property of that person, but to the strength of that person's capacity to contribute
intelligently to achievement of desired outcomes in some context of action.

Consider the case of "smart technology." Its "smartness" consists in a limited number of
functions it performs (We hope!) competently. No determinate thinking going on with smart
technology. A *caveat* as old as computers themselves warns: "Computers never do what you

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[42] Beth Hatt, "Street Smarts vs. Book Smarts: The Figured World of Smartness in the Lives of Marginalized, Urban
Youth," *The Urban Review* 39, no. 2 (June 2007), 145. DOI: 10.1007/s11256-007-0047-9 Jordan Corson, "Schools
of the Walking Dead: Schools, Societies, Smartness, and Educational Sanctuary," *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*
37, no. 2 (2022): 32-43. See, also, Hatt's editor's introduction to a special issue of *Race Ethnicity and Education* at
Beth Hatt, "Racializing Smartness," *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 19, no. 6 (2016): 1141-1148, DOI:
10.1080/13613324.2016.1168537
[43] Beth Hatt, "Smartness as Cultural Practice in Schools," *American Educational Research Journal* 49, no. 3 (June,
2012): 438-460. DOI: 10.3102/0002831211415661 and Helena Korp, "What Counts as Being Smart Around Here?
The Performance of Smartness and Masculinity in Vocational Upper Secondary Education," *Citizenship and Social
Justice* 6, no. 1 (2011): 21-27. DOI: 10.1177/17461979103979
[44] Ulla Lundqvist, "The Burden of Smartness: Teacher's Pet and Classmates' Teasing in a Danish Classroom,"
Linguistics and Education 52 (2019): 24-32.
[45] Pamela Twyman Hoff, "'Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me': African American Students'
Reclamation of Smartness as Resistance," *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 19, no. 6 (2016): 1200-1208, DOI:
10.1080/13613324.2016.1168542 and Hatt, "Smartness as Cultural Practice in Schools."
[46] Zeus Leonardo and Alicia A. Broderick, "Smartness as Property: A Critical Exploration of Intersections between
Whiteness and Disability Studies," *Teachers College Record* 113, no. 10 (October, 2011): 2206-2232.
[47] Hatt, "Street Smarts vs. Book Smarts."
[48] Leonardo and Broderick, "Smartness as Property."

want them to, only what you tell them to." "Smarts" is not "many types of smart." Smarts is an orientation, as opposed to a collection. Skill may be presented as many (types of) skills; but "smarts" refers to a disposition towards the acquisition and application of knowledge; and re-centers persons' actions in reference to their own interests. Skills may be made transferable and something that can be abstracted from persons for the benefit of someone else; but smarts is embedded in persons and their culture(s).

The normative core of schooling changes fundamentally when "smarts" gets defined in ways that create an adverbial counter-hegemony to oppressively reified conceptual systems presently operative in schools. As Billye Sankofa Waters correctly observes, "It is imperative to explore multiple approaches to intelligence and public education that fundamentally integrate the ideas and lived experiences of students – with particular interest to those who are most disenfranchised."[49] First, following Waters' advice makes clear to students that what they know and what they need to know are of value to the school. Second, when student concerns are fully integrated into curriculum delivery school becomes a source of support rather than a confrontational social structure. Third, connecting school knowledge to life circumstances of students adds an agentic edge to school smarts. Students may now put intelligently to use in their lives lessons they have learned at school. On Waters' vision of schooling, schools offer not a preset list of competencies to own independently of life circumstances but a set of life problems to master by use of lessons learned at school. On this model, schooling becomes a critique of the social structure, an institution oriented away from exclusionary definitions of knowledge and towards inclusive ones, a process oriented away from a proprietary understanding of education and towards a participatory one. School is not to be thought of as a place where individuals earn competencies. School is a place where students become skillful in working with others to decide together how to make life better.

Where "smarts in x" is understood as something like "self- or group-generated, intelligent use of knowledge, both propositional and generative, in x", then concerns about quality imbue acts of learning. The aim of schooling is to learn how to put curricular materials intelligently to use. Intelligent use of what you know is a sign of mastery or skillfulness not mere competence. True, there may come a day when online simulations are so similar to life circumstances that the blockchain will be able to claim more than competence. But even in that case, education, in its engaged inquiry sense, will continue to involve learners more significantly than simulations in skillfully meeting, assessing, and resolving real-life problems.

As John Preston has observed, the focus on competence is an existential threat to human learning.[50] Concrete alternatives to this conception are required to confront this crisis. Educators are often caught up in conventional, uncritical discourse arguing for their favored approach or reform based on the claim that it, and not some other method, produces desired "skills" (whether "soft" or "hard," "low-level" or "high-level"). The adverbial theory of skill turns us away from quantitative consideration of "skills" and towards qualitative consideration of "skill." Thus, an adverbial understanding of "skill(s)" has profound implications for how education is conceived and evaluated. Emphasis on masterful use of course material focuses schooling on matters of personal and cultural development. Emphasis on competency as the mark of acquired "skills"

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[49] Billye Sankofa Waters, "Freedom Lessons: Black Mothers Asserting *Smartness* of Their Children," *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 19, no. 6 (2016): 1223-1235. DOI: 10.1080/13613324.2016.1168545

[50] Preston, *Competence Based Education and Training (CBET) and the End of Human Learning: The Existential Threat of Competency*.

undercuts considerations of quality of schooling in favor of quantity of schooling. In turn, insistence on the exactitude of calculation necessitates a view of education as the accumulation of decontextualized, disembodied, and transferable skills. At best, blockchain approaches enforce an aesthetic of mediocrity on education. Not surprisingly, in this case too, market values drive out other values. They "block" quality schooling and "chain" learning to capitalist ends. Education is better served by schooling focused through an aesthetic of skillful action in service of human flourishing.

Review of Jakubowski, C. T. (2021).
***A Cog in the Machine: Creating YOUR Own Story!* (EduMatch)**

Max Jacobs
Rutgers University

Abstract: Jakubowski presents teachers, especially preservice teachers, with a narrative of just about everything that can go wrong when initiating a teaching career. However, that narrative of stress and struggle backgrounds a message of resourcefulness and resilience. The book urges teachers to take charge of their positionality as cogs in the schooling machine to work towards systemic improvement in schools. Inspirational in its intent, the book could be bolstered by more detailed discussion of strategies useful in realizing the systemic changes it recommends.

Part journal, part narrative, part analysis, *A Cog in the Machine: Creating YOUR Own Story!* traces Casey T. Jakubowski's personal story while offering in-text questions for guidance and reflection for others entering the teaching profession. Jakubowski prompts the future teachers reading the book to interrogate their place as a cog in the modern schooling machine. Three steps are outlined for them to do so: 1) Open a new document or buy a journal; 2) Engage in the thought exercises (i.e., allow opening questions to guide, answer ending questions to reflect); and 3) Write why you (the reader) are reading the book. Ultimately, *A Cog in the Machine* connects identity, place, and professional pursuit of teaching to provide a way for future teachers to circumvent burnout and thrive on their why.

The book's structure follows Jakubowski's narrative journey. The first third sketches the history of New York, the Jakubowski family history, and Jakubowski's early childhood and adolescence, and ends with a poignant reflection on four types of bullies (unaware, unwise, outlashing, and outcast). The second third of the book surveys Jakubowski's formative years as a college student at Fredonia College, the perils and excitement of student teaching, landing his first teaching job, and the pressing burnout of the early years of teaching. Post-divorce and mental health struggles, Jakubowski joined the 50% of teachers who burn out and leave the profession. Jakubowski, however, did not leave Education. Instead, he refocused and reengaged in his own schooling and earned a master's degree. Working as an adjunct at three different schools teaching courses in Social Studies Education and Teacher Education, Jakubowski assisted preservice teachers as they honed their craft. The final third of the book details Jakubowski's career as a New York State Education official, describes his pernicious battle with Imposter Syndrome, and traces his turn to (and completion of) PhD research with a specific focus on rural education and school improvement. The book, then, ends with a reflection on how crafting a narrative journey helped him. Equipped with a clear sense of why one is a teacher, with care for students, and with a dedication to the profession, Jakubowski encourages future teachers who read the book to write their own narrative journey so they too can reflect on their experiences as a teacher and strengthen connections among their identity, place, and vocation. Doing so, Jakubowski argues, will help them maintain balance if and when they face the fiery pit of teacher burnout.

For future teachers especially, the book stands out for three reasons. First, the emphasis on identity and place as one prepares to become a teacher is vitally important. The profession of teaching is intimately personal. Before a teacher teaches, they should take time to ground

themselves by reflecting on where they come from and who they are. The guiding and reflecting questions throughout the book provide the future teacher an excellent roadmap with many examples of good turns to take and dead-end avenues to avoid. Second, the book itself morphs into a pedagogical tool. If used in a teacher preparation course, enlightening class discussions will emerge as students and teachers interrogate the questions posed by the book and compare their own narrative journeys with Jakubowski's. Third, writing a narrative journey opens the possibility for future and present teachers to see the waters they swim in. Understanding the waters in which they swim helps teachers not only set realistic expectations for their professional lives but also helps them brace for future hurricanes.

Two things, however, would improve the book. First, the use of capital letters is overwhelming. Jakubowski's energy can be felt in the words, sentence structure, and stories he tells. As a result, the use of all capital letters comes off as jarringly unnecessary. Second, it is imperative that future teachers recognize their place as a cog in the schooling machine. But it is equally important for future teachers to understand *how* to buck the machine from the positionality of a cog. In covert and overt ways, teachers can disrupt, challenge, and organize to change the modern schooling machine. For example, they can practice fugitive pedagogy, they can teach books that highlight collective action over biographical admiration, and they can invite (reasonable) controversy and (non-violent) conflict into their classrooms to challenge the status quo. While Jakubowski nails the why, the book critically misses the how. A cog is not deterministically bound to uncritically work within the machine. Rather cogs can (and should) use their function to challenge and attempt to dismantle the machine in which they work.

Despite these two limitations, *A Cog in the Machine* stands as an excellent addition to any syllabus for teacher preparation courses.

Educational Abundance

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