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Keynote Address

Out of the Classroom and into the Streets: What Movements Teach Us about Learning and Struggling Toward Justice

Krystal Strong
Rutgers University

Abstract: Organized action aimed at achieving social justice expressed in sustained efforts such as Black Lives Matter and the Movement for Black Lives focuses our attention on the generative knowledge and world-building projects that organizers are cultivating through their collective political labors. Social movements offer a liberatory blueprint of radical thought and imaginative praxis for how we continue to struggle through the despair of our times. In social movements, we find alternative models of *being* in community and engaging together in struggle, and of visioning and enacting more just worlds through practices of collective learning that aim to shift consciousness and, ultimately, catalyze material action. For these reasons, we also find in social movements the shared will and a growing capacity to continue to fight against oppressive regimes until *we* win.

Over the past decade, we have witnessed a persistent onslaught of attempts to undo the gains made by struggles to achieve racial and educational justice through abolitionist organizing within and beyond schools. In K-12 and higher education, these attacks have included anti-Black and anti-trans legislation (Fields, 2023; George, 2021; *Human Rights Watch*, 2024; Nakajima & Jin, 2022), book bans (Alter, 2024), and the stifling of academic freedom, free speech, and the right to protest egregious acts of state violence and genocide (*StudentNation*, 2024). First, they came for Critical Race Theory (Schwartz, 2021). Then, they came for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Now, even being "woke" has become a dog whistle for attacks against racial justice (Watson, 2024). What are we to do in the face of organized backlash, which works to narrow the terrain of struggle and foreclose avenues of redress? What *can* be done?

My work over the past two decades as a community organizer, most recently in the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) grassroots campaigns challenging state violence against Black communities, has illuminated limitations of engaging transformative movements struggling towards justice as merely "moments" or "moods" (Strong et al., 2023, p. S3). Instead, focusing attention on generative knowledge and world-building projects organizers are cultivating through their collective political labors, social movements offer a liberatory blueprint of radical thought and imaginative praxis of how we continue to struggle through the despair of our times. In social movements, we find alternative models of *being* in community and engaging together in struggle, of visioning and enacting more just worlds through practices of collective learning that aim to shift consciousness and, ultimately, catalyze material action.

As a scholar-organizer theorizing at times from my position within social movements and, in other moments, from a position of community solidarity, I work to amplify the theory and praxis of global Black social movements on their own terms — not to make these fugitive acts legible to the academy, but practicable within and beyond the campus-movement boundary. My efforts have included investigations of movement learning practices such as popular education campaigns within historic and emerging African liberation struggles (Strong & Nafziger, 2021), political education strategies in the Movement for Black Lives in the U.S. (Nafziger et al., 2023; Strong, Ndgo et al., 2022), and collaborative experiments in solidarity within and across movements (Rogers et al., 2023; Strong, Nafziger et al., 2022). These movement-generated

learning practices are most often constituted by those historically marginalized and pushed out of academic institutions that function as an occupying force and driver of state abandonment (Baldwin, 2021). My discussion here of the role of organizers as educators, intellectuals, and pedagogues, refuses the forms of misrecognition that render illegible the abundant modes of intellectual practice held in Black organizing communities — and instead considers what social movements might teach the field of education about learning and struggling toward justice.

Movement Knowledge

Perhaps the tyranny of the present has allowed us to forget that it is *organizers* we must thank for shifting academic discourse toward closer attention to state violence, anti-Blackness, and racial capitalism as frames of political analysis and redress. As the late education scholar-activist Aziz Choudry reminds us, it is critically important that we examine the intellectual life of contemporary movements if we want to understand the forms and pedagogies of learning and knowledge that are produced within and through political struggle (Choudry, 2015). Drawing on previous analysis of the theory and praxis of Black Lives Matter (Strong et al., 2023), I present three movement artifacts that exemplify the intellectual leadership of social movement actors in knowledge creation from the vantage point of lived experience to transform structural conditions materially. Given its formation around extrajudicial murders of Black people, Black Lives Matter (BLM) is rightfully credited with mainstreaming "state violence" as a discursive register for naming how anti-Black racism results in Black people's disproportionate experiences of "premature death" (Gilmore, 2007). Less appreciated are the knowledge production practices that contributed to this discursive shift. The 2012 report *Operation Ghetto Storm*, released by the U.S. Black liberation organization, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, and circulated within radical movements circles, represents a critical source of movement knowledge (Eisen, 2014), which played a vital role in shaping our current discourse. Released between the first appearance of the BLM hashtag and the formation of the BLM organization, the report, in the tradition of Ida B. Wells' pioneering documentation of post-Reconstruction lynchings, documented the extrajudicial killings of more than three hundred Black people by police, security guards, and vigilantes (1997). The report's unflinching analysis is but one example of the significance of knowledge production within Black grassroots organizing praxis in theorizing state violence and making it visible.

Focused critique and political action against anti-Blackness have also been central to the political and ideological contributions of the Movement for Black Lives. On February 26, 2017, the fifth anniversary of the murder of Trayvon Martin, a Black teenager murdered as he walked home from a convenience store, BLM launched the #TrayvonTaughtMe social media campaign to amplify how "Trayvon's extrajudicial murder …catalyzed a generation of organizers and activists to take action for Black lives" (Black Lives Matter 2017, p. 2) — and, we might add, also inspired a generation of educators and scholars to write and teach about it. Released as tool kits for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and Other People of Color) organizers, white people, and Spanish speakers, #TrayvonTaughtMe distilled lessons learned from Martin's death and the struggle for justice that ensued: namely, that "anti-Blackness is pervasive and implicit" (1). BLM organizers insist that broad analyses of racism are often limited in their capacity to assess, with precision, the specific structures imperiling the lives of Black people, historically and contemporarily. In this sense, too, BLM has sharpened our attention to patterns of anti-Blackness and their varied historical instantiations, spurring the salience of anti-Blackness as a concept within public discourse and, indeed, scholarship and practice within the field of education.

In June 2021, in commemoration of the first anniversary of the murder of George Floyd and the centennial of the "state-sponsored bombing" of the Greenwood community of Tulsa, Oklahoma, then popularly known as "Black Wall Street," BLM released a statement demanding reparations "for all Black people" as redress for the "full range of past and ongoing harms against Black people" (Black Lives Matter, 2021, para. 2-5). Recognizing the extensive history of reparations movements across the African Diaspora, BLM's insistence that without reparations structural discrimination will "continue to thrive" represents a coherent shift in the movement to a sharper analysis of the economic foundations of anti-Black racism and state violence — as well as the evolving formation of an abolitionist vision for what it will take to undo these realities, including material recompense for historical and continuing structural violence (para. 2). In a 2023 special issue of *Comparative Education Review,* which I co-edited, comparative and international education scholars expound further on the significance of this turn toward political economic analyses of racial capitalism and its implications for abolitionist practice and reparative justice in education (Walker et al., 2023).

Though I am writing from my vantage point within the Movement for Black Lives, which is an archive of collective memory for all of us living through the past decade of struggle, rebellion, and reprisal, I want to be clear, as organizers themselves are, that the intellectual labor and inventive learning practices we see modeled in recent movements, is an extension of a longer history and practice of critical consciousness-building among Black activists referred to most commonly as the Black Radical Tradition. Scholars have theorized the Black Radical Tradition as the "revolutionary consciousness that proceeded from the whole historical experience of Black people" (Robinson, 2000, p. 169). From Pan-African struggles against slavery, colonialism, and imperialism to movements against segregation, mass incarceration, and extrajudicial killings of Black people today, the Black Radical Tradition is an intellectual and political inheritance "over generations of collective intelligence gathered from struggle" (Robinson, 2000, p. xxx). Black movements *learned* through struggle what are the sources of their oppression and what are successful strategies of resistance**.**

Assata Taught Us

Countless known and unknown Black women activists have contributed to the Black Radical Tradition, from Ida B. Wells and her Black women's club movement to Ella Baker's decades of activism in Black freedom movements. Baker, in particular, continues as a reference point for BLM's embrace of horizontal leadership or "leaderfulness" (Taylor, 2016). Through her political imprisonment and writings, which are central to the canon of abolitionist thought, the work of Angela Y. Davis (2003, p. 103) draws critical attention to relationships between prisons, white supremacy, and, thus, Black liberation, noting "racism hides from view within institutional structures, and its most reliable refuge is the prison system." Davis joins an indispensable group of revolutionary Black "imprisoned intellectuals" (James, 2004) — including Malcolm X, Assata Shakur, George Jackson, Huey P. Newton, and Mumia Abu Jamal, among many others — whose revolutionary activism and political thought have fundamentally shaped the consciousness and organizing strategies of the Movement for Black Lives.

It is from Assata Shakur's 1973 statement, "To My People," written while imprisoned after her arrest by New Jersey police, that "Assata's chant," the unofficial call-and-response of Black Lives Matter, was culled. The chant, collectively repeated from a whisper to a rousing shout, instructs:

It is our duty to fight for our freedom.
It is our duty to win.
We must love each other and support each other.
We have nothing to lose but our chains.

Elsewhere in the statement, Shakur writes (para. 14-17, emphasis added): "Black people must *learn how to struggle by struggling*. […] Black revolutionaries do not drop from the moon. We are created by our conditions. Shaped by our oppression. We are being manufactured in droves in the ghetto streets. […] There is, and always will be, until every Black man, woman, and child is free, a Black Liberation Army. The main function of the Black Liberation Army at this time is to create good examples, to struggle for Black freedom, and to prepare for the future." Shakur's assessment of the role of Black people's material conditions in creating and shaping the Black revolutionary is a common thread within the Black Radical Tradition and within the orientation of contemporary Black organizers who identify themselves as part of this tradition. This orientation articulates a vision of the political as *pedagogical*, an ideological stance that understands political socialization and education as embedded within the everyday realities of Black life and, critically, Black freedom struggles.

My work theorizing within the Movement for Black Lives has affirmed this orientation. With comrade scholar-organizers, I have embarked on collaborative studies with organizers, which examine the role of learning within Black movements and struggles toward racial justice both in the United States and Africa. In interviews in a 2023 study of political education within my organizing home, Black Lives Matter Philadelphia, Black organizers (myself included) described growing up within Black communities as a fundamentally politicizing experience (Nafziger et al., 2023). While organizers came from different socioeconomic backgrounds, a mix of working and middle class, we shared similar experiences of individual and institutionalized racism and direct or indirect violence at an early age, despite ranging in age from late twenties to early fifties.

For instance, Gina, the youngest organizer in the group, characterized her stepfather as a "strong Black thinker" and described being raised in an environment with different Black communities as helping her cultivate a sense of Black consciousness (Nafziger et al., 2023, p. 8). Josiah's mother was a member of the Black Panther Party in the 1960s and 1970s in Philadelphia. Laniece, who grew up in the South and later moved to Philly as a college graduate, noted that her mother was among the first generation of federal workers who were part of an Affirmative Action program and helped organize other marginalized workers in the 1970s. Of my own experiences, I recalled the example of my father, who served as the block captain of our North Philadelphia street, and modeled Black self-determination in everyday practices of community building and care. We all emphasized, with pride, the social commitments of our families, whose examples shaped our understanding of anti-Black racism and the belief in Black communities' power and capacity to fight on their own behalf.

Organizers engaged with lived experience as the foundation for politicized education. The communities the Black Lives Matter Philly organizers engage are not removed from experiences of police brutality or the carceral state, nor are they removed from local Black histories, as organizers live in neighborhoods where parks and streets are named after Black historical figures, and children attend one of the only school systems where African American history is a requirement for high school graduation. Rather than develop conventional paradigms of political

education, which often resemble the learning practices of formal schooling, BLM Philly organizers worked to facilitate a dialectical learning process that starts from people's experiences and invites them to examine and imagine what to do with these experiences and how to transform their thinking into action (Nafziger et al., 2023, p. 17). What movements teach us is that such projects cultivate forms of collective discovery that dissolve the boundaries between schooling and the contexts of people's everyday struggles, unsettling what Gutiérrez (2020, p. 428) theorizes as "how we see what counts as learning [and] where we see learning."

Cabral Taught Us

In May of 1975, after a prolonged liberation struggle and the assassination of revolutionary leader Amilcar Cabral, world-renowned critical educator Paulo Freire and his team from the Department of Education of the World Council of Churches and the Institute for Cultural Action (IDAC) were invited by the government of the West African nation Guinea-Bissau to lead revolutionary revisions to the education system and to oversee the efforts for universal education. Frantz Fanon's influence on Paulo Freire's thought is well documented (Weiler, 1996), but the Brazilian educator was also deeply influenced by Cabral. In a 1985 presentation about his experiences in liberated Guinea-Bissau, Freire describes Cabral as one of those "leaders always with the people, *teaching and learning mutually* in the liberation struggle" (Freire, 2021, p. 12). Though much of the literature on Freire in Africa focuses on his impact *on* Africa, a closer examination reveals that Freire often borrowed heavily from African revolutionary movement leaders, whose rich ideas around the role of culture and struggle in critical consciousness are often overlooked in his writings (Strong & Nafziger, 2021).

Freire's epistolary memoir, *Pedagogy in Process: The Letters to Guinea-Bissau*, initially published in 1978, describes his sojourn in the country and the efforts to develop a national literacy program for newly liberated people. These letters, to which I now turn, offer important lessons of comradeship, learning, and change within and through struggle. They also push the boundaries of critical pedagogy, challenging the false boundaries between the educational process of decolonizing knowledge and the waging of anticolonial *material* struggles. In Letter #2, authored from exile in Geneva in April 1975, Freire writes to Mario Cabral, Amilcar Cabral's brother and Commissioner of State for Education and Culture, in response to the former's invitation to collaborate with the government of Guinea-Bissau: "Our conviction is that *we will have nothing to teach there if we do not learn from and with you*. For this reason, we go to Guinea-Bissau as comrades, as militants, curiously and humbly, and not as foreign technicians with a mission.… We can discuss, also, the political nature of literacy education as of all education, a fact that demands of educators a growing *clarity regarding their own political stance*, and the coherence of their practice with that stance" (65-66, emphasis added). I understand Freire to mean that we have to be clear about our politics, and our practice has to align with that politics for our help, as educators, as humans struggling toward justice, to be authentic, reciprocal, or useful.

In his exchange with Mario Cabral, written three months later in July, Freire turns his focus to his approach to training educators to contribute to literacy education as a cultural and material struggle, which he constructs based on the political thought of Amilcar Cabral. Freire writes:

> In our training seminars for teachers, we have not emphasized methods and techniques, but, rather, *political clarity*. This emphasis becomes even more important when we are talking about qualifying middle-class young people who

> have not yet committed the "class suicide" to which Amilcar Cabral refers and which he accomplished in so exemplary a manner.… Without the "reconversion" upon which Amilcar Cabral insisted so frequently, it is not possible for the middle-class intellectual to internalize the liberation struggle and to be integrated within it. Without this reconversion it will never be possible for middleclass urban youths to participate with the peasants in the *authentic* cultural struggle for which adult literacy education is a starting point.… If the educator takes refuge in his role as educator of the people without accepting *his own need to be educated by the people*, then his revolutionary oratory is counteracted by an alienating and reactionary practice. (p. 68-70, emphasis added)

In other words, Freire, following the revolutionary teachings of Amilcar Cabral, is instructing us that what we need as educators is "clarity" in our politics. It is not enough to assume the role of the educator if we have not done the work to divest from our compromised class and institutional positions or if we do not understand that a core aspect of our work is, first, to be educated by the people we profess to serve.

Finally, in November 1975, following his first visit to Guinea-Bissau, Freire reflects more substantively on how "the theory of knowledge that serves a revolutionary objective is put into practice in education." He writes:

> We discover that education is a process that takes *social practice* as the basis for learning and study. Education is itself a dimension of social practice. It seeks to know the reason for the practice and, through this knowledge as it deepens and develops, it also seeks new practice that is consistent with the overall plan for the society…. We have spoken before of the impossibility of separating practice from theory. A society that seeks to live the radical unity between the two overcomes the dichotomy between manual labor and intellectual labor. The result is *a totally different model of education*. In this model, the school — whether primary, secondary or university level — is not essentially different from the factory or the farm, nor does it stand in opposition to them. Even when a school exists outside the factory or the practical tasks of agriculture, this does not signify that it is in any way superior to them, nor that factory or agricultural work are not in themselves schools also. In a dynamic vision of the unity between theory and practice, the school, inside or outside the factory, cannot be defined as an institution bureaucratically responsible for the transfer of a select kind of knowledge. It is rather a pole or moment of that unity. (p. 77-78, emphasis added)

Freire reminds us that, in a radically reimagined vision for society, "the school" is everywhere. Learning is everywhere. We learn through social practice, reflection on that practice, and seeking new, better, more transformative practices. If we are going to invoke Freire and be guided by his teachings, informed as they were by the work of revolutionaries struggling to build a new, more just society, let us invoke *this* Freire: the militant and the comrade.

In this spirit, to conceptualize the transformative learning and knowledge production happening within movements I examine forms of pedagogical experimentation that bridge theory and practice and the university and broader struggles I refer to as "organizing pedagogies". This frame is rooted in the intellectual and material legacies of the "Black Revolution on campus" beginning in 1968 and stretching into the 1970s, through which Black students, in comradeship

with university workers and community members, insisted that "universities should reflect and serve the people of their communities" (Biondi, 2012, p. 2). While these struggles are, perhaps, best known for achieving the demand of institutionalizing Black and Ethnic Studies, they also catalyzed radical experiments in teaching, learning, and community that posited "study and struggle, theory and practice" as a unified liberatory process (Alkalimat, 2021, p. 303).

Organizing Pedagogies

In 2020, universities became key terrains of abolitionist experimentation, absorbing and extending the political energy of national unrest calling for the defunding of police. When campuses reopened after months of pandemic closures, campus organizers, networked through the burgeoning nationwide campus abolition movement, demanded institutional accountability beyond institutional public-relations statements about commitments to diversity and inclusion. At that time, I was a faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania, whose historic and ongoing exploitation of Black Philadelphia communities became the focus of my organizing within the campus abolitionist collective, Police Free Penn (PFP), which aimed to abolish policing, transform community safety at Penn, and expose the complicity of the university in the theft of "human remains, human health, and human life" (Police Free Penn, 2020). PFP was formed during the 2020 uprising in Philadelphia when undergraduate and graduate students, postdocs, faculty, staff, and alums convened on Zoom video chat to explore the implications of local abolitionist organizing for the campus community. I was an organizer within an ad hoc formation of Black community activists representing Black-led abolitionist organizations, the Black Philadelphia Radical Collective (BPRC), which organized the first local protest on May 30, 2020. After that event, I assumed a leadership role in sustaining Philadelphia's resistance through direct actions during the summer and fall (Strong, Ndgo, et al., 2022).

Here, I draw from an autoethnographic case study that was the focus of a collaborative writing experiment with two comrade-scholars with whom I organized in Police Free Penn (Rogers et al., 2023). In our article, we analyze our experiences as educational organizers and laborers through the lens of a May 2021 PFP direct action. Encompassing a rally, a street protest, and an outdoor film screening, the #PennReparationsNow action called for reparations for the medical experiments that deceased dermatology professor Albert Kligman conducted on inmates at Holmesburg Prison in Philadelphia County between 1951 and 1974, which resulted in one of the most profitable patents in history for the acne and anti-aging creams Renova and Retin-A.

Adrianne Jones-Alston, whose father, Leodus Jones, was one of the prisoners harmed by these experiments, traveled to Philadelphia from Virginia to speak at the direct-action event. During her moving testimony about the impact the experiments had on her father's physical and mental health following his release from prison, Jones-Alston recalled intimate effects of her father's incarceration and medical exploitation, emphasizing the consequences the experiments had on her own life as well. Noting in her remarks the university's ongoing profits from Kligman's lucrative patents, Jones-Alston made an unambiguous demand that Penn pay reparations for these harms: "He [Kligman] targeted a group of poor, Black, incarcerated men and women and did exactly what he wanted to do. His work ethics went out the damn window. Yet he's still being honored as a role model professor here at Penn? Damn. I should own this street. There's still professorships, and lecture halls, and laboratories [named for Kligman] here at Penn University? Are you all serious? What kind of fuckery is that?" (quoted in Rogers et al., 2023, p. 154).

Adrianne's demands for reparative justice exist in the context of hundreds of years of Penn's institutionalized complicity in the exploitation of Black communities in Philadelphia. As educators and organizers, this direct action needed to serve as political education for the campus community on these histories of harm, which PFP had been researching and protesting for months. These harms included the establishment, in the mid-19th century, of the Samuel Morton Cranial Collection at the Penn Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology, which measured and displayed the crania of Africans enslaved on Cuban plantations and Black Philadelphians whose graves were robbed to establish the collection (Muhammed, 2021); and, the theft of the remains of two Black girls, Delisha and Tree Africa, the city of Philadelphia murdered in the May 13, 1985 police bombing of The MOVE Organization, a West Philadelphia-based revolutionary organization (Strong, 2021). Demands for repatriation and reparations for the Morton Collection and Delisha and Tree Africa were both fights that I was actively involved in organizing.

Abdul-Aliy Muhammad, whose journalism and advocacy helped bring into public view the call for reparations around both the Morton Collection and the desecration of the remains of MOVE children (Muhammad, 2021b), also spoke at the Reparations Now event. Muhammad minced no words in expressing a sense of betrayal to the PFP and broader campus community in learning that the possession of the remains of Black children had been an open secret among museum staff and the Anthropology Department, whose offices also sit in the Museum building. Abdul-Aliy stated that when university members are silent about the harms of the university, we are merely shifting the burden to speak up onto outsiders with less status and power in the university system:

> Someone felt so complicit from holding onto that information that they reached out [to me], and at first [they] did not want to speak on record. So you got this information, you feel bad, and "I wanna tell you and have you do something with it, Black person. Black person, take on this information you are just hearing for the first time and do something with it. Black person, who was one [years old] when that bomb was dropped, Black person from West Philly, I want you and your labor to tell this story." It's disgusting, it's gross. I don't have any damn power. I organize and raise my voice, but I'm not in these institutions. They don't listen to me. They'll listen to you. *So what are you doing? What risks are you taking?* (quoted in Rogers et al., 2023, p. 159-160, emphasis added)

Here, Muhammad challenges campus members to question the knowledge and power systems that rationalize this code of silence and take risks from their positions within the university. The testimonies and demands of survivors and descendant communities for direct reparative acts on the part of the university represent the crux of organizing pedagogies as a conceptual frame: that, ultimately, learning must catalyze transformative action, and we must, necessarily, transgress the imposed boundaries between campuses and broader movements.

What Movements Teach Us

Movements offer profound lessons for how we learn and struggle toward justice. As education scholars increasingly engage in anti-racist struggle, the Black Radical Tradition and other activist traditions offer us "concrete techniques of struggle, including modes of collective study, public advocacy, experiential learning, participatory action, and future making" as guides for thought and action (Rogers et al., 2023, p. 164). If, as Freire writes (2021, p. 65), "we will have nothing to teach… if we do not learn from and with." Organizing alongside and in

solidarity with the communities we are part of and those that we wish to serve challenges our learned complicity with the institutionalized violence of schools and universities. Rather than extracting and co-opting the language of movements, training our attention on the intellectual contributions of non-academic movement actors opens avenues for engaging with historically marginalized communities and those directly harmed by universities as more than objects of research.

More fundamentally, if we as educators and academic laborers strive to be co-conspirators within broader struggles for justice, we must move beyond mere acknowledgment of institutional harms and commit to material repair and the thorny work of organizing. Organizing in solidarity and community offers strategies for scholars and educators actively to demonstrate the relationship between radical pedagogy and liberatory praxis. In 1969, weeks before his death, chairman of the Chicago chapter of the Black Panther Party and revolutionary-intellectual Fred Hampton famously made this interrelationship plain when he stated, "Theory is cool, but theory without practice ain't shit." To my question at the outset, "What can even be done?" Hampton's words provide an answer. Movements teach us that we keep fighting. We fight until we win.

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Educating for Democracy with and against Divisive Discourses: Presidential and Editorial Opening Remarks

Leslee Grey
Queens College/Citty University of New York
and
Greg Seals
College of Staten Island/City University of New York

Abstract: NYSFEA President Leslee Grey analyzes Michael Apple's description of right-wing politics as an amalgam of overlapping but disparate ideologies and his further observation that liberal politics needs to reconstruct its philosophical traditions. Analysis reveals several ideas for undoing damage done to educational policy/practice by the right and advancing democratic educational policies/practices endorsed by the left. Grey's co-editor, Greg Seals, discusses contributions to *Educational Abundance* 2024 in terms of Grey's strategic suggestions. Authors explore tailoring classroom instruction/school administration to student need/aspiration, transforming teacher authoritarianism into teacher authoritativeness, reconsidering knowledge as the right to justification, redefining democracy as active pursuit of peace, and reframing morality as enacted social harmony.

I appreciate the opportunity to kick off the 50th gathering of the New York State Foundations of Education Association (NYSFEA) with an exploration related to this year's conference theme, "Divisive Concepts and Critical Conversations." My interest in "divisive concepts" legislation has developed from my experiences teaching graduate-level courses in Social Studies curriculum theory. My students tend to be in the early stages of their careers, with the majority teaching US history. At the beginning and mid-point of each semester, I ask the class to submit topics they would like to see included in the course. Over the last two years (2023-2024), some version of "how to teach controversial topics" has dominated their requests. While this information is anecdotal, I have little doubt that in the current political climate, even in New York City-area schools, teachers are concerned and even fearful about teaching "authentic" US history. Teaching and learning have long been affected by top-down mandates and standardization measures that de-professionalize teachers and diminish their sense of autonomy when it comes to curricular choices (Ross et al., 2014). Nowhere is the ideological attack on education in the United States more evident than in the highly contested Social Studies curriculum; and at this particular moment, the stakes seem unusually high. Shiloah and Bohan (2023, p. 2) warn that current scrutiny of teachers may carry more serious consequences than in the past due to "standards, accountability, and legislation that could lead to penalties, job loss, and [in the most extreme states] possible imprisonment." Social Studies is where students learn about not only US history but also about sociological frameworks relating to race, class, gender, socioeconomic structures, political systems, and power relations. The field of Social Studies is also where teachers have historically experienced some freedom in the curricular materials they select for their lessons (Clark et al., 2021). The recent spate of "divisive concepts" legislation in the United States (for example, Florida's Stop W.O.K.E. Act of 2022, or Stop Wrongs to Our Kids and Employees Act, formerly known as the Individual Freedom Act) seeks to legislate conservative-leaning ideologies related to race, gender, sexuality, religion, and capitalism, as well as other social and political beliefs. This legislation affects all teachers and learners in all subject areas; however, due to the nature of the content matter, Social Studies and History education are particular targets.

Supporters of divisive concepts legislation claim that educational institutions have indoctrinated Americans into "woke" identity politics, which has led the nation to become less

unified and more polarized (Hornbeck & Malin, 2023). Divisive concepts laws purportedly aim to shield learners from feeling "discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress" related to their *own* race or gender (Stop W.O.K.E. Act, HB 7, 2022). With the assumption that all education initiatives are rooted in conceptions of what it means to be a good citizen, moral person, and contributor to society (Berliner & Glass, 2014), divisive concepts legislation seeks to promote a sense of national unity by compelling Americans to see themselves as individuals rather than as members of contentious identity-based groups. These mandates quash teaching and learning about historical collective movements and possible participation in present-day, justice-oriented movements (Martell & Stevens, 2023).

A growing body of research offers in-depth analyses of divisive concepts legislation proposed and/or passed in numerous states (Dee, 2022; Ellison, 2022; Russell-Brown, 2022; Salvador et al., 2023; Sheppard, 2023; Shiloh & Boham, 2023). An essential point this research brings into clear focus is divisive concepts legislation functions as part of a broader social and political movement that fosters hostility toward democracy and its processes and institutions, including education, which has been historically viewed an essential component of democracy (Beane & Apple, 1995; Dewey, 1916; Giroux, 1989; Gore, 1993; Gutmann, 1999; Nussbaum, 2010). To contextualize the present era of divisive discourse in education, I will begin this discussion by summarizing a few key ideas at the "core" of divisive concepts legislation. Then I will turn to a few prominent theorists — Dewey (1916), Habermas (1996), Freire (1996), and hooks (2014) — to glean an understanding of the relationship between education and democracy. In other words, I attempt to establish what democracy and education *should do* relative to one another, to develop a normative framework that can serve as a tool for comparing educational discourses and practices that support democracy as opposed to those that seek to undermine democracy. Ultimately, I am interested in critically exploring how ideological forces work on educational discourses. For example, in a related inquiry currently underway, I seek to understand how educational discourses are mobilized by the convergence of seemingly disparate ideologies as in the case of *The 1776 Report* (The President's 1776 Advisory Commission, January 18, 2021), the Trump administration's reactionary polemic against the orientation to critical race theory expressed in *The 1619 Project* (Hannah-Jones, 2021). These and other divisive educational discourses, broadly conceived to include conversations, organized movements, policies, and proposals, can be understood as working within an assemblage that I refer to as a "big rightist ideological tent" that aims to steer a collective national identity away from democratic ideals, processes, and institutions. For the present discussion, I will lean on the analysis offered in Apple's 2006 work, *Educating the Right Way*, which offers a framework for understanding how ideological forces intersect and compel support of divisive educational discourses and, particularly, divisive concepts legislation. The following section provides a brief introduction to some "core" ideas that undergird divisive concepts legislation.

Getting at the Core of Divisive Concepts Legislation

As of April, 2024, some 250 governmental bodies at the federal, state, and local levels introduced policies, bills, or executive orders to ban divisive concepts in publicly funded educational institutions (Lantz & Carter, 2024). Put simply, the legislation aims at prohibiting educators and related professionals from teaching or engaging in conversations involving ideas that are deemed productive of dissension. Although most of the legislation is aimed at primary and secondary education, several states have proposed similar laws for higher education. Some bans encompass not only classroom teaching but also professional development training such as

workshops related to sensitivity training, diversity, unconscious bias, and other topics viewed as influenced by critical race theory (Kelly, 2023). What these initiatives prescribe is often unclear, possibly by design to generate confusion and fear (Schoorman & Gatens, 2024). Lantz and Carter (2024) highlight characteristically vague phrasing of the proposals: Under some bills, educators may teach a topic on the "prohibited" list as long as they do not require students to "agree with" the topic; however, teachers who "err on the side of caution" may completely avoid concepts that are essential for understanding complex social phenomena (Lantz & Carter, 2024). Despite the opacity, it is widely understood that "non-dominant perspectives are under attack." Florida provides just one example that aims to prohibit the inclusion of "theories of systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege" (SB 266). In some states, merely exposing learners to concepts such as gender fluidity is considered political indoctrination (Combs, 2024), a construction that (ironically) frames the banning of speech as preserving the First Amendment. This interpretation supports a negative conception of freedom, in other words, *freedom from* progressive or leftist indoctrination. Negative freedom has seemingly gained a stronger hold on divisive discourse than a positive conception of freedom (i.e., *freedom to* explore on one's own auspices ideas, interests, identities, subjectivities, and so forth). To establish what education in a democracy *should do*, the following section summarizes ideas offered by a few prominent theorists concerned with the relationship between education and democracy. Their ideas provide an entry into discerning between educational discourses and practices that aim to support democracy and educational discourses that seek to undermine democracy.

Education for Democracy; Democracy for Education

My analysis of the mutually-affecting relation between democracy and education is guided by the premise put forth by Dewey and likeminded thinkers that, in the United States, education is an essential and constituent feature of democracy (Brown, 2015; Dewey, 1916). Furthermore, a citizenry educated to critically explore, investigate, and question social domains is essential for democracy to flourish (Grey & Shudak, 2018). Knowledge is not the privilege of the few, but a fundamental right of all. Some key ideas may summarize this tradition of scholarship on the interconnectedness of democracy and education. As a starting point consider Dewey's (1916, p. 87) conception of the relation between democracy and education: "…a government resting upon popular suffrage cannot be successful unless those who elect and who obey their governors are educated. Since a democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can be created only by education."

For Dewey (1916), democracy requires education that fosters the habits and dispositions necessary for active participation in democratic processes, which include critical thinking, open-mindedness, and collaborative problem-solving. In a democracy, relationships between leaders and citizens (and, *mutatis mutandis*, between teachers and students) must be built on shared decision-making and trust. Likewise, for Habermas (1996), education that prepares citizens to engage in rational discourse and democratic deliberation fosters the conditions for participatory democracy. However, deliberation, dialogue, and conversation in itself does not guarantee that all voices will be included or heard equally (Biesta, 2009). Educators in the critical camp point out that much of US schooling remains characterized by external power and traditional hierarchies, wherein teaching is didactic, and learning is characterized by passive acceptance and recall. For Freire (1996) and hooks (2014), education should empower marginalized communities, challenge oppressive structures, and promote critical consciousness so that individuals may work toward a more democratic, just, and equitable society. Education in a

diverse and pluralistic society should enable individuals to engage in inquiry, dialogue, and deliberation, even when (and perhaps *especially* when) those processes produce disagreements or divisions. It is important to note that none of these theorists support upholding conventions such as "external authority" for the sake of preserving tradition or maintaining the status quo. Education policies, practices, and discourses that prohibit the utterance of an idea simply because the idea *could* question traditional understandings inhibit the types of inquiry, dialogue, and collective problem-solving that are essential to democracy. To extend this line of thinking, when divisive concepts legislation prohibits teachers and learners from participating in educational processes that are foundational to and necessary for "thick" versions of democracy (Crowley & Apple, 2010), these legislative initiatives and the public discourses that surround them deny opportunity for engaging in democracy as a way of living together.

The recent spate of legislation in the US regarding "divisive concepts" serves as an entry point into understanding the political and ideological discourses shaping not only the direction of public education but also, on a larger level, the direction of democracy itself. The concepts deemed divisive challenge national narratives (myths) of equality, meritocracy, and American exceptionalism. Boler's (et al., 2024, p. 15) analysis of social media platforms finds that policy discourses function as "performance spaces for the melodramatic staging of identity politics and narratives of nationhood, race, and justice." For those who have traditionally benefitted from the production and circulation of national myths, concepts that disrupt power (or even bring a sense of discomfort to certainty regarding traditional opinion) are *divisive*. Importantly, the power-disrupting ideas are not simply "controversial," which could imply there are multiple perspectives or sides to an issue worthy of debate and reconciliation into more adequate ideas. Instead, as Boler and colleagues (p. 15) posit, policy initiatives are presented in "ritualized affective discourses [that] constitute the basic script for polarization and partisan debate." Leaving no room for mediation among competing conceptions, "divisive" is the more immediate construct, as it implies ideas are dividing a nation that would otherwise be united. When concepts and frameworks that reveal structural or systemic inequalities are constructed as always-already "divisive"; rightist rhetoric names and frames the problem and fosters hostility towards trying to work things out together. Manufacturing mutual hostility serves the purpose of garnering support for radically conservative and anti-democratic state-level education reforms. At first glance, these discourses may appear easy targets to ridicule or dismiss. When strategically mobilized to steer US education in anti-democratic directions, however, they cannot be ignored. I now turn to a discussion of Apple's (2006) analysis of right-wing politics, which I find essential for understanding the ways in which rightist ideologies converge under a "big tent" to steer educational discourses.

An Assembly of Rightist Ideologies

My understanding of ideologically divisive discourses leans heavily on Apple's (2006, p. 49) analysis of "conservative modernization," signaled by an alliance of right-leaning political factions and their efforts to reform US education. In *Educating the Right Way*, Apple analyzes the intersection of three rightist ideological factions steering the US: neoconservatism, neoliberalism, and authoritarian populism. I will briefly summarize these three strands, focusing on their intersectional perspectives on society and schooling. Apple's concept of conservative modernization includes a fourth strand, "the professional and managerial middle class" (p. 48). This strand doesn't necessarily share the ideologies of the other three, but it possesses the technical expertise needed to implement discourses and policies supported by the other strands

and it relies on the other strands to maintain its socioeconomic position. Neoliberal views are driven by the belief that the free market is the best, most efficient/effective way to sort out all matters, public and private, including education (Brown, 2015; Rose, 1996). Neoconservatism, on the other hand, is influenced by a romanticized nostalgia, a view of the past when religious and moral truths were predetermined ("back when" there was less cultural diversity, only two genders, and the man-led nuclear family was the main unit of society). In a neoconservative view, schools are to create patriotic citizens and to assimilate the newly immigrated into American values, customs, language, religion and other cultural realms. State educational standards exist to ensure the correct stories and values are learned. The last strand is authoritarian populism. Authoritarian populists are (p. 9) "religious fundamentalists and conservative evangelicals who want a return to (their) God in all of our institutions." Authoritarian populists view public schooling as reflecting the evils of a Godless society; they believe they are under attack, as "their traditions are disrespected [and] the very basis of their understanding of the world is threatened" (p. 134). Authoritarian populists share some commonalities with neoconservatives such as embracing traditional, heteronormative gender roles; however, unlike neoconservatives, who support a weak state, authoritarian populists support a strong state that will enforce their moral views. For this triptych, truth provides certainty in an uncertain world: for neoconservatism, all men are created equal; for authoritarian populism, power is bestowed by God; and for neoliberalism, market forces provide freedom and choice to individuals, who make rational, informed decisions that are rewarded by meritocratic processes.

Apple's (2006) framework reveals how the ideologies of neoliberalism, neoconservatism, and authoritarian populism formed an alliance over shared support of standardization in education, which diminished teachers' autonomy and professional decision-making. For these groups, public school is a microcosm for everything that's wrong with society: Diversity and inclusion initiatives unfairly stack the deck toward women and minorities, and the feminization of the teaching profession weakens masculinity. Emphasizing social and emotional learning and referring to students by their preferred names and pronouns are viewed as taking authority away from parents. In a neoliberal framing, standardization is a way to ensure accountability so that schools can be ranked, and informed parents can make the best choices for their children. Even parents who consider themselves liberal-leaning tend to make schooling decisions based on what's good for their own children rather than what's good for society or democracy.

Concluding Thoughts

Published at the dawn of G.W. Bush's first presidential term, Apple's (2006/first edition, 2002) analysis remains timely and relevant for understanding the current landscape of education reform in which the interests of seemingly disparate groups intersect to produce and mobilize divisive discourses that play into cultural fears. That state-run schools seek to control students' thinking, indoctrinate students, and otherwise quash independent thinking is but one discourse that the right has spun from ideas that were previously considered left-leaning. For example, prominent critics on the left such as Postman (1996), Giroux (1984), and Apple and Beane (1995) warned of the indoctrinating practices of traditional schooling. Furthermore, recent calls to "drain the swamp" by electing leaders who have no previous experience in public service, coupled with performances such as the recent vitriol toward Anthony Fauci's stance on vaccinations, indicate the right appears to have adopted a dismissive view of expert knowledge that could very well have been borrowed from a Foucauldian critique of power. Likewise, a postmodern construct of truth has morphed into the current "post-truth" era (Nelson, 2019, p.

77), in which appeals to belief and emotion are more influential than a call for facts and objectivity

This analysis is not intended to compress right-leaning forces into a homogeneous group; the converging strands in Apple's analysis demonstrate diversity of thought as well as shared thought, which is why I find the "big rightist ideological tent" to be an apt metaphor for this assemblage. Apple (2006, p. 133) points out that the right has "been successful in part because they have taken the rhetoric of what they see as hegemonic liberalism and recast around their own core concerns," circulating a notion of "common sense" that resonates with "people's understandings of their real material and cultural lives" (p. 226). This is not to suggest that the left and right share no common educational concerns. To be sure, individuals on the left are just as concerned as those on the right about school violence, social mobility, and their own children's educational success. For Apple (p. 201), "the task is to disentangle the elements of good sense evident in these concerns from the selfish and antipublic agenda that has been pushing concerned parents and community members into the arms of the conservative restoration." Apple suggests that because the right shares some educational concerns with the left, the left may have the opportunity to reappropriate these conversations, beginning with listening more carefully to the concerns of parents and families. But Apple's ideas offer many more options for (re)constructive democratic inquiry in and about education. Conceptualizing the right as a braided coalition of ideologies points out places where the braids can show potential for unravelling. Neoliberal market values rest uneasily beside the values of their political bedfellows, neoconservative nostalgia and authoritarian populist religiosity. As Thompson (2016) notes, issues surrounding invitro fertilization, considered a form of abortion from a religious authoritarian perspective and from the neoliberal perspective as a lucrative business opportunity, have caught the right between a Rock (of Ages) and a hard (market)place. Authoritarian and conservative wishes for a strong state work against neoliberal desire for a market free from government interference. In addition, Apple implies the need for self-criticality from the left, as liberals rethink the meanings of their own attacks on tradition in ways that more completely propose positive, flexible plans for new ways of living with each other and understanding and responding to the diversities among us.

Papers appearing in this year's NYSFEA journal, *Educational Abundance* 2024, show scholars and researchers at work exploiting for democratic purposes the interstices Apple identifies in the patchwork of right-wing ideologies. Tim Monreal and Iman Lathan (p. 91) move us away from essentialized conceptions of race, ethnicity, etc., and towards understanding of these attributions as part of lived experience in social context. Robert Niewiadomski, Ruoyi Zhang, and Jianing Li (p. 101) look at relations between cultural capital of students and students' occupational aspirations as a way of adapting schooling to address students' life chances. And Rupam Saran (p. 107) describes successful mentoring of students enrolled in a class at the same time they are facing familial, financial, and health crises.

Perhaps teacher authoritativeness provides an acceptable alternative to teacher authoritarianism. Vicki Dagostino-Kalniz' (p. 80) insistence that learning via sharing of ideas in democratic discussion instead of remembering ideas presented in Fascist environments of dictation is the surest way to student mastery of curriculum resonates with Greg Seals and Mark Garrison's (p. 65) argument that fluency is preferrable to competency when learning curriculum material. Anne Shields and Madhu Narayanan (p. 48) and Holly Marcolina (p. 21) discuss, respectively, the *je ne sais quoi* teachers bring to lesson planning and to extra-curricular

activities. Amanda M. Kingston and colleagues at Syracuse University (p. 36) relate their experiences teaching preservice teachers how to assess student effort in ways motivating students to learn rather than preventing students from trying. Lori-Ann Newman's (p. 57) proposal that US and world history curriculum focus on societal issues yet to be resolved may interest middle class social managers, who make social policies work in the day-to-day world, as a means of making their jobs easier by creating social conditions more effortlessly manageable than those currently imposed from the right. All these activities contribute powerfully to a shared sense of individuality among students.

Finally, panelists discussing Dale Snauwaert's *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice* offer reconsideration of foundational principles on the left. Janet Gerson (p.122) explores the idea of peace as the positive presence of justice rather than the absence of violence and finds a synonymity between democracy and the peaceful society. Greg Seals (p. 133 reconsiders what it means to be moral at school and beyond in terms of production of social harmony sung together by voices sometimes tuned to dissonant pitches. Jeffery Warnke (p. 128) takes on post-truth by arguing that knowledge entails a right to justification, a right that may be exercised in a variety of ways — from the personal to the polemical to the purely rational — each with its own consequences and costs to what may be said to be true and what may be said to be known.

May you find of interest and of use these contributions to the ongoing conversation about divisive concepts and ways to turn seemingly unbridgeable divisions to discursive democratic advantage. On the Association's Golden Anniversary (and the journal's 4th — it's Flower Anniversary) the authors celebrate the NYSFEA tradition of finding Social Foundations of Education endemic to construction of high-quality education for all. The final meeting place for discussion designed to overcome divisiveness in patterns of schooling may be the point at which we come to understand that what's good for kids considered as students is also, like it or not, what's good for democratic society.

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"Who Is Going to Be Able to Do What I Do?" Dynamic Expressions of Social Capital Among Teachers

Holly E. Marcolina
State University of New York at Potsdam

Abstract: Relationships between colleagues form a central part of the workplace experience. For teachers, social capital is influenced by obligations, information channels, and social norms operating within local schools. As part of a larger ethnographic study examining teachers' work in rural New York State, data from 27 structured interviews provided insights into formal and informal systems of social capital in K-12 schools, including mentoring, the ability to express concerns to colleagues, and the extent to which teachers at different phases of their career desire to receive help at work. Teachers should be encouraged to grow as people and professionals via informal collegiality and participation in formal, purposeful opportunities for collaboration as a natural outgrowth of working together.

From parents to taxpaying community members to political pundits and so-called educational experts, there are many opinions about how to fix education. Issues connected to student achievement, behaviors, staff shortages (Berkovich, 2023; Edsall, 2022) and burnout (Karalis-Noel & Finnochio, 2022; Newberry & Allsop, 2017) are part of the mainstream news cycle. These negative narratives of K-12 education are reinforced by a public perception of experienced educators being "promotion-blocked teachers in mid-to-late career who are losing energy and enthusiasm," juxtaposed against a view of "new teachers struggling to survive alone in their classrooms" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 14). Supposed remedies, such as establishing national curriculum standards or making teacher preparation programs more rigorous, have not brought about the systemic change desired in education. Perhaps the answer to these reform dilemmas lies within the very ones who work in schools: the teachers.

Colleagues play an important role in daily workplace experience. Teacher interactions produce a network of purposeful and beneficial relationships which must be successfully navigated in the workplace. This network of relationships among colleagues is social capital, an active resource for teachers to utilize, leverage, and cultivate throughout their career (Coleman, 1988). Ingersoll (2003, p. 12) asserts that the social aspect of teacher interaction is "among the most crucial, most highly controlled, most highly consequential, and most overlooked aspects of schooling." By dismissing the power of informal collegiality and formal collaboration, the role of teachers' social capital as a vital component of the internal systems of schooling is ignored. Faculty members are in touch with the needs of their building/district, have developed successful instructional techniques for use with students in their schools and classes, and know the expectations of their building and community. In terms of workplace obligations and expectations, information channels within an institution, and perpetuation of professional norms, gaining social capital is required for a successful teaching career. However, teachers' social capital remains underexamined.

Social Capital

The concept of social capital is a tool used in many fields of study (Kilgore, 2016). Developed by Coleman (1986), a sociologist with a particular interest in high schools, adolescence, and school desegregation (Kahlenberg, 2001; Marsden, 2005), social capital can be difficult to measure and, at times, inappropriate to apply as a panacea for a variety of complex or intricate social and interpersonal situations (Engbers et al., 2017). Nonetheless, as complicated as

it may be, social capital can provide insights into myriads of connections between communities and individuals in ways that elicit hopeful opportunities for the future (Emery & Flora, 2006). Social capital is more than socializing in a professional setting. Shared social capital connects individuals by building stable relationships and clarifying norms/roles within an organization, thus raising "the stability and technical knowledge of all its members" (Leana & Van Buren, 1999, p. 543). Both individual and large-scale organizational social capital (Coppe et al., 2022b) are simultaneously elevated through "collective goal orientation and shared trust, which create value by facilitating successful collective action" (Leana & Van Buren, 1999, p. 538).

Social capital's broad appeal has led to some criticisms. Portes (1998) states that social capital fails to delineate the relationship between the individual and the group. Additionally, Portes (2000) notes that Coleman's (1988) theory does not take different cultures into account. Caldas et al. (2007) found policy shifts resulting in school desegregation in the American South in the early 2000's led teachers in middle class white schools to have a negative perception of their social capital. Opp (2018) believes there is a need to add layers to Coleman's original theory. Coleman's work possesses a certain naivete in the eyes of some, who prefer to use Bourdieu's (1997) economically-framed theories on networks and the complicated nuances of such interactions (Gillies & Edwards, 2006).

Certainly, social capital cannot be mandated and regulated in educational settings. Formalized mentoring programs produce stress for both mentor and mentee, impose external solutions on unique situations, and do not "prepare younger teachers for future leadership roles" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 12). Tensions among school stakeholders and broad mentoring relationships, both failures of social capital, were two themes which emerged from interviews with former public-school teachers (Karalis-Noel & Finnochio, 2022). Likewise, negative relationships, anti-collegiality, lack of connection, and isolation were identified as contributing factors to teacher attrition (Newberry & Allsop, 2017). On the other hand, social capital in the form of routine interaction with colleagues strengthens connections among colleagues (Rostila, 2011; Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998) and helps retain teachers. Sharing frustrations, commiserating or problem solving together on debriefing days, asking for advice, serving as a sounding board, and preparing for new classroom activities all happen with colleagues and are a critical part of what it means to work in a school. Social capital extends to families, as well, for parents and communities have social capital which can serve to elevate disenfranchised groups (Khattab, 2003; Rogošić & Baranović, 2016).

Collaboration

Of course, simply working together as colleagues does not mean that there is a positive "congenial" relationship between individuals (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). Larger faculties have fewer opportunities for collaboration than counterparts who are located in smaller, more intimate professional structures (Keuning et al., 2016). Teachers of color seek out help less than their white colleagues, but are consulted for advice at the same rate as their white colleagues, except when it comes to math (Bristol & Shirrell, 2019). Specialty subject area teachers, such as music educators, are often isolated and do not have their unique professional development needs met (West, 2019). Colleagues within one school building can be products of different generations (Portela Pruaño et al., 2022). When new teachers return to their *alma maters* to work, a common occurrence in rural school districts, they often do not fulfill the expectations that experienced teachers have of them (Huysman, 2007).

But collaboration positively affects overall school culture (Peterson, 2016). Student achievement increases when colleagues work well together, particularly those who have worked together for a long time in the same school (Daly et al., 2014). Collegiality, or work socialization, is a vital component of a successful transition to a career in education for second career teachers (Coppe et al., 2022a). Teachers who have informal contextual bonds, understand the organization, and display individual traits in concert with the broader school culture enjoy lasting collegial ties and greater access to social capital (Birdwell & Cooc, 2016). Venting with colleagues not only reduces stress, but increases collegial bonds (Garrick et al., 2017).

Phases of Career

Educators at all career stages can benefit from collaboration. For example, "positioning a struggling new teacher alongside an experienced professional, rather than placing him or her out in a portable hut where no one else wants to teach" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013, p. 39) breeds both collegiality and collaboration. Pairing veterans and neophytes may also serve as a means of "squeezing out poor performers as teaching becomes less private and more collaborative. These results occur because the day-to-day pressure and support is built into the work. It is social capital leveraging human capital" (Fullan, 2011, p. 12). Senge's (2006) research in the business world translates to schools, for he discovered "just the act of getting people together and talking with one another created a whole set of possibilities that led to a better business" (p. 259). As school leadership fosters social capital through collaboration, teachers will become less competitive with one another and "consider their instruction from other points of view" (Bohen, 2014, p. 2). Collaborative relationships take time to build, but the teachers can speak to each other's personal and professional lives more effectively than an administrator or outside consultant can.

While length of teachers' experience in the field is just one factor affecting their purview, — for "teaching is bound up with their lives, their biographies, with the kinds of people they have become" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 25) — researchers have devised ways to measure the seasons of one's teaching career and the requisite skillfulness honed at each stage (Booth et al., 2021; Day & Gu, 2007; Dreyfus, 2004; Eros, 2011; Huberman, 1989; Katz, 1972). One study suggests that newer teachers are more committed to their local school than their more seasoned colleagues (deJong et al., 2016). The extent to which a new teacher is able to be innovative in their role is a predictor of satisfaction and burnout (Goodard et al., 2006). Mid-career is depicted as a time of tiring, monotonous work (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), yet overlooked by research (Booth et al, 2021). Many high achieving educators leave the field well into their careers (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Perhaps enlisting mid-career teachers into action research as a form of professional development would aid in mid-career teacher retention (Mertler, 2013). Mid-career teachers who have worked in a particular school building the longest are the most sought out by their peers for support and insight. They are important parts of the *de facto* community of colleagues (Birdwell-Mitchell & Fried, 2020). How teachers handle working conditions and workplace stressors may depend on their career phase. The disconnect between teacher education programs and realities of the classroom demonstrate the need for highly contextualized institutional knowledge attuned to one's local school building and the working conditions there (Rust, 1994). Over time, teachers adjust their workload to "cope with the bureaucratic milieu of schooling" (McCarthy et al., 2016, p. 595) in sustainable ways. Collaborative structures focused on targeted interventions for students can help reduce teacher stress (Lhospital & Gregory 2009).

Conceptual Framework and Methodology

Exploring the ideas of teacher collaboration in the workplace and the various phases one progresses through during their teaching career are vital to setting the scene for examination of how teachers' social capital is manifested between and among colleagues. The present study is framed by Coleman's theory of social capital. Coleman asserts that there are three manifestations of social capital between parties: obligations and expectations, information channels, and social norms. Obligations require trust and reciprocation. The longer a person is a part of a specific social structure, they "at any time have more social capital on which they can draw" (Coleman, 1988, p. S103.) Coleman urges us to ask: To whom are teachers obligated and what is the cost of their obligations? Information gathering can be urgent in a workplace situation. It takes time and effort to acquire the "information that facilitates action" (Coleman, 1988, p. S104) needed for teachers to fulfill their responsibilities. Finally, workplace norms may make some tasks easier than others. Acting according to social norms demonstrates a collective mentality instead of an individualistic mindset, ensuring universal benefit to the workplace. The teacher who does not engage in building their social capital will, simply put, not be successful at school, both within and outside of the traditional classroom environment. Here, I explore both positive and negative examples of social capital among new, mid-career, and experienced teachers in a K-12 environment.

Data for this study emerged from 27 structured interview sessions with teachers who also serve as extracurricular advisors throughout the rural Northern Appalachian region of New York State. All interviews were conducted from June through August 2023 and took place in a one-on-one setting or in small groups at teachers' homes, empty school buildings, booths at restaurants, and outside in farm fields. A transcript was made from a digital recording of each interview and member checked (Miles et al., 2014) for clarifications, omissions, and additions (Thomas, 1993). Interviews ranged from 35 minutes to four hours. No monetary compensation was offered for participation.

Multiple iterations of coding extracted granular (Buckley, 2022) data from the interviews. Based on results of the initial coding of themes and trends, re-coding and sub-coding occurred in multiple cycles (Hatch, 2002; Saldaña, 2021). Teachers' relationships with their coworkers emerged as one of the strongest themes in the data. I then conducted *a priori* coding based on Coleman's (1988) three types of social capital. As part of a larger critical ethnographic study (Burawoy et al., 1991; Corbett, 2020; Edmondson, 2001; Porter, 1995; Reed-Danahay, 1996; Seaton, 2007), this data contributes to a greater understanding of the culture of rural school communities by exploring teachers' experiences leading extracurricular activities. New understandings about teachers' social capital and internal school relationship dynamics are revealed, answering Jadhav's (2021, p. 568) call for research "to unveil and disarticulate these unspoken narratives, occluded histories, and hidden practices."

Participants were categorized as new teachers (one-ten years), mid-career teachers (11-20 years), or experienced (21+ years). These categorizations are appropriate to this sample as participants in this study have a notable average 15.4 years and a collective 417 years of teaching experience. The rural northeast has the highest teacher retention rate in the US (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017), making it an important place to examine the perspective of these committed individuals. Mirroring the female-dominated teaching ranks, 20 participants were female and seven were male. Eight participants were alumni of where they now teach and 19 attended school elsewhere. Heavily skewed toward the secondary level, only 6 participants

taught at the elementary level (general education, special education, and physical education). I employed purposive and snowball sampling (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018) through my professional network to enlist participants. After nearly two decades as a high school teacher and administrator in various socioeconomic contexts, most recently in the rural Northern Appalachian region of New York, this study occurred one year after I resigned from a principalship to complete my doctorate. Typically, "educational sociologists can sound the alarm and recognize the problems, but we are considered incapable of offering solutions that can be demonstrated to 'work'" (Corbett, 2015, p. 266). Uniquely, perhaps, I am positioned to offer novel insights and workable solutions through my in-depth knowledge and access to the internal systems of teachers' work in high-poverty rural school contexts.

Findings

Obligations/Expectations: Three obligations and expectations emerged from the data. First is the idea that teachers ought to be thankful for their job. Secondly, participants were unable to communicate professional concerns at work, especially issues with co-workers. Finally, an obligation toward extracurricular work was often expressed through an "If not me, then who?" mentality.

An experienced teacher noted that in the past even from the onset of the job interview process, teachers would be "armed with what you could bring and what you would do… busting your tail to prove yourself to be good enough to do whatever was asked, to volunteer." Citing a difference in hiring practices that developed over time, she continued, "Now, there's no competition for the jobs. We're begging people to come. It was different in 1997." A teacher who was hired a decade later in the mid-2000s expressed that she and her peers at the time "would take whatever job you can find... I'm gonna do a good job and I'm gonna stick with it." But now she sees the obligation to one's rural school community in the form of being thankful for the job is being usurped by new career teachers who "have a mentality that they'll just go somewhere else or do something else. I don't know if people care as much because they have that thought of the work life balance." Here, a teacher presents the dichotomy of caring for oneself and caring for one's career, that is, the students and community members in a rural district, at opposite ends of a spectrum of job commitment.

Issues connected to money were one area where it was difficult for colleagues to conduct productive conversations with one another. A new teacher shared a poignant story about her interactions with another coach in her sport. The new teacher is unable to fundraise. Instead, "all of our purchasing has to go through varsity soccer. That can get annoying because I need new gear and it doesn't happen. We get the hand me downs." In an area of decreasing population, like Northern Appalachian New York, school districts may merge together in order to have enough students to field a team. This teacher's district has merged for other sports; however, she recounts, "it's been explained to me that our soccer coach does not want to merge. She retires after next year." Here, an experienced teacher is fundamentally dictating school practices for her own benefit. While a merger may provide greater opportunities for students and be more financially feasible for a cash-strapped school, these benefits do not outweigh the potential wrath of upsetting this experienced teacher! It is easier to wait for her to retire than to make the financially wise and student-minded decision to merge. Note that there is no direct communication or conversations between the new and experienced teacher, either. Some new coaches were, on paper, for the JV or modified levels, but, in reality, were "working with

students of all levels and attending all the meets, but the varsity coaches get paid substantially more for the season. I'm still expected to be there." A new teacher surmised that what this issue came down to is that "the politics are seniority based." An experienced teacher expressed concerns over the demands on his younger colleagues' time. While discussing the various extracurricular responsibilities associated with their school, he concluded, "There's no way a young teacher that has to get their master's degree can do it."

Concerns about colleagues go in multiple directions. A mid-career teacher who teaches at the school she graduated from was worried about some of her role models, the teachers whom she had as a student when she was in school. She was disillusioned because "There's a handful of us that are really struggling and some of the younger ones just don't get it." An experienced teacher nearing retirement considers the future of his program as he plans for succession while understanding the commitments of new teachers. Looking back over a recent large-scale event, he states, "It's a lot of hours and weekend time. My kids are out in the workforce so I'm not missing things at home. If I didn't do 30 free hours of work, this event wouldn't have happened. But, in the future, I don't think a new teacher will do it." Another experienced teacher looks at the new teachers as "young enough to be my kid. Some folks have burnt out and have had health problems psychologically, physically… but once you do something really well, then it becomes your job forever." Hers is a cautionary tale to those beginning their careers as teachers in rural school communities. After concluding a weeklong senior trip, numerous fundraisers, and a musical production, an experienced teacher found himself in the hospital. His blood pressure was so high, protocols for stroke prevention were done all night on him. I interviewed him shortly after his health scare and when I asked about plans for the musical next year, he said that no one had fulfilled his vacancy. Then, he went on "You definitely can fall into the trap of thinking if you don't do it, no one else will. I'm going to leave it and see. If it came down to it with no show, I would definitely do it again. That group of kids needs their day in the sun. It wouldn't be fair." He is eschewing his own personal health needs for his students and community expectations of a performance.

Teachers at both ends of the continuum of years of experience shared a time when a colleague answered the "if not me" question with their name. A new teacher stated that an experienced teacher was persuasive to get him to coach even though he lived 55 minutes away from work. Qualifying his choice by stating "it was a pretty short season," this new teacher referred to his colleague by saying, "I mean, he got me to coach." The teacher went on to say how valuable coaching was in building relationships with students, even those he did not teach. Looking back on how she got involved in extracurriculars, a now experienced teacher stated that a colleague came into her classroom and said to her, "'You're doing this with me.' I was like, 'OK.'" Over twenty years later, the cycle continues with this teacher recruiting new colleagues to assist with the many extracurricular traditions that are important components of life in a rural school community.

Information Channels: Collegiality is the informal sense of belonging that comes from working with those who become "extended family" (Bolman & Deal, 2003, p. 400). These relationships are "a valuable resource" (Leana, 2011, p. 34). As professionals, "circles keep us grounded in our connectedness and create community day by day as we confront whatever we have to confront together" (Senge, 2006, p. 266). While formalized mentoring is one mechanism for developing social capital, it is essential that "we do not want to limit our definition of 'act' to such conscious behavior" (French & Raven, 1959). Throughout their careers, teachers glean

information through various mechanisms. While formal faculty meetings, administrative memos, and district handbooks play a role, collegial relationships are perhaps the most utilized way that information, particularly localized, institutional knowledge, is disseminated throughout a school's staff over time. Mentoring, physical proximity during the workday and extracurricular co-adviserships were ways that study participants gained knowledge about their workplace.

One year of mentoring is required for new teachers in New York State (NYSED, 2023). Participants, especially if they are the only teacher in their subject area for a school, often reported a mismatch of mentors, dependent on mentees' needs — some appreciated a mentor's insights into overall school culture, but some needed specific content area help. A now mid-career teacher looked back on his experience being mentored, recalling, "When I was first hired, the Superintendent said, 'Well, here's your keys. Here's your room. That's your team leader, across the hallway. If you got any questions, ask her. That's what she gets the stipend for.'" He felt as if he was "thrown in," a sentiment echoed by a current new teacher. She recounted things that she had to "figure out" on her own, despite her mentor "asking what I needed help with." Both of these teachers are in specialized subject areas (such as art, languages other than English, or technology) where they were one of the only people teaching that subject in their district. Their mentors were not familiar with their mentee's content area.

After describing the physical layout of his school, a new teacher commented on the "family" mentality among colleagues in his district, something many rural school communities pride themselves on, "Every single person in the school was helpful or nice to me or there when I needed them." An experienced agriculture teacher described a strategic placement of a music and art teacher near her classroom. The physical proximity between these teachers created relationships where new teachers would "ask a lot of questions. Those discussions after school really helped because they get nervous. They don't want to ask for help because then it looks like they can't do certain things." The teacher's comment toward her new colleagues also had a familial spirit, as she passionately described them as "little puppies" that she wanted to take home and reassure that it was all going to be okay.

Working with colleagues in extracurricular settings can help new teachers grow as professionals. One experienced teacher who coaches with a number of new teachers recalled a powerful conversation with them, "The guys told me, 'You showed us there's more to it. At first, we thought you were just criticizing us, but you were making sure we knew the bigger picture.'" The experienced teacher went on to describe creating an environment on the team where students could share their struggles at home with the coaches. He was proud that the new coaches have become "incredible with that stuff." Colleagues can keep each other accountable to maintain a perspective of holistic student support, especially in a challenging educational environment.

At some schools, co-advising purposefully creates a rotation of experience with new individuals, ensuring the perpetuation of a tradition of the school as a community and the passing down of informal institutional knowledge. Junior class advisor is an important extracurricular position, ensuring funds are raised for the prom and graduation. An experienced teacher shared that she handpicked her co-advisor for junior class advisor. Not only did this person live locally, which is convenient for late night after school events, but, the experienced teacher stated, "I knew she was super organized… In the years that I don't feel like being the 11th grade advisor, she could potentially get her own co-advisor in." Here, she is setting up her colleague for future success in her extracurricular task.

A guaranteed extracurricular task also means an additional guaranteed income, adding to base salaries and useful for retirement purposes. Information about the monetary value of extracurricular work is sometimes only realized by those doing the work. One teacher described seeing a change in the contract at her school: "For years we never addressed extracurriculars. But then when you got people who are on the negotiating team doing extracurriculars it became a priority and they raised the pay." Interestingly, this teacher saw a link between teacher retention and extracurricular pay, "We have longevity pay built into our extracurriculars. Those are things as an administrator, when you're hiring a person, you need to give them reasons to stay here, to know you can make a decent living here."

Social Norms: Whether a district is composed of 30 teachers or 3,000 teachers, "imagine that you would become a better teacher just by virtue of the fact that you are on the staff of a particular school… that is the power of social capital" (Fullan, 2011, p. 11). Those educators possessing personal mastery "often… can be found right within your own building" (Bohen, 2014, p. 3). Social capital attaches to the professional expertise of teachers within a school. The social norms perpetuated by the actions of teachers maintain school culture, community traditions, and come to serve as a component of daily life in the workplace. Just as there are norms for student behavior, there are norms for teachers' actions, as well. Three themes that strongly emerged as rural school norms of teacher behavior are phrased in the voice of participants: "help me when I need it," "leave me alone when things are fine," and "avoid drama." Norms are most often passed down from experienced teachers, for "veteran teachers are grossly underutilized. Cynicism retires, but so does wisdom" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 10). These themes were very strong across all participants, indicating the necessity of understanding how things work at one's local school.

When a now-experienced teacher first got a position at a rural school, it came tied to a new extracurricular. The retiree whom she replaced took it on as her personal mission to support the teacher, "All I had to do was text her and she would help me." Conversely, an experienced teacher recalled not being helped as a new teacher when she needed it. She was hired in the middle of the year and spent a few days shadowing the teacher whom she was replacing. "She told me she was retiring because she didn't like the principal. I just smiled and nodded. The principal told me she didn't like him, either. I remember the going away party and she was like 'This is all an act!' Again, smile and nod, I have no idea what I'm doing, this is my first job." Certainly, that has shaped how this now-seasoned educator has supported her new colleagues in that same district.

Though formal mentoring structures were often viewed as a negative by participants, one new teacher gave her mentor credit for helping support her in a situation involving student safety. Thankful for the experienced teacher's support, the new teacher said, "She really backed me up on that." Here, the mentor did not provide novel knowledge or generate new ideas, but served to reinforce the new teacher's belief about a situation. When a teaching staff operates under the norm of assisting each other, even after retirement, it elevates the entire staff.

A new teacher who is the only teacher in her department resented being put together with other "elective" departments for professional development. She, as was the case with the majority of participants, did not feel isolated in a smaller school, but enjoyed how these schools "give you a little autonomy and control. We don't have to do the same thing. There's no competition. I'm glad that is not a thing." It is important to note that while this teacher did not feel isolated, she did enjoy independence. Teachers at rural schools often do not have to share

their classrooms. One new teacher even disclosed, “I kind of have my own wing, so if I don't want to see anybody, I don't really have to. I stay away from the teacher’s lounge — not good!”

Across the career spectrum, a desire to avoid drama and intrigue characterized these 27 rural teachers. An experienced teacher reflected on the current tensions in his school where new teachers are asking, “Why should I have to walk? Why don’t I have a parking spot?” If they could know how we had it 31 years ago! Now I look at it as… one hand washes the other. The new teachers, I don't think they get that, and I think it's more than just… [sigh…]”. This teacher does not approve of the battles new teachers are taking on.

A new teacher coaches a girls’ sports team. One of the athletes on her team is a colleague’s daughter. Drama has manifested for this new teacher in many ways, “The girls will just come into my room anytime and I tell them, No! I’m in the middle of teaching...’ the main problem is one of the other teacher’s daughters. That’s why I’m not coaching next year.” The hassle of the athletes interrupting her instructional time and the inability effectively to manage a situation with a colleague’s daughter has presented her with an untenable situation. What is the responsibility of the administration in this situation? I wonder if this teacher will ever step back into a coaching role. If not, this young professional is missing out on a positive part of the rural school experience, for every teacher is a necessary part of the rural school community. I fear this district may have forever lost this individual in terms of extracurricular advisement.

Discussion, Implications, Conclusions

Manifestations of social capital (Coleman, 1988) shared by participants in this study present an opportunity to consider long-standing educational practices that, in fact, may stymie teachers’ development of social capital and serve to weaken the profession overall. Institutional-based rituals to express appreciation can enhance school culture. Participant stories revealed a lack of mechanisms to communicate their concerns either to supervisors or co-workers. The ability to speak about shared responsibilities in extracurricular co-advising situations can be extended to inclusion and other classroom formats when multiple educators are in a room at the same time. Annual attention is given to updating handbooks in schools, but more informal ways of information dissemination must be attended to, as well, including classroom placement and free periods held in common among colleagues. Formalized mentoring systems warrant scrutiny for their complicity in sustaining systems that are unresponsive to the specialized needs of new teachers. Encouraging and cultivating a culture of assistance and cooperation, rather than competition among colleagues will provide a rich harvest of social capital for both individual and large-group structures. Reconfiguring practices that force mentoring interactions into a system of sharing concerns with more experienced colleagues is a way schools may endorse the value of, in the words of this study’s participants, being “left alone.” Certainly, some teachers may seek this alone time as an act of resistance against workplace drama and intrigue; but interrogating the practices of our institutions can serve to ensure our schools are places where teachers at all phases of their careers are growing in both their pedagogical capacity and their social capital.

The potential of teachers’ social capital has far-reaching impacts in both the policy arena and higher education. Currently, half of teachers leave the profession within their first five years of teaching (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017), demonstrating the insufficiency of existing systems of support for current practices. Talk of teacher burnout and turnover should be replaced in the policy arena by methods that harness social capital. As new teachers are prepared for the workplace, attention must be given to fostering at all stages of their career a coalition

mentality with their future colleagues. New teachers will have extensive interactions with experienced teachers, many of whom are formidable fixtures in the power structure of their schools, as seen in the data presented here. Fostering a coalition mentality also helps teachers view their profession and the social capital they gain as something to "benefit all those who are part of such a structure" (Coleman, 1988, p. S116), for the greater good of the school and its students.

In the K-12 workplace, there are actions that can be taken to strengthen social capital. Classroom placement should be considered. Are there opportunities for a grassroots examination of the building's layout by teachers? Are there changes that need to be made as the individuals and the spaces within the building are "defined, redefined, and altered" (Abowitz, 2000, p.95) throughout their careers? While mentoring is mandated for new teachers, veteran teachers also can benefit from mentoring (Danielson, 2002), especially with incorporating new technologies into their instruction. Classroom coaching by experienced teachers can be a valuable part of the training of new teachers. Having an experienced teacher available for real-time assistance, similar to an "office hours" situation throughout the school day may give new teachers regular access to timely support. Increased oversight, particularly for extracurricular duties, including check-ins and monitoring for accountability (especially in co-advising situations) would have remedied some of the situations presented in the data. Professional development that permits the use of collegial "affinity groups" around shared, non-educational interests would also build social capital among teachers.

Specifically in rural New York, this study piques the sociological imagination for different types of mentoring. Perhaps a regional mentorship structure through BOCES (Boards of Cooperative Educational Services) would be responsive to content-area needs, while in-district mentoring would transmit information specific to a district's institutional knowledge and localized norms. Finally, supporting teachers at all stages of their career must be considered. In rural New York State, retirees often stay near where they worked; public service pensions account for 4-6% of county economies (DiNapoli, 2022). K-12 schools should look to utilize the full continuum of teachers' social capital, including that of pre- and post-service teachers. By bringing attention to the extant systems that teachers work in and through, we can ensure educators at every stage of their career have the tools and support they need to provide a high-quality education to their students.

Collegial relations affect every aspect of teachers' work. For lasting, effective change in our schools, it is imperative "…that policymakers and schools… enable teachers rather than developing policies that provoke active resistance from the very people who are expected to implement them" (Mehta, 2013, p. 29). Mandates are often "ineffective because they fail to get at changing the day-to-day culture of school systems" (Fullan, 2011, p. 8). The ones who create the daily school culture — the teachers — should be encouraged to grow as people and professionals. They also should enjoy informal collegiality, as well as have a chance to grow from formal, purposeful, carefully designed opportunities for collaboration as a natural outgrowth of working together. Fullan (2011) views social capital as a driver for educational reform. When "there is commonality of purpose, a shared vision, and understanding of how to complement one another's efforts" (Senge, 2006, p. 217) through the obligations and expectations, information channels, and social norms that influence teachers' daily work, then the social capital of teachers will be harnessed and can be used as an ingredient in the recipe for genuine educational reform.

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Reflections on Decolonial Pedagogy and Antiracist Teaching: Assessments as Resistance in Pre-service Teacher Education

Amanda M. Kingston, AJ Borja, Caitlin Cafiero, Calissa Brown, and Mario Rios Perez
Syracuse University

Abstract: It's not enough to tell students about the value of antiracist teaching/decolonial pedagogy. Students must feel that value in their own educational experiences. The final project in "EDU 310: The American School" (affectionately known as "3tenlab") gives students opportunity to feel the worth of antiracist/decolonial teaching. Three themes identified in analysis of final projects point to 3tenlab's framework of antiracist teaching/decolonial pedagogy: student meaning-making, generating resources/tools, and de-centering epistemic power. Final projects not only inculcate deep engagement with course content; but compel students to confront the foundational backgrounds of systems of schooling. 3tenlab challenges Social Foundations to find ways to communicate to students: Foundations is not *about* education. Foundations is *in* education.

At the end of each semester of "EDU 310: The American School," a course rooted in the Foundations of Education (which we, the authors, collaboratively teach), we come together as a teaching team to discuss student final projects, excitedly talking about photography slideshows, children's books, or podcasts undergraduate students created as a reflection and extension of their learning from the semester in 3tenlab. Topics range from educational equity and the future of technology to critical understandings of students in ELL programs to culturally relevant pedagogy in a first-grade classroom. Rather than a final test or required final essay, students propose projects that speak from and back to the course. The goal of this undergraduate course is to introduce students to the long durée of educational movements and to critical issues currently affecting educational structures. It is the only required course for all education majors in the School of Education at Syracuse University. Thus, pre-service teachers make up the bulk of our enrollment. Based on our reflections of teaching this course as a collective, the purpose of this article is to show how we attempt to reframe systems of oppression in our teaching — particularly those systems that shape how we assess student learning — to a more relational practice of assessment rooted in decolonial and antiracist teaching.

While research around pre-service teacher education attends to the inclusion of decolonial pedagogy and antiracist teaching (Arneback, 2020), we find that an extension of this work contributing to adequacy of instruction must include assessment practices in pre-service teacher education as well. Across many courses, assessments still consist of traditional tests or final essays that require students to demonstrate a specific line of knowledge and restrict them from applying what they have learned to real world scenarios or generate new knowledges and applications. As a result, traditional assessment practices can promote individualism, reproduce ableist and racist notions of knowledge (even with accommodations and modifications), and tend not to engage students in more just and equitable considerations of the education and schooling systems (Ketonen & Nieminen, 2019). Traditional assessments can also reinforce static models that future educators may replicate in their own classrooms, further entrenching white supremacist, capitalist, and positivist notions of knowledge and merit (Paris & Alim, 2017; Reese, 2013).

Decolonial pedagogy and antiracist teaching, when applied to assessment analysis, can disrupt traditional assessment practices by using more holistic, creative, and generative forms of knowledge production and resources for pre-service educators. As a result, we anticipate two potential outcomes: 1) interruption of traditional assessment in pre-service teacher experiences in

favor of a more meaningful engagement with course content, and 2) a model of assessment for our students' future classrooms and educational spaces to make their students' educational experiences more meaningful, too. With these potential outcomes in mind, we discuss offering creative final projects in a pre-service Foundations of Education course as an extension of decolonial and antiracist pedagogy to counter and resist oppression associated with traditional assessment practices. To situate our work conceptually and experientially, we provide a brief literature review of decolonial and antiracist pedagogy and a discussion of the context of the course. Then, utilizing a reflective methodology, we discuss our own experiences guiding students in completion of final projects. Finally, we consider implications for other pre-service education courses — particularly those rooted in a Social Foundations of Education tradition.

Decolonial Pedagogy

We draw on decolonial pedagogy to help us develop new assessments in the course that will promote critical reflection and challenge western notions of knowledge production. Decolonial pedagogy is part of a growing body of research and scholarship that focuses on challenging the colonial legacies in educational systems by fostering more empowering and equitable learning spaces. It emerged as a response to the perpetual and ongoing effects of colonialism on global and national education systems. Generally, the framework aims to decenter western ways of knowing and being, thus empowering marginalized voices and promoting social justice within educational settings (Grande, 2004).

One of the most prominent themes of decolonial pedagogy is the urgent call to depose Eurocentric and western epistemologies that perpetuate colonial educational practices (Smith, 1999). Paulo Freire and Frantz Fanon laid the groundwork for decolonial pedagogy by highlighting the role of education in reproducing colonial hierarchies (Fanon, 1963; Freire, 1970). Fanon and Freire promoted liberation through critical consciousness-raising and resistance to banking methods of education that perpetuated hierarchies of race and class. Their work underscores the need to reexamine curriculum, instructional methods, and assessment practices to challenge dominant narratives and empower learners to engage critically with their histories and identities. In our teaching, we take up the task posed by Freire and Fanon by reexamining our course's inherited curriculum (the course has been taught by numerous instructors over the past 40 years), as well as the course assessments. We are interested in students' ability to synthesize the foundations of American education, as well as make sense of their own role and social position as educators within the contemporary educational context.

Since its inception, decolonial pedagogy has grown to emphasize the importance of centering Indigenous knowledges, land, and perspectives in educational spaces. Indigenous scholars like Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Sandy Grande, and Shawn Wilson have advocated for decolonizing methodologies that prioritize Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Grande, 2004; Smith 1999; Wilson, 2008). Their work underscores the importance of recognizing and respecting diverse knowledge systems and challenging western epistemologies that marginalize Indigenous voices. Decolonial pedagogy intersects with other critical frameworks such as critical race theory, tribal critical race theory, and feminist pedagogy (Brayboy, 2005). Scholars like Gloria Ladson-Billings and bell hooks have explored the intersections of race, gender, and power in educational settings, highlighting the importance of addressing systemic inequalities and centering the experiences of marginalized groups in the curriculum (hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Recent literature on decolonial pedagogy also explores practical strategies for implementing decolonial practices in the classroom, which include incorporating Indigenous perspectives into curriculum development, engaging in dialogue with local communities, and critically examining power dynamics within educational institutions (Maldonado-Torres, et al, 2023; Maluleka, 2023). Additionally, scholars have highlighted the role of technology and digital media in decolonizing education, providing opportunities for students to share their own narratives and challenge dominant discourses. This body of work underscores the importance of recognizing and confronting colonial legacies within educational systems. By centering Indigenous knowledges, challenging dominant narratives, and promoting critical consciousness, decolonial pedagogy offers a transformative framework for creating more inclusive and equitable learning environments. However, further research and reflection are needed to examine the effectiveness of decolonial practices in different educational contexts and to address challenges such as resistance from dominant groups and institutional barriers to change.

The Material Practice of Antiracist Teaching

The revisions we make to our syllabus, and the policies and practices we employ in the course are drawn from pedagogues who are interested in centering the educational experiences of historically marginalized communities (Gillborn, 2006; Hamer & Lang, 2015; Tomlinson & Lipsitz, 2013; Yancy, 2019). In our teaching, we aim to actively challenge narratives that view students of color through a deficit-based lens and sustain damage-centered narratives (Tuck, 2009). Our antiracist pedagogical approach considers the content we include in the syllabus, how we teach and apply policy, and how power is conceptualized in educational practice. Throughout the semester, we center critical histories and discuss contemporary social conditions and possible futurities for communities of color that are relational and intersectional (DuBois, 1935; Kelley, 1990; Collins, 2019; Molina et. al., 2019). Given that most of the students who enroll in our course are white women and will likely teach students of color after they graduate, it is paramount for us to include content that is not only about communities of color, but also promotes antiracist teaching (Paris & Alim, 2017).

Drawing on intellectual traditions of critical theory and community-oriented pedagogy, we are in constant dialogue as a teaching team about the content we present. We make weekly adaptations to our course material and teaching methods to ensure that all our students are critically engaging the content, and we adjust our teaching methods during lectures and discussion sections accordingly. Despite being an upper-level course, our course enrolls a range of students from first year to nearing graduation. It is not uncommon for us to have teacher education students enrolled in the course who are adept in antiracist educational teaching practices while simultaneously having students enrolled who have never had critical discussions about race or racism. Being attentive to our students and their broader contexts and histories gives us a sharper perspective on how to integrate contemporary racial issues into our instruction and address possible gaps in our students' understanding of racial justice (Parks, et. al., 2022).

Being conscious of our students' social identities, in addition to including content that challenges white supremacy and messianic narratives of education (Anderson, 1988; Marquez, 2024) we draw on scholarship that conceptualizes antiracist teaching as a pedagogical strategy. Recent scholarship has provided useful guideposts for college instructors wanting to center antiracist pedagogical practices in their classrooms (Sonn, 2008). In addition to integrating content written by scholars of color, an antiracist classroom requires instructors to be critically

self-aware and self-reflective about how their social position informs their ideas of merit, learning, and teaching (Kishimoto, 2018; Browne & Jean-Marie, 2022).All these ideas taken together, we find that antiracist teaching must actively challenge how power is conceptualized in the classroom. Although it is essential for antiracist instructors to interrupt racial narratives through the content they include in their classes, we argue that it is also necessary to integrate assessments that challenge and subvert the ways in which knowledge and power are conventionally produced and shared in the classroom. Developing creative final assessments for "EDU 310: The American School" is one way we implement these critical approaches.

Situating Antiracist and Decolonial Assessments

Course Context: In recent years, EDU 310: The American School" has been under the leadership of a Foundations of Education professor and three graduate teaching assistants who mentor between 50 to 75 students each fall and spring semester (Rodriguez, 2009; Scully & Romo, 2022). The context of our course of study is heavily influenced by the demographic profile of the student population that cycles through the course. Like most education programs found in research-extensive universities and liberal arts colleges in the United States, the majority of pre-service educators enrolled in "The American School" are white. For this reason, we find it imperative to embrace antiracist teaching and decolonial pedagogy and weave those two pedagogical strategies into the fabric of our course to adequately address ongoing inequities and injustices in US schooling. And, given the increase of students of color in public schools and the recent racial justice movements on college and university campuses, we constantly evaluate our curriculum to reconsider how our course centers educational justice in theory and practice. It is critical to go beyond introducing students to educational justice movements and issues by also incorporating equity-based pedagogies into our practice. It is *prima facie* hypocritical to teach about educational justice, equity, and inclusion, if we do not exercise those ideas in our own teaching, in our course materials, policies, practices, and assessments. We design our course curriculum to offer students the opportunity to learn from decolonial writers, antiracist scholars, and teacher-activists like Bettina Love, bell hooks, and James Baldwin (Baldwin, 1963; hooks 2009; Love, 2023). The curriculum also offers pathways to learn how Indigenous, queer, disability, Black, and ethnic studies are foundational fields for educators who are interested in challenging deficit-based practices. Informed by scholars like hooks, the project-based assignments and assessments we include are based in educational philosophies and research that draws on decolonial and antiracist pedagogies (hooks, 1994).

Process of Final Creative Assessments: The final, project-based assessment of the course was born from the pedagogical influences of the educators, activists, and scholars we teach about in the course. Project-based assessments provide students the opportunity to explore their positionality and educational philosophy by expressing, in any media they feel comfortable***, their*** understanding of course topics that resonate with them. Thus, the final project provides a level of intellectual access and (inter)personal engagement traditional assessments do not.[1]

The process for final projects begins in the last third of the semester, at which point we review and edit instructions from previous semesters. This provides us opportunity to collectively review and make edits, ranging from more specific guidelines for proposing creative projects to offering directions, based on how students conceived their projects in preceding

[1] Although we only focus here on the final project, 3tenlab integrates other non-traditional assessments throughout the semester.

semesters. For example, in fall 2023, we asked students to consider their final project as an educational resource of sorts, either a piece they could draw on as part of their future portfolios of work or as a resource that could be utilized by current pre-service or classroom educators, communities, or students. For self-generated projects, students were asked to include an explanation statement detailing connections to course content and specific materials from the class they were drawing on, be it lectures, course readings, videos, or podcasts. While there is the option of submitting a traditional final essay with a provided prompt, students have increasingly opted to develop creative projects as their final assessment. In fall 2023, 53% of students chose the creative project for their final. Below, we detail the final project process as well as provide examples of student work.

The initial instructions for the final creative project are intentionally broad, so projects can take several forms. Students choosing a creative project are required to meet with their assigned teaching assistant to develop expectations of the project, flesh out ideas for the final product, and talk through any additional support ideas that will help them create their work. While these typically are not long and belabored meetings, they are a space where teaching assistants and students can engage in a different type of power dynamic in the creation of the project. Rather than the professor or teaching assistants dictating the detailed terms of the final project, students come prepared with a brief presentation of what they hope to accomplish and, together with their teaching assistant, discuss the capacity of time and materials necessary to reach their goal. For example, as students propose working with partners on a podcast, teaching assistants might help students narrow down the focus or talk through how long the podcast needs to be to fully accomplish the goals of the project. As teaching assistants, this can be a generative space of looking to students as the experts of their own experiences and assessment, learning what their greatest takeaways are from the course, and genuinely serving as midwives to this final project as we constructively guide student creativity. Through initial instructions and in one-to-one meetings, students and teaching assistants agree on a set of criteria for final projects. Rather than providing a standard traditional essay and expectations on an A-F scale, these meetings afford the opportunity for students and teaching assistants to work together in discussing what a project demonstrating student knowledge will look like and be assessed on.

Completing a creative final project, students often also have the opportunity to work with a partner or group, either in their same discussion section or across another section. When students across sections choose to partner for a final project, this is also a chance for teaching assistants to consult together on the expectations to communicate to students as well as how collaboratively to grade the project. While students are not required to work with a partner or in a small group, we encourage them to collaborate on the final project with at least one other classmate as a way for them to generate knowledge together, locating this in an act of "commoning" and co-creation rather than in an individual act (Chapman, 2023; Korsgaard, 2019). Creative final projects include a range of possibilities as each semester brings fresh and innovative ideas. To date, students have developed scripts for plays or films, collections of poetry, several audio formats including a podcast-style project or musical composition, video interviews with peers or colleagues, and a range of visual media including photography, graphic novels, children's books, paintings, digital artwork, and more.

Many students opt to do a podcast-style project with several episodes in which they explore and extend a class topic. International students have chosen the final creative option to compare the educational system in the US to the system in their home countries, interrogating the goals of

schooling in social, political, economic, and cultural ways. Sometimes, students who are in the midst of, or have completed, their student teaching semester(s) will use course concepts and ideas to produce a podcast exploring the realities of US education as revealed in their experiences. And, still others use this project as a space to interview current classroom teachers or administrators — or even students — to discuss challenges in US schooling around issues of school discipline practices, EL (English Learner) programming, teacher preparation; to name only a few. In a recent podcast project, a student chose to interview a local EL teacher and one of the teacher's students who had arrived through refugee resettlement. They talked about their experiences, including the challenges of teaching and learning in US schools as well as how EL programming provides culturally relevant support to students. In all their many forms, we have found taking the creative project option has given students the space to critically analyze the foundations of education while also engaging in antiracist and decolonial pedagogies.

Children's books have also been a popular mode for the final project, challenging students to take nuanced and complicated concepts and communicate them to children anywhere from elementary to middle school age. Students have created children's books focused on welcoming classroom spaces, diversity and disability, and equitable and just practices in educational spaces. With this project, students must not only write the kids' book, but they must also provide the illustrations. While some students create these images by hand using drawing utensils or at a workstation designing digital art, other students use websites like Canva or My Story to design the images for their picture books. A student in a previous year chose to draw on her experiences visiting Mt. Rushmore with a friend who is a citizen of an Indigenous nation. During this visit, the student learned about the Indigenous histories and memories around Mt. Rushmore and the colonial effort to claim and alter the space by using it to honor presidents of the US settler colonial nation state. In her children's book, the student offered the reader two pathways up the mountain, one that followed the white-washed colonial history of Mt. Rushmore and the other that pioneered the more complicated and violent history of settler colonialism, including Indigenous resistance and activism to reclaim the area. While children's books can seem a simple medium, we find that putting larger concepts such as white supremacy or settler colonialism in terms and examples meaningful for children is a powerful exercise for our students, one that prepares them for conversations around these and other curricular topics in their own future classrooms.

A growing number of students are also using this project to redesign a curriculum unit or lesson plan focused on the grade level and content they wish to teach. For example, one student planning on teaching fifth-grade social studies reimagined a curriculum unit on Westward Expansion, renaming it Colonial Expansion. The content and questions of the unit focused on interrogating traditional histories of US Manifest Destiny from the experiential perspectives of Indigenous nations. The experiences the student chose to focus on included both the structural genocide Indigenous peoples experienced as well as resistance to and agency in service of US settler colonialism. In another example, a student reworked a lesson on family for a first-grade classroom. Taking a culturally relevant approach to the topic the lesson included various family structures to provide racial, gendered, religious, and ethnic representations of family. The lesson taught appropriate vocabulary to ensure first-grade students who engaged in the lesson not only saw themselves there, but also saw each other.

Art and other visual projects make up a portion of creative final projects. These have included comic panels, painting and drawing, and photography. As we have asked students to

consider their work as a resource, we have been intrigued by the ways in which students use visual media as a teaching tool or as supplemental material for instruction. For example, in a recent semester one student chose to photograph staff members from the Center of Disability Resources (CDR) on campus as part of his final project, creating a photography portfolio. As part of the work, the student asked staff to write out by hand what their roles meant to them and how they thought about disability pride. The student then imposed images of the staff's own handwriting onto the photographs. The purpose of this portfolio, the student argued in their explanatory statement, was to show the human faces behind CDR emails and the accommodations section often included in course syllabi. The student shared that, through creating this portfolio, he also hoped it could be utilized as a future resource for students unaware of CDR or intimidated in approaching the space to acquire necessary accommodations. Emails and accommodations statements do not always have space to show the office is filled with dedicated staff who care deeply about supporting student success.

Students have also taken these projects in other directions. One student wrote a "Teacher's Oath" based on the Hippocratic oath taken by medical professionals in which educators pledge to interrogate their biases, create safe spaces, prioritize student well-being, and protect students from harm. Another student wrote a musical composition based on their teaching experiences. In a recent semester, a student created a set of ten poems based on readings from James Baldwin and bell hooks, interrogating the need for schools to focus on the goal of democratic equality in curating present and future classrooms. Through projects like these, we continue to be impressed and excited by the work students are developing and co-constructing. Our guidelines evolve and change in each successive semester, serving as a living document to provide students the appropriate guidance while also providing them the space to create their own projects. We continue to find the project to be not only generative and exciting for students themselves, but also an opportunity for myriad interests, knowledges, and experiences to unfold.

Reflections on Student Projects

We find three themes that arise out of the final creative projects that point back to the course framework of antiracist teaching and decolonial pedagogy: student meaning-making, generating resources and tools, and de-centering epistemic power. In the following subsections, we discuss our reflections on each of these themes as well as the possibilities they hold for continuing antiracist teaching and decolonial pedagogy. We identified these three themes from our shared conversations on the final project process. However, many more themes unfold as we reflect on student work. Certainly, we can consider additional themes around universal design learning, accessibility, learning theories for adult learners, and practices of epistemic justice. For the present analysis, though, we focused on the themes that most often came up in our reflections and conversations most closely related to the work we try to do as antiracist and decolonial pedagogues.

Making Meaning in Course and Life: Common through many student projects are 1) the connections they make to their own lives, experiences, and work outside of the course, and 2) that the projects are curated through modes connected to students' own interests and/or skill. Through these pieces, students often engage in deep processes of meaning-making through the course content by connecting to their own lives and practices of knowledge engagement and production. As a result, the course continues as *living* through student perspectives and experiences. Additionally, as we reflect, we also see how students utilize passion, skill, and

knowledge to make meaning with their final projects. Unlike traditional essays, creative final projects continue to allow students space to bring in their own modes of knowledge production — such as screenwriting, film- or podcast making, or visual arts — to convey how they are making meaning with course content.

For example, in the photography portfolio of the Center for Disability Resources staff discussed on the previous page, the student drew a connection between a course theme, examining the history of dis/ability in US schooling, to his own lived experiences in higher education as a person with a disability. Appreciation of the people at CDR who channeled the resources that made learning more accessible to him prompted him to create a project encouraging other students in situations similar to his to access the support available from the CDR staff. Through this project, the student made meaning of the course material in his own lived experience, drawing connections between the history of US schooling and his own education. In his reflection, the student spoke about making meaning of the world through photography rather than just words. The meaning-making the student participated in is not to be found solely in course material and/or his own experience, but also, perhaps as a *sine qua non* of the degree of meaningfulness the project achieved, in how he *conveys* this meaning-making through a mode of knowledge production most meaningful for him (Kuh, 2016).

In another example, three students chose to jointly create a podcast to reflect on their educational experiences around inequity. The students first highlighted their own experiences — all from more privileged schooling backgrounds — followed by their experiences as students in a teacher education program located in a predominantly white institution (PWI) and as student teachers in the (not quite so privileged) local city school district. Throughout their podcast, the students focused on the inconsistencies of equitable messaging they received as K-16 students and what they saw students in the surrounding city school district experiencing. The students also paid attention to *who* can afford to receive teacher certification through traditional education programs. College coursework and student-teaching schedules often prohibit undergraduate students from holding outside jobs, resulting in a need for more student loans or greater support from family. The connection these students made was, while teacher education programs and US schooling can claim to be promoting more equitable and diverse classrooms, teacher education was often only available — financially and temporally — to students from more privileged backgrounds who can afford the costs of the college experience, thus reproducing a white, female teaching workforce. At the end of this project, we found students engaging in antiracist reflection and considering how white supremacy not only orchestrates how students of color experience K-12 education, but also how teachers are produced for K-12 classrooms in the United States. Critical to the meaning-making involved in this project is the fact that students collaborated on it. Course material was conversationally and synergistically mediated through multiple experiential lenses to generate the educational energy that fueled this powerful project.

Generating Resources & Tools The second theme we see in student work is how students generate and employ their projects as resources for antiracist and decolonial learning (Arneback & Jämte, 2020). We encourage students to think about their projects as living beyond our class by asking them what audience they are creating the project for, the purpose of the work, and how the work might be used. In recent semesters, several students have turned to infographics as a mode for their final project to present complex information in a more digestible format (Charsky, 2023). Infographic topics have included differences in the medical and social models of disabilities, the rights of LGBTQ+ educators, and addressing environmental racism in schooling.

Some students have distributed their infographics projects to fellow educators as a resource for their classrooms. Other students have rewritten curriculum units and lesson plans for their student-teaching or teaching portfolios with particular interest in culturally sustaining pedagogy. And yet other students tend to think of the broader community to which they can connect by using their projects as support resources, such as study guides for local plays targeting K-12 students and podcasts for classrooms to educate school attendees and the general public on the experiences of newcomer students in US school systems. By asking students to consider their audience, the purpose of the work, and how it might be used, the final projects become a meaningful site of engagement between the classroom and communities. Students can respond to needs they have become aware of through volunteering, working, or student-teaching. This is yet another way we see the course as living beyond a semester.

As instructors, we also find 3tenlab is a place which has challenged us to support students in thinking at deeper levels about antiracist and decolonial work. As students and teaching assistants conference to co-create project expectations, we ask students to consider what structural inequities they are addressing in their work and what they hope an audience will learn through the final project. For example, many students share that they hope to focus on themes of diversity or equality in their final project, which becomes a place for teaching assistants to prompt students to think more deeply — "*But why is this important, and why does it matter? What histories are you thinking about? What structures are at odds that need to be aligned? How will you talk about these structures? What are you asking for this audience to think about differently?"* Students nearly always refine their responses into themes of addressing dis/ability, white supremacy and racism, settler colonialism, or cisheteropatriarchy, allowing for development of more concrete and clearer ideas and language in crafting a podcast, children's book, or video slideshow that is audience-appropriate for teaching these topics (Ohito, 2016).

Decentering Epistemic Power: Central to decolonial pedagogy is an ongoing set of questions around structures, discourses, and dynamics of power. In our weekly team meetings, we discuss grading calibration, informal check-ins on students and student work; as well as how we are functioning together as a team. What we hope to do through this series of practices — despite all structural limitations — is to de-center power in an institutional sense of changing a potential professor *vs*. teaching assistant situation into a teaching team or collegial collective, dispersing power to decide what knowledge demonstrates learning and engagement. In traditional academic epistemologies, knowledge is tested through written essays or tests which ask students to memorize information and repeat it back to the professor. Even when students are asked to critically engage with course materials, instructors often grade students' work using traditional methods such as standardized rubrics or benchmarks curated without student input. In utilizing a decolonial pedagogical approach, we look to assessments and grading as a power structure of traditional academia often rooted in white, colonial epistemologies. So, we are considering not only the content students learn but also the ways in which they begin to think about power structures and how power might be less centralized in schooling.

Reflecting upon the final project process, we see more of a reach to *work with* students on the development of final projects rather than merely testing their learning. By meeting with teaching assistants to share their ideas and help develop grading benchmarks, students are invited to co-construct the assessment process. In thinking through this process of co-creating benchmarks, students offer what they conceive is possible for the mode in which they hope to address their topic of choice. Teaching assistants offer feedback and guidance on refining and

sharpening the topic and idea. After these meetings, students and teaching assistants continue to communicate on expectations and any adjustments that need to be made. In our experience as a teaching collective, talking projects out with students provides a space in which neither party is a true expert on a project or topic. Rather, students listen to the teaching assistants for guidance and teaching assistants listen to students on how a particular mode and topic might function together. As students submit final projects of music, visual art, graphic novels, etc., teaching assistants may not be experts in or even familiar with these modes of knowledge and thus must rely on student knowledge to co-curate final project expectations.

Implications for Foundations of Education

We offer three implications of the practice of antiracist/decolonial assessment for practitioners, scholars, and teacher education programs, particularly those rooted in Foundations of Education. First, creative assessments present the possibility of de-centering power dynamics within rigid academic systems so that students play a part in generating new knowledge and contributing to the field of Foundations. Students are not merely learning *about* cultural and social foundations of education but are *finding* cultural and social foundations *in* education. Second, creative assessments prompt students to engage in critical theory and praxis by relating their own experiences as students and as educators to foundational questions about what schooling is, who schooling is for, and what differences exist between schooling and education. Implementing similar practices can strengthen cultural and social foundations of education programs' commitment to critical work in addressing democracy, social justice, histories of inequality, and the colonial logics of education (Tozer, et. al, 2011). Finally, creative assessments offer space for students to engage and understand their current educational context. Assessment of local, place-based contexts of educational issues such as inequality, environmental racism, dis/ability, and resistance to colonial structures, positions students to address experiences that may be hidden from the public eye. Creative projects hold space for students to *reveal* the presence of racial and colonial logics in schools; and to understand how the master narrative in US schooling omits, silences, and contorts other perspectives on the meaning of education and the structure of schooling.

As we look to future iterations and evolutions of this course and the final project, we are considering how student self-assessment might be part of this process, what it would look like to expand public and school of education engagement in student work by incorporating creative final projects as core texts of the course, and additional pathways of formal research to understand the implications of student engagement with creative projects as a contribution to the aliveness of 3tenlab. Whatever transformations we foster and experience, we remain focused on practicing antiracist teaching and decolonial pedagogies that address power dynamics in assessment, break-down classroom-community binaries, and cultivate critical classroom engagement with personal experience and socio-cultural positionality.

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Teacher Autonomy and Lesson Planning

Anne Shields
Bard Early College
and
Madhu Narayanan
Portland State University

Abstract: Teacher autonomy is an important construct that shapes how educators feel about their work within schools and classrooms. This paper explores how teachers' felt sense of autonomy affects their lesson planning process. We conducted semi-structured interviews with a group of four teachers who utilized different approaches to lesson planning. Key findings point to the important role of individual school contexts, the impact of teachers' existing pedagogical and content knowledge, and the unique discourses teachers adopt in describing their process.

Autonomy is a fundamental human need alongside feelings of belonging and competence, all three of which work together to shape human motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). For educators, autonomy can be thought of as the degree to which they control their actions in their work environment (Pearson & Moomaw, 2006). Perceptions of autonomy vary across the many different domains of a teacher's work (Wermke & Forsgard, 2017; Ingersoll, 2009), as teachers are tasked with both working in their classrooms and working as members of a larger school community. Autonomy is a complex construct — it is not quite an objective measure of decision-making authority but rather a perception of control (Erss, 2018; Frase & Sorenson, 1992).

Teacher autonomy can relate to many positive attributes, including job satisfaction (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020), retention (Fernet et al., 2014), increased empowerment, and lower stress (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). However, teachers generally express a lack of autonomy related to many of their professional roles. They have little influence in domains of school operations, including deciding rosters, electing which grade or subject to teach, or school-wide policies on behavior (Hargreaves, 2000; Lortie, 1975; Worth & Van den Brande, 2020; Ingersoll, 2009). This dynamic is one reason schools have historically been described as "loosely coupled" systems, where teacher responsibility is controlled in exchange for considerable freedom within the classroom (Ingersoll, 2009). Other structures that regulate teachers' autonomy related to curriculum include textbooks and scripted reading programs. Requiring teachers to follow such books/programs has been stigmatized as effort to de-skill the profession (Ball & Feiman-Nemser, 1988; Shannon, 1987). More recently, a shift towards high-stakes accountability has brought increased regulation and monitoring of teachers' work, including the mandated use of scripted lesson plans (Valli & Buese, 2007; Hargreaves, 2000).

Despite its apparent benefits for teacher morale, autonomy is a complicated construct within education. Teachers are public agents, responsible to both the students they serve and the general public. Their autonomy inevitably will be placed against larger institutional goals or family goals, thus raising deeper questions of the interplay of control, freedom, and the state (Lennert da Silva & Mølstad 2020; Wermke & Salokangas, 2021). Additionally, not all teachers may perceive autonomy to be completely necessary for their practice. Pitt (2010) argued that, for some teachers, autonomy is interpreted as abandonment without adequate support. Frase and Sorenson (1992) suggested that granting autonomy to teachers is a way for leaders and education departments to avoid their responsibility for ensuring strong teaching.

In this complicated arrangement, some argue that autonomy must be balanced by other structures. Erss (2018) claimed that teachers should be given "complete freedom to choose within limits;" that is, they would be socialized to practice self-regulation and metacognition within a community of practice to support development of their autonomy. Similarly, Cribb and Gerwitz (2007, p. 203) wrote that autonomy and control are overlapping concepts, "autonomy cannot exist in a vacuum but is always exercised within systems of constraints." These ideas are examples of what Wermke and Salokangas (2021) call the "autonomy paradox," where a degree of control is necessary to support autonomy.

Previous studies illustrate how perceptions of autonomy can be highly variable. Researchers from Scandinavia described the complicated relationship between national context and teacher autonomy where teachers have the freedom to adapt mandated curriculum to patterns of learning among their students (Erss, 2018; Mausethagen & Mølstad 2015; Wermke & Forsgard, 2017). A survey of 155 New York City teachers (Narayanan et al., 2024), out of which this study grew, found that autonomy was higher for high school teachers and those who wrote their own lessons, and lower for elementary teachers and those using scripted lessons. However, these general findings about variability leave room to investigate how the actual, lived experience of lesson planning can shape a teacher's perception of autonomy, a gap this paper seeks to explore.

Method

This multi-case study sought to understand how teachers perceive their workplace autonomy in relation to their unique process for planning lessons. Our previous research involved interviewing 18 participants as a follow up to a survey of 155 New York City educators (Narayanan et al., 2024). We conducted semi-structured interviews with participants who opted in after completing an initial survey on autonomy. All interviews took place on Zoom and lasted 30 to 45 minutes. We asked teachers about their lesson planning process (where, when, how); expectations for lesson planning (scripted lesson plans, scope and sequence, write from scratch), and what models of support were present within their schools. Our final interview question asked participants to rate their sense of autonomy on a scale from 1-10, and participants reported a wide range of scores. As we asked this question, we followed Pearson and Hall's (1993, p. 172) original teacher autonomy survey in formally defining autonomy for our participants as the "extent to which you select learning goals, have control over this process, over your materials, and over what you ultimately teach in your class."

The current study selected four of these teachers for a case study analysis to more closely explore the relationship between autonomy and lesson planning. All four participants instruct secondary students at the middle or high school level; but each participant in this study teaches a different grade and subject area. These participants work in three school models — charter management organization (CMO), independent charter, or traditional district school — and their lesson planning processes are similarly varied, including writing plans from scratch, receiving scope and sequence, or receiving scripted lesson plans. Participants were strategically selected as cases who work across settings with a range of approaches to lesson planning, thus allowing us to better explore factors that inform their sense of autonomy. Based on comments made during the interview process, we also chose teachers who expressed different levels of content knowledge related to the subject area they taught.

After transcribing interview responses, we created a comprehensive deductive codebook based on themes of lesson planning, accountability, and Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-

determination (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) scale to drive our analysis (Saldaña, 2021). To strengthen the reliability of our coding and interpretation, we first compared our independent coding of one transcript (Braun & Clarke, 2013). After sharing our codes and resolving different interpretations, we established an inter-rater reliability of 92%. We then continued coding the remaining transcripts. During that process, we listened to recordings of the interview to ensure accuracy. After coding, we individually drafted detailed memos for capturing reflections. We both have experience in various teaching and administrative positions in New York City schools, working in both district and charter schools. Our own experiences and positionality as teachers and teacher educators undoubtedly shaped our interpretations. This iterative process of coding, reflection, and discussion allowed us to develop confidence in our interpretations of the data and address potential biases that may result from our positionality as researchers.

Results

Each teacher articulated nuanced perspectives about their planning process, as well as variables that impacted their sense of autonomy related to drafting lessons:

Rafael: Rafael teaches 10th-grade neuroscience at a traditional district school after his previous career as a genetics researcher. He is in his second year of teaching. Ninth and tenth graders in his course can receive an advanced Biology credit. He works as part of a consortium of schools where he collaborates with other educators who teach the same subject. Rafael works with a co-teacher but takes on most of the planning himself. Rafael does not submit his lesson plans to anyone. He stated his administration fosters a community of trust and emphasized that he appreciates this element of school culture: “I don’t do well with micromanaging.” He is also aware that this freedom and trust are highly connected to not teaching towards a state exam: “So it's a very unique system, you know, not having to teach for the Regents, as well. So, it gives me a lot of freedom with what I teach and how I teach it.” Such a sense of freedom from the constraints of institutional structures within and outside of his school is a key factor influencing his autonomy.

Rafael’s planning process is complex. It involves finding sources on the internet, drawing on the work of a previous neuroscience teacher, accessing a collection of plans from the Franklin Institute of Neuroscience, and using a template for his unit planning. He completes most of his planning on weekends, citing evening commitments, such as graduate school, interfering with his week-time productivity. He takes pride in his efforts in planning claiming, “I have built a lot of my curriculum myself.” His planning efforts, including creating detailed scripts, challenge the norms of his school. Other teachers have mentioned this difference to him and he reflected, “I feel like everybody I've talked to is like, ‘Why are you so hellbent on writing such a detailed lesson plan?’ And I get frustrated with that. I'm just like, ‘Yeah. Why am I writing like this?’ It feels like I'm writing a play almost sometimes. And it's like, ‘Do I really need to do all this?’ Because a lot of the stuff that I say and do, like everybody needs a plan, always, but, like, a lot of the stuff that comes out there in the lessons is pretty natural. Sometimes I don't even plan it.” Still, Rafael derives comfort from a well-thought-out lesson plan, explaining that including talking points and concept maps directly on his written plan helps to ease his anxiety. He rated his autonomy as 10 out of 10. His high autonomy allows for more positive interactions with students. He stated, “the freedom and the support allow me to be the teacher that I am to my students, to be open and goofy with them.”

Rita: Rita teaches high school special education at a district school. She is in her first year of teaching but comes to the profession with several years of experience, having served as a tutor since she was 14. Now, as a teacher, she experiences teaching in a heavily institutionalized context. In her context of a district school, there is a degree of autonomy, but it is complicated by her role as a special education teacher. Rita does not submit her lesson plans to anyone but collaborates with several different co-teachers in her classroom and is sometimes dependent on materials from them. She has one mandated co-planning meeting with each teacher every week but said that planning is often done independently after school or at home. These co-teaching structures don't support her having the type of impact she would like related to lesson planning: "the lack of accountability between these interpersonal relationships that I have doesn't allow for it to be as successful as I would like it to be." Rita appears to want more structure to support her collaborative lesson planning efforts outside of what her school currently provides.

The union-negotiated rules are in the background of her lesson planning process. Although she creates lesson plans, the administrators cannot inspect them unless a teacher is being observed. Ultimately, such regulations contribute to her conflicted relationship with the concept of autonomy. The union rules produce a degree of freedom and structure, but they also create murkiness. Rita seemed reluctant to admit that she craves more structure, mandated partnerships, and oversight: "I'm happy that the union allows us to have so much freedom in terms of how we plan our lessons… and the way that we can run our classroom. But I also think that with all that freedom, it's kind of easy to take advantage of, and that's just what I'm feeling at the moment."

Rita's overall autonomy score stated in the interview was a 3 or 4 out of 10. There are two cases where she felt more autonomy. One was when she had to take more of a lead while teaching to complete a graduate school assignment. The other was related to a successful lesson she planned for the one class she teaches on her own. She described in detail how planning for her students made her feel she was making a real difference. She included differentiation, creativity, student choice, and noted the impact that providing opportunities for student-autonomy helped to increase engagement. Overall, she seemed to have a positive experience creating her own lessons, "I kind of enjoy it… because I have that freedom, it's very… it can be very personal to me, and I just feel like this is something that I can produce. Like, this is how I would imagine teaching." Clearly even small moments of freedom can positively impact teachers' autonomy and overall affect in the classroom.

Lilliana: Lilliana teaches at an independent charter school. She is a first-year classroom teacher, writes her own lesson plans, and is responsible for submitting them to her supervisor. Her assistant principal, who she described as her "indirect supervisor" provides feedback after reviewing the lesson plans that she submits every Wednesday. She expressed feeling stressed as a novice educator, claiming her administration said, "You just need to be on top of it. This is what it's like to be a first-year teacher like you need to work more than 40 hours a week." This pressure from the top negatively influences Lilliana's feelings as a professional. Despite the role of administrators, she expressed mixed opinions about the impact of their oversight related to student performance on quarterly interim assessments. She states, "We're fully criticized by our bosses for the data;" but goes on to emphasize how this system of accountability motivates her to be more mindful about her lesson planning. She described receiving contradictory guidance about from which previous years' courses she could re-use lesson materials and which lessons she needed to write from scratch. Lilliana also receives support from a coach who comes to the school a few days per week.

Lilliana teaches Government at multiple levels and is paired with another first-year teacher. Her school is a unionized charter and only requires teachers to submit their lessons a few days per week. She expressed ambivalence about the amount of time she spends planning, "I spend like a really long time on each lesson plan. And that's been hard because I just don't have enough time in the day, and I'm obviously not being paid for all that." She works with a co-teacher in certain classes and expresses how she and the teacher with whom she is paired have "different levels of commitment to the job." She goes on to emphasize that "Chat GPT is like the co-teacher that I need." Clearly, Lilliana is looking for more support to strengthen and streamline her day-to-day planning process. Lilliana rated her autonomy at an 8 out of 10. However, she expressed mixed feelings when asked to elaborate on this rating. She claims that her freedom allows her to further develop her professional identity and teaching style. However, she also expressed a sense of guilt, stating: "I get imposter syndrome... am I what my students deserve? Do my students deserve a better trained teacher? Like am I doing this correctly?" She later elaborated that "autonomy comes with such a burden."

Deanna: Deanna teaches 6th-grade English at a CMO school. Before teaching she worked for child services as a counselor. She has four years teaching experience and receives scripted lesson plans she is required to teach. She is very aware her curriculum is scripted from an outside company (hired by the charter management organization that runs the school), and, therefore, she has little say in how lessons are designed. "Everything is laid out," she said, and her role is more, as she described it, "following the game plan." In this context, the idea of lesson planning looks very different from the previous cases. For Deanna, planning equals what she calls "intellectual prep." She describes the positive impact of this process, claiming "it's important 'cause it is nice to be planned for potential student mistakes." Deanna is very much aware that if she did not make the effort to be prepared, the restrictions on her responsibilities would likely increase. To demonstrate her preparation, she turns in annotated lesson plans once a week to show her intellectual prep. Deanna sees this expectation as part of a management structure, one that is helpful. Her coach gives feedback, and as a result her lessons are stronger. She takes the work of supporting her students very seriously, claiming, "I definitely want to teach with fidelity."

The company that produces the scripted curriculum works closely with Deanna's school. Personnel from the company that produces the curriculum were very proud of their results on standardized tests, which were some of the highest in the state. Representatives frequently visit the building and observe her classroom once or twice per week. She is critical of the curriculum in some respects stating, "You know. Sometimes you think about who's in the room making these things like, you know, like, are they really considering the students that it serves?" Her priority is to differentiate the material for the students — most of whom come from under-resourced communities — without lowering the rigor. This takes away from her overall sense of autonomy, which she rated at a 7 or 8. She felt autonomy was higher in previous jobs where she had more freedom to design her own lessons based on the individual needs of her students.

Discussion and Conclusion

Our case study highlighted several key themes. First was the importance of teachers' individual context in informing their autonomy related to lesson planning — particularly the role that co-teaching plays. Second was the role of content knowledge and competence as a key variable that informed autonomy. Lastly was the rich discourse that teachers used to describe their pedagogical planning process.

Teaching Context: Bandura's (1986) theory of triadic reciprocal determinism argues that human functioning is influenced by three factors: behavioral, personal, and environmental. Participants spoke at length about the role of their immediate environment or school context, which came up as a coded response 93 times across interviews. More specifically, the impact of administrative oversight emerged as a key factor that informed teachers' autonomy for lesson planning. Relationships with colleagues or direct supervisors rooted in trust support stronger feelings of autonomy (Narayanan, 2024). Deanna expressed a sense of pride in her work, but the presence of outside visitors from the corporation designing her lessons seems to have a direct negative impact on her sense of autonomy. Lilliana spoke about her school context more than the other three participants. She focused on the role administration has in informing her day-to-day work and is very consumed with her "packed schedule" and "finding time" for things like calling parents, looking at data, or "a million other things." She expressed the need for more systems of support from administration. This contrasts to Rafael, who emphasized how trust from his administrators contributes to his sense of "freedom." Rafael and Lilliana both spoke about the role trusted mentors played in quashing their self-doubt, which positively impacted their overall feelings of belonging in the workplace and motivation towards completing high quality plans.

Co-Teaching: All four of our participants work in co-teaching partnerships, which influences their autonomy. Rita emphasized several times how interpersonal relationships are "complicated," but that she is "working very hard" with her co-teachers to stick to commitments — such as sending lesson plans to one another 48 hours in advance. Rita is a member of a teachers' union, where teachers are only required to submit lesson plans to administration when they undergo a formal observation. However, she claims the freedom the union contract allows creates situations where colleagues take advantage of the lack of accountability. Such a model is in direct contrast to CMOs, where teachers are often mandated to submit scripted lesson plans on a daily basis (Narayanan et al., 2024). Rafael asserted that his co-teacher did not support his lesson planning process. Lilliana emphasized the impact of Chat GPT as her dream co-teacher. Ultimately, there is a need for additional research about how to create structures where teachers within a co-teaching pair feel individually or collectively autonomous as part of their collaborative planning process.

Competence: Teachers see the value of in-depth planning, and our interviews found that a sense of competence was key to teaching. This is consistent with Deci & Ryan's (2000; 2020) self-determination theory, which posits competence as a key need contributing to one's intrinsic motivation. The lesson planning process is difficult, so motivation is a relevant construct to explore. Rita specifically mentioned difficulties in supporting students, stating, "I don't always feel prepared to help them." She feels a sense of guilt about how her background in math helps her to support students in certain contexts better than others. Lilliana mirrors Rita's sentiment, emphasizing how she did not study the content she is teaching and that she is "more or less learning along with them."

Rafael spoke confidently about his competence as a science instructor, which is likely due to his previous experience in the field. He draws a sharp line between his and his co-teachers' content knowledge, arguing that while she is helpful in providing scaffolds "she's not really an expert on the material" and "I'm pretty much on my own." Deanna spoke confidently about her teaching practice and expressed a high degree of pedagogical content knowledge. She has four years of teaching experience under her belt, which is the most out of all our participants. However, since she receives lesson plans that are (pre)scripted, her process looks different from

those of the other teachers. She engages in a process of "intellectual prep" to ensure pre-planned questions meet levels of rigor her students need. Part of this is reviewing materials and making "metacognitive notes" about how students might approach a text or specific question. This allows her to address potential misconceptions that might arise. However, she revealed some ambivalence about both the plans and the structures because they are not always differentiated to support the unique students in her classroom. She states, "If I had creative control over lesson planning there would definitely be things I'd do differently to address those needs."

The Discourse of Lesson Planning: Despite different contexts and levels of competence, all four participants spoke in detail about the lesson planning process. They adopted a unique discourse that related to cultural and social constructions of pedagogical content knowledge (Gee, 2014). When asked about a specific lesson that went well based on her planning, Rita described a class where she gave students their own autonomy to choose sources that were the most interesting to them. Despite the difficulties she mentioned about managing co-teaching relationships, she described her overall planning process in a positive light. When asked to use one word to describe how she feels about her work writing lesson plans she responded "hopeful."

Rafael — who has a strong sense of autonomy related to lesson planning — articulated that his detailed planning process helps to ease anxiety, and that the unscripted moments of understanding in class are a direct result of his detailed planning process. Lilliana mirrored this sentiment, describing several questions she asks herself during the planning process: "How am I going to introduce this? What should this independent practice be? What should the guided practice be? What should we introduce in the mini lesson?" She follows this up with lots of research to find relevant sources since "whatever I write is what happens in class." Future studies could explore teachers' description of the planning process to illuminate trends connecting lesson planning with sense of autonomy. Such an exploration is particularly relevant as an increasing number of AI programs bill themselves as able to replace the traditional lesson plan.

Overall, three key themes emerged from our analysis of coded responses. The first was the role that teaching context can have on teachers' perceptions of their autonomy, due in large part to support structures and other collaborators within the school. The second is the importance of competence — those with the most content knowledge or experience in the classroom expressed higher ratings of autonomy. Lastly, the rich discourse teachers adopt about their planning process is a highly individualized, powerful driver informing their emotional state around the process.

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Contextualizing the Canon of Primary Sources: Examining a Critical Thinking Pedagogy in School Survey History Courses

Lori-Ann Newman
New York City Department of Education/Kansas State University

Abstract: History education has moved away from traditional textbook teaching by adding analysis of primary source materials to classroom instruction and standardized testing. However, canons of primary sources tend to lead students into traditional textbook interpretations of historical events. Two options are available to address this issue. Either, minimally, canonized primary sources must be subjected to nonstandard interpretation or, maximally, the canon of primary sources must be supplemented/supplanted by inclusion of sources/voices suppressed in traditional historical accounts.

Social studies courses in the twenty-first century encourage students to engage in genuine historical research with the analysis of primary source documents. The examination of primary sources is presented as both an extension of conventional textbook learning and an evolution of history instruction for school students. Students are taught to consider the author of the source, the time and circumstances of publication, the intended audience, and the author's purpose. By contrast, in traditional textbook learning, students are told what happened in the past. The material is presented from a *faux neutral* perspective and is grounded in a positivistic, objective-truth-of-the-matter approach to history. Freire (1993) would describe this as knowledge holders banking information into students. Traditional textbook organization of historical developments assumes there is one true history with the textbook providing the essential facts to arrive at that truth. While textbooks were traditionally positioned as apolitical and absent of any agenda, these assumptions have been challenged in the past few decades. Influential education researchers from Ladson-Billings (1995) to Banks and Banks (2010) and Apple (2019) have written about problematic textbooks in teaching and encouraged teachers to plan humanities lessons beyond textbook content.

Traditional textbook approaches to teaching history have recently been counterbalanced by inclusion of critical evaluation of primary sources. For instance, New York State history exams (NYSED, 2022) and national history exams (collegeboard.org) now include primary source analysis as a tested area. The New York State Global History and Geography Regents exam and United States History and Government Regents exam debuted new versions in June 2019 and June 2023, respectively. In the free response sections of the updated exams, prompts ask students to evaluate primary source documents. For example, the January 2020 Global History Regents Exam included in Part II text from a 1989 speech by Mikhail Gorbachev, the last general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The accompanying writing prompt asked for response to the following item: "Based on this excerpt, explain how the audience affects what Mikhail Gorbachev includes in his speech" (NYSED, 2022). In the June 2023 US History Regents Exam Part II displayed an engraving by Paul Revere depicting the 1770 Boston Massacre in which British soldiers killed several colonists among a crowd of Americans confronting the Redcoats. The accompanying task for students was: "Analyze Document 1 [Revere's etching] and explain how audience, or purpose, or bias, or point of view affects this document's use as a reliable source of evidence" (NYSED, 2022). These sorts of items on the tests illustrate how a direct focus on skillful document sourcing is now included in these high stakes assessments.

As a result of changes to the tests, reading primary sources and considering author's point of view and the audience for which the primary source was originally written have been emphasized in New York high school social studies classes in order to prepare students for statewide exams. The intention of this pedagogical practice is to introduce students to genuine historical research, in which they consider the complex factors surrounding a primary source as they make sense of its meaning in a holistic way. In professional historical research, the goal of document sourcing is for historians to arrive at a meaningful conclusion based on wide consideration of evidence and, more recently, also to consider their own positionality's impact on their conclusions.

In survey history courses and exams, primary source analysis is touted as developing critical historical thinking via engagement in the coursework. Yet important questions arise for students and teachers from this new practice. Are students genuinely permitted to analyze these documents and arrive at their own conclusions? Do they consider the collection of documents themselves as a representation of societal values, cultures, and power struggles? How do the collections of documents lend themselves to particular viewpoints and conclusions? If these considerations are absent from instruction, then students might be disingenuously imitating the work of historians because they are still being steered toward predetermined conclusions crafted long before these primary sources were placed on their desks in, say, second period US History class. This is problematic because students are learning and teachers are teaching under the potentially invalid assumption that they are performing authentic historical research. One invalidating consideration about the primary sources accompanying survey history courses is they often align with a traditional narrative across topics and units. For example, textbook history says the disenfranchisement of women was solved through the 19th amendment (1920). So, documents from the Seneca Falls Convention (Stanton,1848) are commonly included for study as a primary source in survey United States history courses to cast the 19th Amendment as the fruit of ideas first put forward in the mid-1800s, giving the false impression that women's rights are a settled issue in US history and American society.

Research has shown that not only high school but elementary school global and United States history survey courses are still tied to a master narrative and western perspective (Apple, 2019; Dozono, 2020; Schmidt, 2012). I, too, have conducted curricular studies on the order of events and trajectory of historical developments that reveal in survey history courses a tendency to favor an all's-well-with-America perspective (Newman, 2023). Primary sources are often plugged into curriculum spaces to bolster the traditional narrative. For example, in a survey US history course students across the United States will most certainly read the Declaration of Independence (Jefferson, 1776) and the Monroe Doctrine (1823), as they do in New York State (New York State Grades 9-12 Social Studies Framework, 2016). They might read President McKinley's justification for war with the Philippines (1899) or Andrew Carnegie's commentary on philanthropy (1900). They would then examine the author's point of view in these documents. McKinley was concerned about US trade interests in Asia. Jefferson wanted to legitimize the North American revolution. Carnegie was intent on spreading his fortune to help others. The audiences might be considered as well. For McKinley, for example, these audiences included the merchants and plantation owning US colonists in the Philippines interested in profiting from independence from Spain, the Spanish monarchy who just lost their South American colonies, and pro-imperialists in America intent on spreading US power after The Spanish-American War of 1898.

However, these sourcing practices must be contextualized within broader historiographic concerns. Because a large part of the discipline of history, especially as it is expressed in school curriculum, has already been cobbled together from historical artifacts and documents approved by the literate elite, the illiterate or oppressed voices of the past have disappeared or, rather, been made to disappear from the historical record. The canon of literate voices is unbalanced and students should be reminded of that reality as they engage in analysis of written primary sources. According to Villaverde et al. (2006, p. 325), "those who have suffered the most may not have left written records — the bread and butter of traditional historiographical source material." Therefore, the analysis of original sources is still a narrow study of pre-approved past voices and traditional perspectives on them.

When teaching a primary source document, when choosing to spend time analyzing the intentions and impacts of an individual's words in the past and in the present, educators communicate a clear, yet unspoken message: the authors of the primary sources mattered and still matter. They were and are still worthy of our time and intellectual energy in the classroom. There are a finite number of instructional days in a school year and the process of including primary sources must be selective. When the curriculum emphasizes the practice of primary document analysis, educators and curriculum writers must be mindful of any imbalance in the canon of documents. Villaverde et al. (2006, p. 326) warned their readers, "historians will often unconsciously embrace the perspective of those who left written records." Therefore, an integral part of this pedagogy should be conversations with students about this imbalance, and how highlighted groups were not more talented or valuable than groups who are absent from the curriculum-approved collections of written primary sources. These conversations can even lead to invitations for students to share their ideas on the search for expanded sources.

In the analysis of primary sources, students need to know the *collection* in and of itself is a form of historiography. The canon represents a complex intersection between favoritism towards the literate elite who have for thousands of years recorded in written form their thoughts and perspectives and the intentions of the historians and political forces that shaped the selection of documents chronicling historical developments to form, as we know it, a history of the United States. Brown & Au (2014, p. 374) emphasized that a small group of people "struggled and deliberated over the concerns of curriculum… [people] who were able to attend meetings throughout the 20th century or be part of an academia based intellectual project." DeMarrais & Lapan (2004, p. 33) also articulated a fundamental historiographic principle when they observed, "there is no history until historians tell it, and it is the way in which they tell it that becomes what we know of as history." The essential primary source documents from the Declaration of Independence and Stephen Douglas' campaign speeches (1860) to Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "Day of Infamy" speech (1941) and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech (1963), have all already been categorized and chronologized to create the narrative that is embedded in high school social studies courses. Critical evaluation of the *collection* of primary sources can be an opportunity to disrupt this canon or at least bring awareness to its existence as a nonobjective assemblage, and call into question conclusions that have already been drawn from it.

Another factor to consider when critiquing the social studies pedagogy of primary sources is the content of included documents. Are the primary sources from marginalized groups only those that either highlight the plight of the marginalized group or acknowledge a corrective action from the dominant group? Are the bulk of primary source documents from the dominant group those that emphasize progress for that group, while other groups remain invisible? If primary source

documents are woven together to meet a prefabricated narrative defending the hegemony of a dominant culture, then students are being misled with inauthentic historiographical practices. In the future, it is my hope, as a high school history educator and social studies curriculum researcher, that teachers, curriculum developers, history education preparation programs, and state education departments will critically examine not just the folks now shining in primary source spotlights but equally investigate the invisible folks now relegated to the shadows of history curricula. As educators and researchers, we can infuse classroom conversations with criticism of the canon of typically provided primary sources. We can pledge to find primary source documents that enrich and disrupt traditional history curricula. We can engage in more documentation of oral histories to elevate hidden voices and normalize evidence from diverse sources, as suggested in Villaverde et al. (2006).

For example, coverture was an early American cultural practice that denied women a wide variety of social, political, and economic rights upon marriage. The social custom had roots in British Common Law where, according to coverture, a married woman's legal, financial, and political identities were subsumed under her husband's (Downey, et al., 2023). Coverture transferred a woman's civic identity to her husband at marriage. The practice found its way into the American legal system in 1805 when the Supreme Court of Massachusetts in the case of Martin v. Massachusetts set the legal precedent that a US married woman did not have separate, formal, political citizenship apart from her husband's. The Massachusetts high court overturned a lower court decision to uphold the property rights of a widow whose lands had been confiscated (Kerber, 1992). The justices ruled that laws covering retention of family property did not, in the absence of a will from the deceased husband, extend beyond the custom of "*femes-covert*." The decision put women in the paradoxical position of being citizens without having any civic obligations to perform (Kerber, 1999).

Coverture has never been resolved through a constitutional amendment and in states like New York, for example, this topic is absent in the survey US history curriculum (New York State Grades 9-12 Social Studies Framework, 2016). Despite the topic's curricular invisibility, there is a plethora of early American primary source documents written by married women oppressed from coverture laws. Other primary sources exist that were written by those who would uphold and maintain the system (Hart & McDaniel, 2023; New York Historical Society Museum and Library, n.d.). Women confronted the repression from coverture and challenged the practice in a variety of newspaper publications from the 19th and 20th centuries (White, 1921). These primary source documents are not usually included alongside other documents celebrated as highlights of the early 20th century, such as speeches from oil industry leaders or books from progressive muckrakers. Their absence is problematic because they provide important clues into the struggles of women beyond suffrage, and, equally important, into the power of the patriarchy in oppressing women, silencing their dissent, and shaping the dynamics of the American family (Holton, 1994; Harris, 2010; Case, 2014; Field & Syrett, 2020).

Paternalism is the logic behind coverture; and paternalism of any sort creates the same paradox for democracy created by coverture: citizenship without civic duties. Attempts to protect populations perceived to be vulnerable often end up as systems of control, policing, and surveillance based on stereotype-infused understandings of the populations put under state protection. The logic of coverture and the limits it places on full membership in the constitutional community of American citizens lies at the heart of the harms still regularly suffered by women, the poor, people of color, and pregnant people enmeshed in the health and social welfare systems

of the US. (Downey, et al., 2023, Kerber, 2012). Perhaps, however, of greatest interest for development of a critical US History curriculum among school-age Americans and their teachers is the paradoxical nature of children's citizenship. As Elizabeth Cohen (2005, p. 221) observes:

> Paternalist policies dictate that children be represented politically by their parents, leaving them as or more vulnerable and excluded from private life as women were under coverture. Lacking independent representation or a voice in politics, children and their interests often fail to be understood because the adults who do represent them conflate, or substitute, their own views for those of children. Compounding this damage is the tendency for democratic societies to view children not as an ever-present segment of the populace, but rather as future adults. This encourages disregard for children's interests. Until democratic societies establish a better-defined and comprehensive citizenship for children, along with methods for representation that are sensitive to the special political circumstances faced by children, young people will remain ill-governed and neglected by democratic politics.

What would a curriculum of children's citizenship look like? What might students contribute to creation of a Children's Rights Amendment to the US Constitution? What would a kids' in-school constitutional convention add to the power and validity of their education? Would teachers have the support and courage to teach a curriculum composed completely of questions rather than settled answers? (Dunlop & Venens, 2019; Parkhouse, 2018).

In either case, however, whether dealing with traditionally approved aspects of American history or exploring relatively uncharted territory in our nation's past, sourcing documents is not a practice that invokes a value free history, because a value free history cannot exist. History educators are moving away from textbook only instruction, and this is important to facilitating history pedagogy and curricula that confront the complexities of the past. However, the master narrative in social studies curricula is strong (Dozono, 2020; Schmidt, 2012; Newman 2023). The dominant perspective persists, but educators cannot operate under the preposterous assumption that primary source analysis taught in a vacuum corrects problematically celebrationist histories or frees students from prefabricated conclusions.

Educators can think of the journey toward a more culturally relevant, multi-perspective education as a work in progress (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The critical analysis of primary source documents is just the beginning of evolving pedagogical practices to reject a dominant perspective, infuse contextualization of the primary source collection, continue the search for documents from hidden voices, invite student-derived conclusions, and encourage collaboration between researchers, teachers, and students for a more inclusive canon of primary source documents. For example, students should be exploring who the audience was for primary source documents written by women advocating for peace, such as Jeanette Rankin (Jeanette Rankin Peace Center, n.d.), or the purpose of Pauli Murray writing about racial and gender oppression with the term *Jane Crow* (Murray and Eastwood, 1965).

Yet even primary source documents that serve as giants in the field of historical understanding included in the canon of documents to be evaluated by students who will consider the author's point of view and audience must be subjected to the same sort of criticality applied to less familiar readings. Educators and curriculum writers should confront the fact that

conclusions from these documents are well established in the literature. And, concurrently, these conclusions have impacted state-building, social/economic systems, and more. For example, the Declaration of Independence is a staple document in United States History courses; but

> The problem with the typical conclusion about Jefferson's iconic work sowing the seeds of a moral and enlightened nation is not in the conclusion itself, but rather in how it is presented, *which is as a foregone conclusion, and as the only conclusion.* A different conclusion is that in claiming humans as property, enslaving them, and profiting off their humanity, Jefferson excluded them from enlightenment principles and redefined what it meant to be both human and equal…. This alternative conclusion is more radical, not in its interpretation of the events but in the extent to which it disrupts the master narrative of an exceptional United States built on Enlightenment ideology, progress, and democracy (Newman, 2023, p. 69, italics in original).

If we as curriculum researchers, administrators, and humanities teachers, plan for students to engage in genuine historiography by contextualizing primary sources, then we need to be extra careful when examining the pillar documents of our nation's story, the archives that have already been written about, reviewed, analyzed, and interpreted countless numbers of times. These documents are positioned as cornerstones of United States history or world history curricula, and they enter our lesson plans and classrooms with the weight of those accepted explications. In order genuinely to engage students with these documents, we must, at the very least, acknowledge their previous interpretations and the results of those interpretations. By verbalizing their weight and their impact on historical developments, we can, alternatively and simultaneously, permit students to confront the original interpretations and assumptions from these documents, and possibly, critically reconsider the systems that have been built by them. When students evaluate the intersection of a document's content with author's point of view, or a document's content with its intended audience, it is essential for educators to create an open space with multiple possibilities of making meaning, for students to be made aware of previous conclusions yet still engage in historical research to develop their own interpretations from their study of the primary sources. What we can do at the very most is develop curriculum of as yet unresolved issues in US history and American life to bring to the forefront of attention voices we know to be long unheard because they are still being ignored.

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Undoing the Knower?
Education, the Problem of Truth, and Artificial Intelligence

Greg Seals
College of Staten Island/CUNY
and
Mark Garrison
West Texas A&M University

Abstract: AI researchers admit to not knowing how AI works; yet the pudding is made and consumed. In the process, AI reduces knowledge and knowing to doing and saying, to stating results of performance in accord with programmed algorithms. Our paper aims to counter reductionist epistemologies of the sort presented by AI. Conducting an epistemologically focused content analysis of a purposive sample of AI-related news and commentary, we conclude that neither metaphysics nor epistemology supports reduction of knowing to doing. Both doing and understanding are required for an adequate account of knowledge and an optimized capacity to work wisely in the world. Education requires an ontology of ideas *and* things. AI fails for the same reason metaphysical idealisms typically fail: Reason is not all of reality.

What are educators to make of the growing push for adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies? While the AI industry talks endlessly of "innovation," growing concern about AI in education is also evident. Education technology scholar Neil Selwyn identified five themes that should be attended to as educators are pressured to adopt the new, untested technologies:

1. Pay less attention to speculative AI technologies in favor of exciting AI.
2. Admit limited ability to model social contexts/simulate human emotions.
3. Taking seriously social harms associated with AI use.
4. Acknowledging values inherent in AI advocacy.
5. Environmental sustainability of AI development/implementation.[1]

Selwyn's concerns echo popular discourse regarding AI (academic integrity, bias, "deepfakes," transparency). But we worry a significant issue with AI in education is being missed: a possible epistemological shift that eviscerates the knowing subject. AI can "do" (demonstrate competency) without there being a knower. Since AI "does all the doing" without any of the knowing, is AI "undoing" the knower? Is AI breaking down the distinction between performative and perspicacious knowledge? In this paper we explore the reach and depth of Selwyn's second concern. We do this by conducting an epistemologically focused content analysis of a purposive sample of AI-related news and commentary. Four questions guide the analysis:

1. What epistemological arguments are evident?
2. What epistemological arguments are absent (but assumed)?
3. What ontological assumptions are made about teaching and learning?
4. How do ontological assumptions relate to evident/absent epistemic arguments?

[1] Neil Selwyn, "The Future of AI and Education: Some Cautionary Notes," *European Journal of Education*, (17 October 2022), https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12532

About the Source Material

The news and commentary to which we applied our epistemically oriented content analysis comes from an *Education Week* "Spotlight" on artificial intelligence.[2] *Education Week,* in operation since the 1980s, is a production of Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) and, in accord with EPE editorial intent, describes itself as more than a source of news about K-12 education:

> Because at *Education Week*, we don't merely inform. We generate critical conversations that shine a spotlight on our schools. We hold education's leaders accountable — equipping them with the right tools, so they can become instruments of change. And we spark transformation, helping our nation support its students — and build a stronger tomorrow.[3]

This frames the purpose of *Education Week* "Spotlights," which are typically a collection of news articles and commentary about issues in K-12 education, such as AI. Spotlights tend toward advocacy, promoting the science of reading, specific approaches to social-emotional learning, or, as in this case, the rapid adoption of artificial intelligence in schools.[4]

Education Week receives support from major philanthropic entities. The Board that oversees operations includes executives from Discovery Education (digital learning platform), Boston Consulting Group (neoliberal school reform), Allovue (educational technology), WNET (Boston public television), Cooley LLP (mergers and acquisitions), Stanton Chase (consultancy), as well as superintendents from large school districts operated on neoliberal ideas about education. From sources such as these, EPE has received substantial and sustained funding for general operations, a variety of initiatives, and as an incentive to cover specific education topics. According to EPE's *Education Week* website, this private funding has come from the following 25 funders.[5] Many funders have a focus that includes technology. Listed in alphabetical order, they are:

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Carnegie Corporation of New York
The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative
Charles and Lynne Schusterman Family Philanthropies
The Charles Butt Foundation
The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
The Field Foundation of Illinois
The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation
The Joyce Foundation
The Kern Family Foundation
The Lemelson Foundation
Meyer Memorial Trust
The NEA Foundation
The Nellie Mae Education Foundation

[2] "Education Week Spotlight: Artificial Intelligence (AI)," *Education Week* (5 January 2024): 1-15 https://epe.brightspotcdn.com/35/2a/cdd0047540b29d8ffd0ca897c491/1-5-24-aispotlight-sponsored.pdf
[3] See *Education Week* website, "About Us: Our Organization" https://www.edweek.org/about/our-organization
[4] See, for example, https://epe.brightspotcdn.com/8a/50/18f484b74230ac4e5639a59f472a/spotlight-science-of-reading-sponsored.pdf and https://epe.brightspotcdn.com/09/9f/6748386e4b71a3e65d16afee6e1c/6-15-socialemotionallearning-sponsored.pdf
[5] https://www.edweek.org/about/our-supporters. For board membership, see https://www.edweek.org/about/our-board#board-of-trustees

NewSchools Venture Fund
NoVo Foundation
Oak Foundation
The Robert R. McCormick Foundation
Siegel Family Endowment
Spencer Foundation
The Susan Crown Exchange
The Wallace Foundation
The Walton Family Foundation
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
William E. Simon Foundation

Considering its self-professed and well-funded role in holding educators, as quoted above, "accountable" by "equipping them with the right tools," EPE and its spinoff endeavors should be considered first and foremost a political and ideological effort, and as we discuss here, one with significant epistemological and ontological implications.

The articles collected in the 2024 *Education Week* AI Spotlight we analyze were published between August and November 2023. Included were six "news" articles written by *Ed Week* staff followed by two "opinion" pieces, one by Stacie Marvin, a math educator turned congressional aide, and one by Rachna Nath, an award-winning science teacher with fifteen years' experience in K-14 settings. The news articles included quotes from teachers, educational administrators, and technology company executives. As a convenience sample, clearly the contributors to the AI Spotlight we quote from reflected editorial intent to promote rapid adoption of AI. This reveals both significant contradictions and challenges faced by *Education Week*'s EPE-directed approach to AI in schools. The educators quoted in these Spotlight articles are spread across the United States from Kansas (including a fully online "academy") to Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Tennessee. The articles also quote education faculty from Stanford University and executives from organizations like Code.org and Edthena, as well as a former *Time* magazine teacher of the year gone national consultant, keynoter and grant writer.

AI: Two Models of Science

As our work aims to show that AI has implications for our most basic understanding of how knowledge is acquired and what it means to know, some initial observations are warranted. To set the stage for our analysis, an analogy may be found in the fact that science, the systematic development of a body of knowledge, has two, sometimes competing, models.[6] The first, most common, especially in relation to technology development, focuses on "prediction and control." Efficacious prediction about modification of the natural or social world is equated with knowledge. Call this the "doing" model of science. The proof is in the pudding. The second model stipulates science advances by way of "explanation and understanding." Call this the "seeing" model of science. On this model, knowledge is enacted as perspicacious insight into the workings of the world. An adequate understanding of science as scientific knowledge requires an account of both doing and seeing but, importantly and to its detriment, the "doing" model is evident in AI discourse to the exclusion of the "seeing" model.

[6] Peter T. Manicas, *A Realist Philosophy of Social Science: Explanation and Understanding* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

In his book, *Why Things Matter to People*, Sayer argues reason is reduced to rationality on the doing model of science. Reason is thus "attenuated." This attenuation occurs when a mode of reasoning is abstracted from what the reasoning is about. This separation licenses the view that there are no limits to technical rationality and the increasing displacement of *practical reason*. This latter form of reasoning is concerned with objects and is consciously context bound. While much critique of this techno-scientific rationality comes from the Frankfurt School, locating the problem as one of *instrumental reason* (to paraphrase Adorno: the means of thought have become independent of the purposes of thought),[7] Sayer argues a more fundamental problem exists, originating in the increasing domination of *formal reason* (that is, procedure over content). Instrumental rationality need not be formal, he points out, and it is of obvious value for achieving practical goals. While instrumental reason "is concerned with means rather than ends in themselves, it requires a close focus on the objects which it uses as means, and on the end, which it is trying to meet." Thus, importantly, and unlike formal reason, instrumental reason does not turn "away from the object." Formal reasoning does turn away, becomes inwardly focused, losing its object: *the logic of things becomes things of logic*. Most importantly for our work here, "when instrumental reason is also formal *as in the case of general technologies*, it becomes more dangerous and morally indiscriminate, for to the prioritization of means over ends is added the detachment of rationality from its object."[8]

What Epistemological Arguments Are Evident?

AI is reliabilist in its epistemic orientation. Reliabilism holds that "a belief produced by a reliable belief-producing process is justified." AI is (presumed to be) such a reliable belief-forming process. Justified belief is the result of a *performance* of a process that may or may not be associated with the giving of reasons for the belief. That is, beliefs formed by reliable processes may be justified but not necessarily true. Reliabilists attempt to skirt this epistemological issue by setting parameters to shore up the reliability of belief-forming processes.[9] A main style of parameter setting is to set a rule that, among humans at any rate, true beliefs are, *ceteris paribus*, to be preferred to false beliefs. This truth-preference parameter has given rise to virtue or value epistemologies;[10] but, whatever the usefulness of this attempt to shore up reliabilism, such moves are unavailable to AI. AI is a sort of *raw* reliabilism in the sense that not even AI engineers can say exactly how it works. It is as likely that AI operates on what we might call the willy-nilly algorithm as it is that AI results can be traced to some patterned processes of reasoning on the part of AI which resonate with human thinking about a topic. The mysterious nature of the production of AI results creates two epistemological issues related to AI, one an issue internal to AI and another issue external to AI but affecting users of AI. Thomas Kelly points out that since reliabilism lacks relevant parameters, such as a preference for true beliefs over false ones, then for a knower like AI "*nothing* would be either

[7] See Theodor W. Adorno, "The Subject and the Object," in *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, eds., Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (New York: Continuum, 1985), 497-511 and Yvonne Sherratt, "Instrumental Reason's Unreason," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 24, no. 4 (July, 1999): 23-42.
[8] Andrew Sayer, *Why Things Matter to People: Social Science, Values and Ethical Life*. (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 67-69, emphasis added.
[9] Matthew Frise, "The Reliability Problem for Reliabilism," *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition*, 175, no. 4 (April, 2018): 923-945. See 923 for the quote.
[10] For example, Ernest Sosa, "The Place of Truth in Epistemology," in Michael DePaul and Linda Zagzebski, eds., *Intellectual Virtue: Perspectives from Ethics and Epistemology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1-13.

epistemically rational or irrational."[11] The untoward consequence of this nonrational approach to the generation of answers when questions are posed to it engages AI in a sort of epistemic pathology in which we are told, instrumentally speaking, what or how to do, but are not told, theoretically speaking, why we should believe what AI has to say.[12] By not being able to say why its answer is to be believed, AI creates a situation that undermines the reliabilist epistemology in terms of which it operates. Users may begin to second guess AI answers in much the same way that ancient peoples wondered what the oracle may have meant by saying that. When externalist processes originally proposed to be sufficient for knowledge need to be supported by processes of thought internal to AI users, internalist epistemology subverts rather than supplements reliabilism.[13]

Most, if not all, of the more common, popularly discussed concerns about AI — its potential for biased results; its propensity to reproduce rather than produce knowledge; its high probability (like any meta-analytic exercise) to include error as well as fact in answers it develops; its seeming hallucinatory relation to reality — appear traceable to its reliance on raw reliabilism.[14] The epistemic crisis produced by AI is that even though we may grant (for the sake of argument) that AI is a reliable process of belief formation, in the sense that AI will give the same or a similar answer every time the same or a similar question is put to it, we cannot say that the beliefs so formed are true. This epistemic crisis contributes to an ethical crisis, as well, in two ways. First, uncritical use of AI's reliabilist assumptions about the nature of knowledge requires socialization of teachers and students to assume/accept a limited role in understanding and explaining courses of action undertaken in the world. Unpredictable human agency surrenders to algorithmic machine certainty. This surrender raises a second ethical issue described in Gilbert's discussion of happiness.[15] On Gilbert's view, intelligence is not what makes humans unique. Gilbert notes that all living things are intelligent in the sense that they all behave on the basis of

[11] Thomas Kelly. "Epistemic Rationality as Instrumental Rationality: A Critique," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 66, no. 3 (May, 2003): 612-640, 627 for the quote. Emphasis in original.
[12] Kelly. "Epistemic Rationality as Instrumental Rationality," 635. The epistemic pathology Kelly describes cuts the other way, too. Merely knowing what to believe does not, in and of itself, tell us what to do.
[13] Kristoffer Ahlstrom-Vij, "Esoteric Reliabilism," *Episteme: A Journal of Individual and Social Epistemology* 18, no. 4 (2021): 603-623. The same may be said of the addition to validity checks, confidence intervals, and probabilistic reconfiguration of AI results, a problem that equally haunts results from standardized tests, etc. When responsibilist considerations are added by human interpreters of AI, standardized test results, etc., the reliabilism of the process *per se* is called into question not merely refined. For an account and assessment of the effect on our understanding of knowledge and of knowing of the probabilistic turn in multiple phases of contemporary culture see Gert Gigerenzer, Zeno Swijtink, T. Porter, Lorraine Daston, John Beatty, and Lorenz Kruger, *The Empire of Chance: How Probability Changed Science and Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[14] Pertinent discussions include Eamon Duede, "Instruments, Agents, and Artificial Intelligence: Novel Epistemic Categories of Reliability," *Synthese* 200, no. 491 (2022): file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/Duede%202022%20-%20Instruments,%20agents,%20and%20artificial%20intelligence%20%20novel%20epistemic%20categories%20of%20reliability-1.pdf ; Hiroaki Kitano, "Nobel Turing Challenge: Creating the Engine for Scientific Discovery. *npj (Nature Partner Journal) Systems Biology and Applications* **7**, no. 29 (2021): https://doi.org/10.1038/s41540-021-00189-3 ; Lisa Messeri and M. J. Crockett, "Artificial Intelligence and Illusions of Understanding in Scientific Research," *Nature* 627 (2024): 49–58 https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-024-07146-0#citeas ; Frederica Russo, Eric Schliesser, and Jean Wagernans, "Connecting Ethics and Epistemology of AI," *AI and Society* (17 January 2023): https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-022-01617-6 ; and Andrew Smart, Larry James, Ben Hutchinson, Simone Wu, and Shannon Vallor, "Why Reliabilism Is Not Enough: Epistemic and Moral Justification in Machine Learning," *Proceedings of the AIES (Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, and Society) Conference* (2020): 372-377 https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3375627.3375866
[15] Daniel Gilbert, *Stumbling on Happiness* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006).

reinforced predictions, whether or not they can explain or understand why they are doing what they are doing. William James makes the same point with greater panache when he says, "[C]reatures extremely low in the intellectual scale may have conception. All that is required is that they should recognize the same experience again. A polyp would be a conceptual thinker if a feeling of 'hello! *thingumbob* again!' ever flitted through its mind."[16] The unique achievement of humans, Gilbert asserts, is not in the things they do or make, say, the pyramids, etc. Machines can build these. Rather, conscious experience and imagined future worlds are the stuff of human achievement. AI's raw reliabilism, its thoroughgoing externalist orientation to knowledge, taken to the extreme, threatens to ignore/degrade/deny the conscious human experience of creating our own futures. In the name of instrumentality, efficiency, and expediency, AI robs users of the core of their humanity and education of much of its *raison d'être*.

What Epistemological Arguments Are Absent (but Assumed)?

Teachers appear to endorse a robust epistemology that includes elements of doing (performance) and of seeing (perspicacity). The title of the *Education Week* Spotlight discussing AI and schooling, "What Teachers Need to Know About AI, But Don't" (which appears in the Table of Contents and gets repeated in the title of the first article) seems somewhat epistemologically at odds with the teachers' point of view. Use of "need" in the title makes the title ill-structured in two ways. First, the phrase "need to know" casts shades of "esoteric reliabilism," an optimally functional but presumably undesirable reliabilist epistemic universe in which exists "a form of two-level epistemic consequentialism, where an esoteric commitment to reliabilism will be appropriate for an enlightened few, while a form of epistemic fetishism — on which some heuristics are treated as fundamental epistemic norms — is appropriate for the rest of us."[17] Second, deciding what teachers "need to know" could be done externally to teacher thinking or could arise internally from teacher thinking. On the externalist approach teachers would be *told* what they need to know to be efficient at work. On the internalist approach teachers would be *asked* what they *want* to know to become adept at educationally energetic use of AI. Taking contributors to the *Education Week* Spotlight feature on AI as a convenience sample of teachers gives us some insight into what teachers want to know about AI. Perhaps contrary to the wishes of their publisher and its sponsors, what teachers really want to know is how to use AI to help achieve among their students the epistemic ideal of learned fluency, a sort of confident familiarity with the subjects they study in school.

True, teachers do have concerns about what they do not know about AI: but these comments are at least as much declarations of curiosity as they are confessions of ignorance. *Education Week* staff writer Lauraine Langreo in the lead article of the AI Spotlight summarizes concerns expressed by Chad Towarnicki, an 8th grade English teacher in Wissahickon, Pennsylvania, that teachers "are already so far behind on AI knowledge and skill that students who have grown up

[16] William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, in ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins, *Great Books of the Western World*, Volume 53 (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1952), 301. Emphasis in original.

[17] Ahlstrom-Vij, "Esoteric Reliabilism," 613. The teacher ignorance asserted in the title of the *Education Week* Spotlight feature is reinforced in Stacie Marvin's (former teacher/current congressional aide) claims implying a steep, chaotic learning curve for teachers relative to AI. : "…two months of reading about AI, listening to podcasts, and even attending hearings and briefings about AI on Capitol Hill, I've come away with a great big "who knows?" shrug of the shoulders [a gesture indicating uncertainty, indifference, or lack of knowledge]." from p. 13 of the *Education Week* AI Spotlight, "I'm a Math Teacher: Graphing Calculators Taught Me a Thing or Two About AI*:* Artificial Intelligence Will Enhance Learning If We Use It Right," 12-13. (Originally published 16 October 2023).

learning how to use all kinds of digital technologies will be running circles around them." But the concern prompted the follow-up observation based on comments from Glenn Kleiman, whose research at the Stanford Graduate School of Education focuses on the potential of AI to enhance teaching and learning, that "It's critical that schools of education act quickly to ensure prospective teachers have a foundational understanding of AI, know how to use it effectively in instruction, and are able to infuse AI literacy into every subject so that they're ready when they get in the classroom."[18] In her opinion piece included in the Spotlight, Rachna Nath, a veteran science teacher, concurs with Kleiman: "And we need training on theoretical and practical levels: training to understand what artificial intelligence actually is and where it stands in the development timeline and training about how to integrate it into our classes." Nath also professes a broad lack of understanding of AI among teachers but sees that lack as a removable obstacle to idea-sharing among members of the teaching profession: "The problem is that my fellow teachers and I cannot have those productive conversations about generative AI if we do not understand it. We need models of what is or isn't acceptable when using this technology. At this very moment — and completely on the fly — we're setting the standard of what is acceptable, and each one of us has a different perspective."[19] From an epistemological perspective, what emerges from uses of "know" and its cognates in analysis of the quotes above is a two-fold theory of knowledge. Knowledge has at least two parts, alternatively described as knowledge *and* skill, foundational understanding *and* know how, memorization *and* employment, responsible *and* effective use, theoretical *and* practical aspects. That is, knowledge comprises both a science of perspicacious seeing and a science of effective doing with the performance informed by the perspicacity.

Further, for teachers, knowledge comprises some standard of truth, some process of verification to meet the truth standard, and personal confidence in assertion, via word or deed, of belief. These epistemological ideas are expressed in the *Education Week* Spotlight issue on AI via quotes that express teachers' distrust of AI. Teachers distrust information provided by AI because AI is a doing. AI is not a knowing; and, so, tells only half of the full epistemological story. Nonetheless, the doing is often mistaken for and supplanting of the knowing. What *is* to be done? For the teachers in the sample, understanding is the antidote to mere believing: "Of course, there are potential downsides to the new technology. It can produce inaccurate or biased responses based on faulty data it draws from… Experts have cautioned that when using these tools, it's important to know how they [the AI programs in use] were trained and what datasets were used. It's also important to be skeptical about any information these tools provide and to double-check it with a trusted source."[20] At the heart of this skepticism about AI is recognition that: "There is no standard of truth on the internet, and generative AI has absolutely no ability to confirm the veracity of what it is presenting as fact." This observation leads to the general recommendation that students may be turned into skeptical readers and set to the task of fact checking material generated by AI: "…my students are learning how to be cynical readers, perhaps better now than ever. So, my advice to teachers is to use any and all the generative AI you can get your hands on. Then experience — for yourself — verification of the information.

[18] Langreo, "What Teachers Need to Know About AI, But Don't: Students Must Be Critical AI Users,3 Steps for Teachers to Prepare," 1-2. Both quotes may be found on 2. (Originally published 31 August 2023.)
[19] Nath, "AI Can Teach Students a Powerful Lesson about the Truth: How I'm Harnessing ChatGPT in the Classroom,"14-15, 14 for both quotes. (Originally published 7 September 2023.)
[20] Lauraine Langreo, "Beyond ChatGPT: The Other AI Tools Teachers Are Using," p. 10 of the *Education Week* AI Spotlight (Originally published 15 August 2023).

Track it back to the source because in doing so, you'll land on the adjustments you need to make in your classes next year."[21]

Without evidential support, knowledge is mere belief. One use of each of the belief cognates, 'believes' and 'believe' indicate this. Mere belief is held counter to or without consideration of fact and therefore fails to reach epistemic fulfillment as understanding: "There are so many things that a teacher does that AI would never fully be able to replicate a wonderful teacher," Edwards [April Edwards, a 6th-grade Social Studies teacher from Texas] said. Still, Edwards believes that AI is the future of education."[22] Stacie Marvin expresses a similar conception of belief as epistemically under-formed knowing when she says, "Knowing most students will pull out their phones to perform even the smallest of calculations, we've had to rely on our relationships of trust to teach them to have confidence in their own abilities. We help them understand that they are more capable without the technology than they believe."[23] These comments express, perhaps unsurprisingly, teachers' tendency to think of knowledge in traditionalistic terms as justified, true belief. Beliefs are turned into knowledge by achievement of evidentiary standards matched to rigorous canons of truth. Thus, the epistemic problem presented to teachers by AI is that AI does not fulfill any of the requirements for knowledge endorsed by teachers: AI has no standard of truth; AI is incapable of offering verification of its claims; and AI has no confidence whatsoever in anything it has to say.

What teachers want for their students, namely, fluency with subject matter, is also what teachers want for themselves in learning AI. The object of knowledge is fluent use of AI for classroom instruction: "…preparing prospective teachers to integrate emerging technologies into instruction." April Edwards, who uses AI for lesson plan development, "…has not introduced AI to her students, because she wants to fully understand it before allowing students to use it in the classroom." Says Edwards, "I have not let my students use AI yet, but I plan to incorporate it this school year…. "My goal is to show them how to use AI responsibly and effectively and model that for my students."[24] Part of the *Education Week* Spotlight on AI is "A toolkit of principles to think through when crafting AI guidance." The toolkit includes the heading "Knowledge: How Can Schools Advance AI Literacy?"[25] The toolkit equates "knowledge" to "literacy." Ideally, AI literacy culminates in AI fluency. Fluency with AI gets described in some detail in a discussion about use of calculators in math class. Fluency in use of graphing calculators goes beyond mere competency in carrying out computations and expresses understanding of which calculations are relevant to skillful development of correct answers to present problems: "We've worked to define what computational 'fluency' means over and above precision of calculations. Fluency includes drawing on mathematical understanding to find flexible and efficient pathways to correct answers."[26] By the same token, teachers who know AI know how to use it to find solutions to pedagogical issues such as tailoring lessons to student interest and/or need. Dyane Smokorowski, coordinator of digital literacy and citizenship for Wichita Kansas Public Schools, explained to *Ed Week* staff writers that "Because she does not have knowledge on every learning

[21] Both quotes from Nath, "AI Can Teach Students a Powerful Lesson about the Truth," 14 and 15, respectively.
[22] Lauraine Langreo, Lydia McFarlane, and Caitlyn Meisner, "Can AI Improve Instruction? Teachers Share How They Use It," *Education Week* AI Spotlight, 3-4. (Originally published 10 November 2023.) Edwards is quoted on 3.
[23] Marvin, "I'm a Math Teacher," 12.
[24] Langreo, McFarlane, and Meisner, "Can AI Improve Instruction?" 2 and 3, respectively.
[25] Alyson Klein, "The 93 Questions Schools Should Ask about AI," *Education Week* AI Spotlight, 5. (Originally published 17 October 2023.)
[26] Marvin, "I'm a Math Teacher," 12.

difference or middle school pop-culture trend, she can ask ChatGPT to provide a writing sample for students to interact with, which makes personalized lesson plans much easier to craft."[27]

Another use of 'understand' and three uses of its cognate 'understanding' give insight into what teachers hope from use of AI, namely, deepening mastery of subject matter for themselves and their students, adept use of AI for finding solutions to subject matter questions, and development of ways to deal wisely with emergent technologies. For example, the *Education Week* Spotlight on AI says of Amanda Young, principal of the online Education Imagine Academy that, "In her experience …using AI does not harm the critical thinking abilities of students, but it can foster a deeper understanding of the new technologies that come into fruition in their own lifetimes."[28] Similarly, Stacie Marvin asserts that after using AI via graphing calculators for a month "…my understanding of trigonometric functions likewise deepened as I took over the class to learn to teach students using those same graphing calculators. Suddenly, as I watched the sine and cosine waves unspool from the unit circle on the calculator's screen, I grasped for the first time why they were called "cyclic functions." Marvin goes on to say, "…we continue, as a community of math educators, to generally move in the direction of capitalizing on the calculator's ability to enhance conceptual understanding." She adds as a final thought, "When our students have access to all the information that they once spent much brain power memorizing, they are able to apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. The miracle here is that brain research tells us that when they are doing these magical things, they remember and understand *at the same time and more permanently*."[29]

Teacher approach to AI expresses the epistemological debate between reliabilist and responsibilists. While reliabilists see the stuff of knowledge as the result of a reliable belief-forming process, responsibilists argue that knowledge is better estimated by a look at the intellectual virtues involved in the processes involved in producing it.[30] Intellectual virtues typically endorsed by responsibilists include courage, open-mindedness, curiosity, creativity, and humility, and are conceived as "stable, excellent dispositions of cognitive character."[31] Apparent contradictions in discussions of AI for education map well onto the reliabilist-responsibilist framework: AI makes the teacher's job easier vs. Teachers must always check AI because it gets things wrong; Students already know way more about AI and teachers better get caught up vs. Students need to prepare for a world with lots of AI; AI is empowering and a great tool vs. AI is very hard to use responsibly without lots of support to figure out what to do with it in classrooms; Students need AI because it is sure to be a super-important part of the future vs. We need to carefully police what students do with AI because of all the issues with AI.

While reliabilists may wish to assume that intellectual virtues are in play for belief-forming processes legitimately labeled "reliable," there is no accountability in this regard when AI is the

[27] Langreo, McFarlane, and Meisner, "Can AI Improve Instruction?" 4. Of course, if she doesn't know these differences or sub-cultures, she will be challenged, at least in terms of the time required, to verify AI-provided answers or, simply take their truthfulness and usefulness for granted.
[28] Caitlyn Meisner, "ChatGPT Is Everywhere in This District: Here's What It Looks Like," *Education Week* Spotlight on AI, 7-8. See 8 for the quote. (Originally published 29 August 2023.)
[29] Marvin, "I'm a Math Teacher," 12 for the first two quotes and 13 for the final one, emphasis in original.
[30] See Lorraine Code, "Toward a 'Responsibilist' Epistemology," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 45 (September, 1984): 29-50 for the original proposal of epistemic responsibilism.
[31] Nathan L. King, "Responsibilist Virtue Epistemology: A Reply to the Situationist Challenge," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 64, no. 255, (April, 2014): 243-253, 243 for the quote.

process guiding belief formation.[32] Therefore, from the educator's point of view, both reliabilist processes and epistemic virtues must be taught in AI classrooms. That is, the AI "fact-checking" recommended by teachers goes beyond just making sure AI got the right answer. Considerations of how AI arrived at that answer are of paramount importance. There is a great difference between merely being able to do something and knowing how to do something. Knowing how to do something involves critical thinking about the processes involved in doing things.[33] AI can do things without knowing how to do things. Teachers are not willing to let their students off so easily. Responsible use of AI is as important to teachers as is the ability to use AI to generate answers. Even if it is objected that reliabilism is more fundamental than responsibilism because responsibilism is not so much a philosophical position as it is a commitment to removing obstacles to discovery of truth, teachers' interest in discovering truth seems firmly rooted in the undeniable responsibilist axiom: "If a belief is responsibly arrived at, it is, therefore, likely to be true."[34] That is to say, in their epistemology, teachers are committed to some version of evidentialism, the epistemological position that "a person is justified in believing a proposition just in case the person's evidence sufficiently supports the proposition and the person responsibly acquired and sustained the evidence that supports the proposition."[35] This is likely part of what teachers *mean* by calling a belief-forming process "reliable." Commitment to evidentialism carries with it the epistemological mission of showing how reliabilism and responsibilism relate to one another, but the black box of AI reliabilism makes articulating that relation a difficult task.

What Ontological Assumptions Are Made about Teaching and Learning?

That AI drives a wedge between reliabilism and responsibilism is of main concern to use of AI as an educational tool. AI's close-mindedness about its processes, instantiated in human inability to check those processes for reliability, violates responsibilist demand for open-mindedness in the search for truth. But, perhaps more importantly, what gets closed out from consideration by AI's solipsism is the local contexts in which AI and its recommendations will be used. A report issued in March 2024 by the National Education Policy Center (NEPC) at the University of Colorado, Boulder argues that AI risks "undermining teachers' ability to make professional judgments about their students and devaluing teachers' subjective experience, subject matter expertise, classroom interactions, and contextual knowledge of a given child, class, or social setting." As AI comes to be seen as a critical factor in teaching, teaching may be reduced to a recommended set of programed steps to be taken to get curricular material across to AI numerically profiled students. AI also, the report continues, "poses a real threat to the accuracy of school knowledge and thus to the validity of curriculum materials." Curriculum designed, developed, and disseminated using AI risks inability to distinguish merely plausible

[32] Jason Baehr, "Responsibilist Virtues and the 'Charmed Inner Circle' of Traditional Epistemology," *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 174, no. 10 (October, 2017): 2557-2569.
[33] Heather Battaly, "Teaching Intellectual Virtues: Applying Virtue Epistemology in the Classroom," *Teaching Philosophy* 29, no. 3 (September, 2006): 191-222; J. Adam Carter, Ben Kotzee, and Harvey Siegel, "Education for Intellectual Virtue: A Critique from Action Guidance," *Episteme: A Journal of Individual and Social Epistemology* 18, no. 2 (2021): 177-199; and Ben Kotzee, "Learning How," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 50, no. 2 (May, 2016): 218-232.
[34] For the objection see Guy Axtell, "Expanding Epistemology: A Responsibilist Approach," *Philosophical Papers* 37, no. 1 (March, 2008): 51-87 and for the axiom see Joel Katzav, "Riggs on Strong Justification," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 76, no. 4 (December, 1998): 631-639, 635 for the quote.
[35] Christopher Michael Cloos, "Responsibilist Evidentialism," *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 172, no. 11 (November, 2015): 2999-3016. Find the quote on 3013.

sources from proven ones. But the biggest epistemological threat to education is that as decisions made about students along the arc of their educational histories become increasingly machine-guided, "…neither teachers nor administrators will be able to understand, explain, or justify the conclusions the programs reach, much less audit or document their validity." Disturbingly, on this scenario from an epistemic point of view, education becomes guided by ignorance, a process the NEPC report says serves to "replace human discretion with automated suspicion."[36] Thus, a central negative epistemic consequence of AI's closemindedness is irresponsible revocation of human freedom to decide what to do in a particular case in favor of inscrutable machine calculation that may possibly be true. In a worst-case scenario, AI could make recommendations about a student that educators familiar with the student know to be unwarranted. Here we have a clear case of what it means to say AI's doing risks undoing human knowing.[37]

Considerations along these lines prompted NEPC to call for a pause in use of AI while public agencies and elected officials get their act together with answers to questions like: What is acceptable use of AI? Who can use AI? What are state and district approved best-practices? What's to be done in cases of policy violations?[38] However, a pause in AI use and development seems unlikely. First, AI use is already rampant. Stacie Marvin, in her opinion piece in the *Education Week* Spotlight on AI sees the role of teachers changing as the educator's duties increasingly include the need to "prepare our students to thrive in a world that has AI embedded into nearly everything they are going to be asked to do."[39] Keith Krueger, executive director of the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN), points out that the problem of AI's virtually universal presence is particularly pressing for schools: "Now, many district leaders understand that AI is "probably in almost every product that you already purchase."[40] Second, economic

[36] Ben Williamson, Alex Molnar, and Faith Boninger, *Time for a Pause: Without Effective Public Oversight, AI in Schools Will Do More Harm Than Good* (Boulder, Colorado: National Education Policy Center, 2024). For the quotes see 13, 14, 15, and 16, respectively. NEPC use of the word 'suspicion' has rhetorical power in casting doubt on uncritical acceptance of AI recommendation. However, it may mislead as to what is going on in processes leading to AI output. "Thinking" or "feeling" are ill suited to describe algorithmic outputs. The outputs of AI are probabilistic in nature, and believed to be reliable on the grounds of probabilistic reasoning. On the chance they are true, we are to believe them. The calculator (i.e., the instrument, AI) which does the calculating need not nor can think or feel anything about the calculations or results of calculations. There is no feeling or thought (i.e., evaluation) anywhere in this system — feelings and beliefs would be "external" to it (or about it), but not in it. We tend to impute thought and feeling to machines and machine processes because in our own experience, thoughts and feelings are part and parcel (attendant to, and emergent properties) of our psychological-biological-social systems. That is, in the view of interpersonal neurobiology, thoughts and feeling are not epiphenomenon of the brain or society, but rather central features of energy and information flow that govern our entire life world. Thoughts and feelings exist as evaluations of how things are going for us, i.e., we are by nature evaluative beings. On this view, emotions are not the antithesis of reason; emotions have a rationality and rationality has a feeling for us. See Dan Siegel, *The Developing Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Guilford Press, 2012) and Sayer, *Why Things Matter to People*.

[37] It should not go unmentioned that the *Education Week* Spotlight on AI tends to downplay the difficulty concerning AI's undoing of human knowing by treating the trouble as a possibility rather than an actuality. Anything "negative" about AI is given as a "potential downside" (4 instances); the "positive potential" of AI is also discussed (6 instances). The "positives" offered in the *Education Week* Spotlight are not well-established, and some are simply presented as ideas or things yet to be tested that teachers might try. But we know AI has the downsides mentioned. These are not potential; they are currently existent. The *Education Week* Spotlight on AI takes a propagandistic turn with this possibilistic rhetoric.

[38] Williamson, Molnar, and Boninger, *Time for a Pause*, 3-5.

[39] Marvin, "I'm a Math Teacher," 13.

[40] Alyson Klein, "180 Degree Turn: NYC District Goes From Banning ChatGPT to Exploring AI's Potential," *Education Week* Spotlight on AI, 6. (Originally published 5 October 2023.)

development arguments for AI are beginning to take shape and gain strength. *Education Week* reports, "Data science is rapidly becoming a critical skill, and the United States has a lot to learn from global peers in equipping students for the coming economic shift." And the same article quotes Zarek Drozda, executive director of the University of Chicago's Data Science 4 Everyone program, a working group monitoring developments throughout the world of methods of teaching data science, as saying: "Artificial intelligence has triggered a global talent race, and whichever country is able to find the talent to not only build AI tools, but more importantly, effectively implement the technology economy-wide, will quickly shift the economic pecking order" and "I think we [in the United States] are setting ourselves up to quickly build technologies our broader population does not understand, nor will be able to effectively leverage. To maintain U.S. competitiveness, we need to create broad, population-level data literacy."[41] The point is well-taken. Literacy in recognizing and complying with legitimate use of AI would be a strong source of support for NEPC's call for AI governance. Governance via policy statement takes us away from understanding AI. The type of procedural knowledge involved in policy setting (tell me what steps to take and what I can and cannot do) itself invokes programmed, computer-like logic. Given the ubiquity and fluidity of AI with respect to any procedural steps governing its use, a lacquer of legislation and regulation sprayed over AI is unlikely to seal off irresponsible use of AI without an extant wish, widespread among users, to be responsible in their use of AI. Regulation, on its own, will likely set up an anxiety-ridden ontology of policing. Regulators will be hard-pressed to keep everyone in line unless regulators deputize all users to keep an eye on AI use. Educating towards AI fluency as a continuously applied, inquiry-based policing of AI data analysis and AI data analytics makes good sense because undergirding the epistemic issues we are discussing is the metaphysical issue of the relation of ideas to things.

How Do Ontological Assumptions Relate to Evident/Absent Epistemological Arguments?

Bernardo Kastrup, a philosopher and computer science theorist, has recently revived doctrines of metaphysical idealism under the new label analytical idealism. Kastrup lays out the main points of the theory using slogans such as "Everything is mind." (The First Principle of Metaphysics.) "Matter is what presents itself on the screen of perception." "Matter is what conscious inner life looks like from a perspective." These slogans aim to articulate the core belief of metaphysical/analytical idealism, namely, that there is no physical world, instead all existence is a mental construct given the appearance of physical form through mental processes of perceptions.[42] Kastrup's view is as vulnerable as any form of idealism that reduces existence to

[41] Sarah D. Sparks, "Ready or Not for an AI Economy: How U.S. Students Stack Up," *Education Week* (18 March 2024): https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/ready-or-not-for-an-ai-economy-how-u-s-students-stack-up/2024/03?utm_source=nl&utm_medium=eml&utm_campaign=eu&M=9329214&UUID=6e33ca36297c0e666ef3dac56b2ffdeb&T=12334777

[42] See Bernardo Kastrup, "Conflating Abstraction with Empirical Observation: The False Mind-Matter Dichotomy," and "Informing Metaphysical Choices with Epistemic Considerations," 341-347 and 357-360, respectively, in *Constructivist Foundations: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 13, no. 3 (July, 2018): 357-360; "The Universe in Consciousness," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 25, nos. 5-6 (May-June, 2018): 125-155; "The Next Paradigm," *Future Human Image* 9 (2018): 41-51; and "On the Plausibility of Idealism: Refuting Criticisms," *Disputatio: International Journal of Philosophy* 9, no. 44 (May, 2017): 13-34. Also see two podcasts: Bernardo Kastrup, "The Nature of Reality and AI," *Singularity Podcast*, Episode 57 (6 June 2022) host, Steven Parton https://www.su.org/feedback-loop/the-nature-of-reality-ai and *Simulation Podcast*, #676 (25 July 2020) host, Allen Saakayan https://www.facebook.com/simulationseries/videos/simulation-676-dr-bernardo-kastrup-metaphysical-idealism/292649535303977/

mind in an effort to avoid reliance on a material substrate to describe the make-up and structure of the world. Mind is as much a substrate, an abstracted metaphysical entity or theoretical postulate, as ever was any material world. Science seems to deal with more than ideas in understanding the world. And the very dichotomy of mind and matter misstates the philosophical issue at hand, namely, the relation of mind *to* matter. That relation is unlikely to be explained by any theory aimed at eliminating one of the relata from the discussion.[43]

However, whether metaphysical idealism accurately and adequately describes the world in which we live, it quite correctly describes the world of Artificial Intelligence. Part of the *artificiality* of AI's "intelligence" is that AI operates in a world in which only ideas exist. Even Kastrup the metaphysical idealist says AI will never develop (self-)consciousness. There is no substrate, either mental or physical, against which AI is required to assess the validity and adequacy of its ideas. This makes the ideas very atypical in the way they are formed. AI does its thinking independently of, rather than in terms of, real-world solutions to real-world problems. This is precisely what makes AI troublesome for use in a world that seems to demand a metaphysics of both ideas and things. AI's ideas are being thought up in a world of momentary phenomenal awareness and then being applied to a world that may be constitutively different from the world in which those ideas arose. The schism between the world of pure ideas and the world of real events ineradicably imbues AI advice with the aura of incompetence.

Seeing AI's intelligence as involving consciousness rests on a significant ontological and epistemological mistake. Intelligence does not involve or entail consciousness. Intelligence is different in kind than consciousness. It is easy to make the invalid assumption that as the intelligence of a being increases so too does its consciousness. Consciousness is an achievement of our species distinct from intelligence. While consciousness is dependent upon some level of intelligence and some level of science and technology, consciousness is neither reducible to nor singularly derived from intelligence understood as the ability to recognize rules and follow patterns, to "next," to predict. AI is already much "smarter" than we are in some respects, but this has not made it 1% more conscious of itself (or anything else). In fact, culture-wide deployment of machine intelligence may work against self- and social-consciousness because for humans to know and be aware requires action on and interaction with the world, including one's inner world, that is, understanding requires a conscious participation and finding out. Absent expenditure or release of this energy, human power (which includes the essential power to decide based on our evaluation of what is good for us) cannot be developed. Yes, humans can be trained to be part of larger AI-governed processes, even including fact-checkers, or other deputized guardrail monitors along the assembly line of AI-controlled socialization. But like calculators, the understanding (or consciousness) does not inhere in or emerge from the process of calculation (intelligence) itself. AI makes no evaluation because for AI there is only behavioral output on the basis of probabilities. What AI does is meaningful to humans, but it is not meaningful to AI because AI does not produce its output on the basis of meaning, understanding, or knowledge. Its output is the result of predicting the sequence of words based on data mining of huge repositories of human-generated narrative.

[43] For a collection of criticisms of Kastrup's view see Chris Fields, "Mind Is an Abstraction," 350-352; Sebastian Kletzl, "Concepts, Intuitions, and Hypotheses," 352-354; Robert Prentner, "Epistemology, Metaphysics and the Preconditions of Science," 354-355; and Konrad Werner, "Is Speaking of Mind or Matter a Matter of Choice," 355-356. all in *Constructivist Foundations: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 13, no. 3 (July, 2018).

Technological "solutionism," the position that technology is the key to solving all problems and, further, that all problems should be put in technological terms, empirically illustrates the metaphysical problem presented by AI. Certainly, technology can solve problems put in terms it can understand, but that merely restates rather than resolves the issue of AI's incompetence. Not all problems are translatable into techno-language. For instance, bias and violations of privacy seem persistently to be involved in AI's reductive description of students only in terms of leveraged, quantifiable data points. Technological solutionism, in requiring problems be put in terms of techno logic so that they may be solved via technology, creates an ideological position, an unbreakable logic of techno dependence that borders on religious devotion. Like any other deified voice, however otherworldly, to its devotees, AI is right because it has spoken. AI is an intelligence unto itself, a causal force that acts independently of human concerns and cognition. The performances of AI, its epistemological doings, become pronouncements of truth by their very utterance.[44] From a techno determinist point of view, AI doing becomes the pre-eminent form of knowing, that on which all other knowing is to be based, modelled, and justified. In reducing knowing to doing, AI becomes a doer without also being a knower, and knowledge becomes a performance rather than an achievement. Contrary to techno solutionism, the solution to educational problems is to integrate educational thinking into AI systems, not the other way around. Ultimately, techno solutionism is an authoritarian position wrapped up in the language of techno determinism: AI is here to stay whether you like it or not, so you better get used to it and do what it tells you. Socialization to acceptance of the pronouncements of AI becomes an epistemological norm. To become familiar with AI is to fall under its sway. AI is not so much a tool in the classroom as it is a presence to which teachers and students must adapt if they wish to be understood as efficient teachers and competent students.

But in the world in which techno determinists wish AI to do or to guide work, there are not only ideas. There are things, as well. And ideas almost always roughly and, typically only with effort, map onto things. The philosophy of the situation, in its metaphysics and in its epistemology, suggests the only way to live amicably with AI is to get everyone in the habit of criticality towards AI. We must subject pronouncements of AI, like any other claim to know, to a process of responsible human inquiry as litmus paper with which to test the reliability of the processes supporting the claims AI makes. This may be the strongest meaning of suggestions to use AI as a tool in the classroom. *Tool* talk is symbolic of technical power, something that empowers. The power is obtained through proper use of the tool. If used properly, the tool enhances and extends human power. In particular, then, AI assertions must be assessed in terms of morally responsible epistemology. AI's reliable processes must also pass tests of responsibility. Especially, AI recommendations must be given evaluation in terms of aims beyond efficiency and techno logics that describe and express what type of lives we might want for ourselves, a set of imaginings which lie outside the parameters of AI's sometimes unfathomable reliabilism. Epistemologically speaking, ideas go sour, sometimes disastrously, when applied in nonideal circumstances of their use. The corrective is to treat AI as just another data source and one that needs to be checked against reality. At both the level of student use of AI for paper writing and at the level of professional use of AI for policymaking, we're asking the same thing: make critical use of the info and answers AI provides. Do not take AI advice at face

[44] For more on the performative theory of truth see Peter F. Strawson, "Truth" in Margaret MacDonald, ed., *Philosophy and Analysis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955): 260-277. Strawson's deflationary theory finds its source in the redundancy theory of truth presented in Frank P. Ramsey, "Facts and Propositions," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volume 7 (1927): 153-170.

value. Sprinkle AI opinion liberally with grains of salt before consuming. The best way to make this happen is to socialize students and teachers in criticality towards curriculum, especially curriculum generated by AI. John Dewey articulates this sort of epistemic socialization in terms of the emotions students critically engaged in learning will develop. Dewey observes, "There is nothing in the inherent nature of habit that prevents intelligent method from becoming itself habitual; and there is nothing in the nature of emotion to prevent the development of intense emotional allegiance to the method."[45] Emotional attachment to responsibilist epistemology adds a component to "understanding" AI — one richer than that found in much of the narrative about uncritical acceptance of AI. Beyond mere epistemic understanding of AI as a reliable belief-forming process, we need to add 'understanding' as a meta-epistemic term meaning something akin to 'taking as a parameter of discussion' that AI results must constantly be checked against reality as we perceive reality to be and as we wish to see reality shaped by us.

A. N. Whitehead has said, "Civilization advances by extending the number of important operations which we can perform without thinking of them."[46] But the *type* or *character* of the civilization that develops when more and more operations are automated is not identified. We add to Whitehead's postulate this thesis: "The self-consciousness, or lack thereof, of a civilization is dependent upon how it develops, views, adopts and understands technology." We might further suggest that there is no necessary relationship between how technologically advanced a civilization is and how advanced that civilization's *consciousness* is. Simply put, in the case of AI, technological advance does not automatically entail advanced cultural forms, in the sense of conscious awareness of self and others, including our most deeply held moral convictions and their evaluation. That we *can* does not imply we *must*. As Rollo May observes, "Human freedom involves our capacity to pause between the stimulus and response and, in that pause, to choose the one response toward which we wish to throw our weight. The capacity to create ourselves, based upon this freedom, is inseparable from consciousness or self-awareness."[47] Self-awareness is exactly what's missing from AI; and AI must rely on us to fill its epistemological emptiness.

[45] John Dewey, "Experience and Education," in John Dewey, *The Later Works, 1925-1953*, Volume 13, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988), 58.
[46] Alfred North Whitehead, *An Introduction to Mathematics* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1912), 46.
[47] Rollo May, *The Courage to Create* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, reprint edition, 1994), 100.

How to Be an Antifascist Educator

Vicki Dagostino-Kalniz
University of Toledo

Abstract: Education must prioritize antifascism, equipping educators with principles and strategies actively to resist authoritarianism. Ensuring educators are committed to antifascism is essential for combating growing fascist political threats and preserving democratic freedom. The U.S. is confronting a crisis of democratic backsliding in conjunction with an ever-increasing threat of fascism. Antifascist education is essential to countering the rise of far-right extremism and ensuring schools remain spaces of critical thinking, empathy, and democratic engagement. By knowing, teaching, and modelling principles of antifascism, educators can help shape a generation resilient against fascist ideologies and committed to building a more just and equitable society..

"If you want to keep a secret, you must also hide it from yourself."
– George Orwell

Orwell's (1949/2021) dystopian, antifascist novel, *1984*, highlights, as a hallmark of fascism, the self-deception required to avoid recognizing reality. Fascist politics undermine reality through gaslighting, a psychological manipulation technique by use of which a person or group attempts to get others to question their own reality, memory, or perceptions thereby creating doubt and confusion, making the victim dependent on the gaslighters for a sense of validation, stability, and truth. Gaslighters deny their actions even when there is evidence demonstrating what they are doing. They spread disinformation, accuse victims of the very faults the gaslighters themselves possess (a psychological technique called negative projection), dismiss victims' feelings, and isolate their victims from support systems to increase dependency on the gaslighter. (Vaccarino, 2018; McGrath, 2021).

Fascist gaslighting often utilizes conspiracy theories and "alternative facts" to manipulate perceptions and beliefs, undermining trust in established facts and authoritative sources. By suggesting hidden sinister forces are at play fascist gaslighters undermine trust in relationships, institutions, media, and authorities. For example, making baseless claims of election fraud causes supporters to doubt the legitimacy of the electoral process. Such manipulation can cause anxiety, paranoia, confusion, depression, and a sense of helplessness, increasing the perceived need for a "savior" to show them the way, creating a loyal base of true believers who distrust opposing viewpoints. Fascist gaslighters undermine opposition groups by labeling dissenters as traitors or mentally unstable, discrediting legitimate criticism. They exaggerate or fabricate threats from minority groups, political opponents, or foreign nations to unify the populace against a common enemy. This creates a state of confusion and fear, making individuals more likely to rely on the fascist for information and decision-making, further consolidating the fascist's power. Such gaslighting normalizes unacceptable actions and policies, weakening social cohesion (Steinmetz, 2021; Corn, 2022).

Antifascist education is crucial in cultivating an informed, critically thinking, and psychologically resilient populace capable of resisting manipulative tactics. This paper explores how to be an antifascist educator, articulating the necessary skill and stressing social-psychological acuity. Antifascist educators defend democracy and prevent fascism by promoting and engaging in active citizenship, practicing inclusivity, developing psychological strength, and committing to social justice and human rights. Antifascist educators are democratic educators committed to taking action against fascism to prevent it from taking hold. In *How to Be an*

Antiracist, Ibram X. Kendi (2019) argues that it is not enough to identify as "not a racist," rather, one must actively struggle against racism, i.e., they must be an "antiracist." Similarly, it is not enough to identify as "not a fascist" or even as pro-democracy, rather, as an "antifascist" educator, one must actively struggle against fascism. Since antifascism is opposed to oppression and repression in all its forms and is focused on defending democratic values and institutions through actions that thwart oppression and repression, education for democracy must also be antifascist education.

Democratic Backsliding towards De-Liberal Democracy

Liberal democracy is rooted in classical liberalism and representative government, emphasizing individual liberty and protection from arbitrary authority. Key features include multiple political parties, separation of powers, the rule of law, a market economy, and the protection of human, civil, and political rights. Universal suffrage and political participation ensure all adult citizens can vote and engage in civic activities ("Liberal Democracy," n.d.). Constitutions in liberal democracies outline governmental powers, enshrine the social contract, and limit governmental authority, protecting rights such as due process, privacy, property, equality before the law, and freedoms of speech, assembly, and religion (Rawls, 1971).

Democratic backsliding refers to the deterioration of democratic performance and the rise of authoritarianism. Hudson (2021, para. 2) defines democratic backsliding as the "state-led debilitation or elimination of any of the political institutions that sustain an existing democracy." Unlike generalized democratic erosion, backsliding is characterized by targeted actions that undermine political institutions, attack legislatures and courts, and interfere with media integrity and civil liberties. Democratic backsliding is an incremental process involving the gradual erosion of institutions, rules, and norms due to the actions of elected governments. It often involves social and political polarization, governmental dysfunction, and a lack of trust in institutions. This incremental nature allows incumbents of antisystem parties to slowly accumulate power, making the erosion of democratic institutions difficult to detect and counter until it is too late (Haggard & Kaufman, 2021).

The United States, once a leading liberal democracy, has experienced significant democratic decline. Between 2006 and 2016, it slipped from 12th to 17th place among the world's 52 liberal democracies (Mechkova, Lindberg, & Luhrmann, 2017). In a 2021 report, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) classified the U.S. as a "backsliding democracy" highlighting a drift towards authoritarian tendencies. IDEA's assessment, based on 28 indicators across five core pillars — representative government, fundamental rights, checks on government, impartial administration, and participatory engagement — revealed a gradual erosion of democratic norms and institutions. Recent polling underscores the alarming trend toward authoritarianism. The Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) found that in 2022-2023 38% of Americans, including 48% of Republicans, 38% of Independents, and 29% of Democrats, support authoritarianism due to the country's current direction. Additionally, in 2023, 23% of all Americans, including 33% of Republicans and 31% of White Evangelical Protestants, agreed that "true American patriots may have to resort to violence to save our country" (Westheimer, 2022, p. 51). Among 75% of Americans polled, 77% of Republicans, 73% of Independents, and 84% of Democrats believe that the future of American democracy is at stake in the 2024 presidential election. In 1995, just 1 in 16 Americans agreed

that it would be “good” or “very good” for the military to run the country rather than elected democratic officials, while today, 1 in 5 agree (World Values Survey, 2020).

According to Westheimer (2022), the decline in support for democratic institutions is sharpest among younger generations. Two-thirds of Americans could not name all three branches of the federal government, and declining proportions view free elections as important in a democratic society (Kahlenberg & Janey, 2016). From 2017-2020 the World Values Survey revealed that 42% of American millennials prefer a political system led by a strong leader unburdened by elections or congressional oversight, and in 2017 the Pew Research Center found that 22% of Americans favor a political system with unchecked executive power (Westheimer, 2022).

Levitsky and Ziblatt (2020) demonstrate how America's democratic norms have unraveled over the last three decades, tracing early signs back to the 1990s. They highlight contemporary polarization in the U.S. is rooted in racial and cultural identity, creating profound and emotionally charged divisions. This division is underpinned by the historical racial exclusion that has consistently stabilized modern American democracy, originally designed for a predominantly white and Christian political community that, in the American South most clearly, forcibly excluded millions of African Americans. The backlash against the first Black president, Barack Obama, and cultural shifts in human rights and social justice ideologies set the stage for the rise of Trump-era racism and xenophobia. Addressing these challenges requires reinvigorating education to stem the tide of fascism supported by a Supreme Court that all too often no longer acts as a check on executive power and a Congress in gridlock, only sporadically able to enact laws to guide executive action.

A Call for Moving Forward: Democratic/Antifascist Education

Over the past twenty-five years, the decline of democratic education in public schools has paralleled the weakening of democracy in the United States (Weiner, 2022). The original goal of public education — developing free individuals on equal terms — is facing unprecedented challenges from forces seeking an anti-democratic schooling system. Neoliberal capitalism's influence on education exacerbates these issues. Giroux (2019) noted that authoritarianism's rise and the correlative erosion of democratic values are driven by a culture prioritizing speed and utility over critical thought. He urged educators to empower young people to think critically and defend democratic principles. Apple and Beane (1995) called for democratic schools that promote participation in governance, cooperation, and social justice, while Milligan and Ragland (2011) advocate for preparing teachers to educate, equip, engage, and empower students in democratic ways of life. If we are to move forward most effectively, we need to know with what and whom we are dealing. Natasha Lennard’s (2019) *Being Numerous: Essays on Non-Fascist Life* argued that liberal appeals to truth will not break through a fascist epistemology of power and domination. Understanding how we become fascist and exhibit fascistic behavior in the neoliberal mode is crucial to recognizing fascistic habits when they manifest in work environments as illustrations of the institutional and family conditions of micro-fascism (Peters, 2022). Examination of fascist patterns of thought reveals steps to take in carrying out antifascist education.

Fascism (Know Your Enemy!): Fascism is a multifaceted ideology with interpretations spanning historical-ideological, economic, and social psychological perspectives. Each of these perspectives will be examined more closely below. At the core of fascism lies the exploitation of

human psychological vulnerabilities, especially during periods of economic and social distress (Feigenbaum, 2022). Fascism's unique feature — exploitation of human vulnerability as a tool for political power — becomes clearer when distinguishing among fascism, authoritarianism, and totalitarianism.

Although distinct forms of governance, authoritarianism, totalitarianism, and fascism share many overlapping characteristics. Authoritarianism is symbolized by centralized power in a single leader or small group of elites, limited political freedoms, and controlled societal attributes, often lacking a guiding ideology and maintaining power through selective legal applications. Totalitarianism extends authoritarianism by holding absolute control over all public and private life, driven by an all-encompassing ideology. It features single-party rule, mass mobilization, extensive surveillance, repression, and control of communication and education to indoctrinate citizens. Fascism is characterized by ultranationalism, strong dictatorial leadership, militarism, anti-communism, anti-liberalism, and corporatism. It suppresses political pluralism and uses propaganda for mass mobilization, differing from other totalitarian systems through its unambiguous nationalist and militaristic ideology (Ben Ghiat, 2024; Stanley, 2018). Consequently, fascism involves both totalitarian and authoritarian characteristics, but not all authoritarian or totalitarian regimes are fascist. With this broad framework in mind, we can see deeper into the specific characteristics and development of fascism through various lenses. The next subsections will examine the historical-ideological, economic, and social psychological perspectives of fascism, shedding light on its origins, evolution, and the ideological underpinnings that have shaped its manifestation across different contexts and periods.

Historical-Ideological Perspective of Fascism: Opposing communism and liberal democracy, fascism collaborates with capitalist interests to suppress leftist movements and promote a narrative of national decline followed by a miraculous rebirth. Social Darwinism influences its racist and xenophobic policies (Griffin, 1993). Fascist leaders glorify a mythic past and justify authoritarian measures as law-and-order defenses, often incorporating misogyny and, for lack of a better word, homophobia into their rhetorical attacks on women's and LGBT+ rights as cultural and moral threats Finally, fascist leaders cultivate personas of infallibility, use violence to suppress opposition, and engage in corruption and cronyism, undermining democratic institutions (Ben-Ghiat, 2020; Stanley, 2018). Fascist regimes use propaganda to control public opinion, masking corruption with anticorruption rhetoric and fostering mistrust among citizens (Stanley, 2018). Fascism undermines intellectualism, science, expertise, and the press, replacing truth with manipulated narratives.

Fascism's adaptability and propagandistic appeal to diverse groups poses a persistent threat to democracy. Antifascism counters this by recognizing fascism's origins, features, and psychological warfare tactics. Recognizing fascism on sight is essential for preventing its resurgence. Teaching about contemporary antifascism is crucial for integrating various social justice movements into a broader antifascist resistance. This involves supporting victims of fascist violence and taking actions to disrupt far-right formations, especially when traditional policing is inadequate. Forming alliances with community-based, anti-fascist groups is vital to defending educators and school officials under fascist attack. For example, anti-fascist activists can support teachers, schools, and school districts who pledge to teach history truthfully as part of the Zinn Education Project which goes beyond traditional textbooks to teach an accurate, complex, and engaging history of the United States, a "people's history" (Vavrus, 2022).

Economic Perspective of Fascism: Economic fascism, linked to neoliberal policies, merges corporate and governmental powers to suppress dissent and maintain social hierarchies. The structural basis of fascism is fully realized through corporate-government (corp-gov) merger (Jenkins, 2019). “Democratic” capitalism masks its hegemony through commodified difference and atomic individuality, decimating community and democratic life (Weiner, 2003). Extreme capitalism and neoliberalism concentrate wealth and power, forming an oligarchy that exploits citizens. In this way, fascism, combined with social constructs like patriarchy and white supremacy, oppresses marginalized groups, fostering anger and resentment that fascists exploit to polarize populations and breed violence among citizens.

When driven by international finance capital, neoliberalism enforces policies prioritizing finance over working-class interests, causing wage stagnation and increasing inequality. Neoliberalism’s opposition to state intervention creates political stasis, weakening class resistance and facilitating fascism's rise (Patnaik, 2020). Neoliberalism claims to ensure economic growth and social justice through competitive markets, but it redefines equality as market competition freedom, shifting social equality responsibility from the state to individuals, masking the resulting inequality. Neoliberalism's failure to achieve justice necessitates arguments for fundamental rights like housing, education, healthcare, and living wages (Hursh, 2006).

To transcend this threat, it is essential to move beyond neoliberal capitalism towards socialism, mobilizing anti-fascist forces and envisioning a post-neoliberal future (Patnaik, 2020). Antifascist educators teach that socialism is not a threat but a way of living in cooperation with one another. A pedagogical resurgence of antifascism must provide an intellectual, philosophical, and strategic battle plan, understanding the systemic forces of capitalism, imperialism, and white supremacy. Paulo Freire's revolutionary pedagogy of class consciousness emphasizes grasping the systemic roots of oppression and engaging in radical pedagogy. His problem-posing pedagogy encourages a critical perception of reality and personal transformation through dialogue, helping students break free from internalized domination and participate in their liberation (Aronowitz, 1993).

Social Psychological Perspective of Fascism: The social psychology of fascism examines the interplay between individual psychological states and broader societal conditions that contribute to authoritarianism and development of fascist attitudes. In *Escape from Freedom* (1946), Erich Fromm explained why individuals in Nazi Germany were drawn to authoritarian figures. He differentiated between negative freedom (freedom from external authority) and positive freedom (freedom to realize one's individuality). Fromm argued that while negative freedom liberates individuals from traditional constraints, it leaves them feeling isolated and anxious. This existential void drives people to seek refuge in authoritarian systems. Fromm suggested that overcoming these tendencies involves achieving positive freedom through personal authenticity and creative self-expression. He also emphasized the socio-psychological effects of alienation in capitalist societies, stating that fascism results from the unhealthy psychological condition caused by alienation (Sakurai, 2018).

Theodor Adorno and colleagues expanded Fromm’s ideas in *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), identifying traits that predispose individuals to fascist ideologies. They developed the F-scale to assess authoritarian tendencies, which include conventionalism, authoritarian submission, and aggression, among others. These traits cluster together to form an authoritarian personality susceptible of fascist propaganda. Bob Altemeyer's concept of Right-Wing

Authoritarianism (RWA) posits that traits like submission to authority, adherence to conventional norms, and aggression toward those who challenge these norms are socially acquired attitudes rather than innate characteristics. Altemeyer emphasized that socialization practices in institutions such as schools, media, families, and religious organizations play a crucial role (Feigenbaum, 2022).

The socialization perspective provides a compelling explanation for the development of authoritarian personalities. By recognizing that authoritarian traits are learned and rooted in social structures, we can more effectively address the psychological needs and desires that fascism exploits, particularly by preparing antifascist educators. Antifascist education should emphasize self-awareness, autonomy (positive freedom), historical knowledge, civic engagement, critical thinking, and countering far-right ideologies. The 4E model of Milligan & Ragland (2011) — Educate, Equip, Engage, Empower — provides a practical framework for preparing educators in civic education. This model includes educating students to recognize historical knowledge, equipping them with practical tools for critical thinking, engaging them in participation, and empowering them to apply their knowledge as active citizens. By adopting this framework, educators can transform classrooms into spaces for critical dialogue and action against oppressive practices and ideologies, thereby fostering a democratic and just society. Respecting student autonomy is critical. Teachers should allow students to make choices, develop social relations, engage creativity by creating a safe environment for open discussion, cooperation, and respect. Educators must model core democratic values like freedom, equality, and justice, creating an inclusive environment where all students feel respected, regardless of their background (Subba, 2014). Incorporating democratic values in curricula involves methods of teaching that allow for freedom of expression and shared decision-making, like collaborative projects and student-led activities (EUDEC, 2022).

How to Be an Antifascist Educator

A commitment to constructing a new, antifascist system of schooling in the U.S. is vital to counter these anti-democratic forces. Education's role in preventing atrocities and fostering humanity is critical. Adorno (2014, p. 1), emphasized that education's primary goal must be to prevent atrocities like Auschwitz, famously stating, "The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again." Turcotte-Summers (2023) echoed Adorno, calling for antifascist education emphasizing critical thinking and a commitment to truth to combat the rise of the post-truth, authoritarian, fascist era. This principle aligns with Karl Marx's notion of radicalism, "getting to the root of things" (Reich, 1946, p. 7), guiding educators to address the underlying causes of societal issues. Drawing from the philosophies of Paulo Freire and Angela Davis, being a radical pedagogue means engaging deeply with the root causes of oppression and fostering revolutionary class consciousness. Freire emphasized that revolutionary class consciousness is realized through radicalism, a process Davis describes as “simply grasping things at the root” (Jenkins, 2019, p. 28). This approach requires understanding the systemic foundations of societal problems and applying this knowledge to real-world contexts.

To understand how systemic inequalities may be addressed locally, antifascist educators must engage in meaningful dialogue with oppressed communities, confronting oppressive structures without claiming proprietorship over history or liberation. Freire’s pedagogy highlights the importance of entering into dialogue with people, listening, confronting, and seeing the world unveiled. Antifascist educators commit to fight alongside the oppressed *within*

history rather than acting as proprietors or liberators (Jenkins, 2019, p. 28). Integrating antifascism into education involves more than recognizing fascist traits; it requires active engagement with contemporary antifascist movements and building community alliances to support those targeted by fascist tactics. As Vavrus wrote (2022, pp. 11-12 and p. 13, respectively), [1] "Community-based antifascists can defend these educators by showing up at school board meetings, demonstrating in support of harassed teachers and librarians, and connecting with concerned parents and educators." and [2] "To counter the fascist politics of educational absolutism, antifascist educators with community backing can help to claim the contested cultural space of schools as antifascist zones for civic discourse and reasoning."

Antifascist education is inherently activist. It encourages students to learn about historical insurgent struggles and recontextualize them in contemporary terms. This includes analyzing power dynamics in schools, researching structural change strategies, and understanding civil disobedience's risks and benefits (Weiner, 2003, p. 73). Antifascist educators should also develop skill in public address, legal policy, and unionization to defend progressive practices. An activist curriculum could take various forms, including historical contextualization, power analysis, civic engagement, and critical reflection. By fostering a socially and politically engaged pedagogy, educators can counter the ideological forces of neoliberalism and authoritarianism, promoting critical thinking, empathy, and collaboration.

Antifascist educators must possess the psychological readiness to counter fascist indoctrination and socialization. This involves developing resilience to withstand potential backlash and opposition, as well as cultivating adaptability to navigate complex and evolving social and political landscapes. Antifascist educators must be equipped with the emotional intelligence to manage their own feelings and respond empathetically to students' diverse experiences and reactions. This readiness includes a deep commitment to continuous self-reflection and growth, recognizing and addressing one's own biases and assumptions. Moreover, antifascist educators must have the psychological acuity necessary for recognizing propaganda and gaslighting. This includes being able to identify manipulative language, misinformation, and deceptive narratives used to distort reality and manipulate public perception. Educators should be trained to analyze media sources critically and teach students to do the same, fostering media literacy and critical thinking. Understanding the psychological tactics used in propaganda and gaslighting helps educators and students remain vigilant and critically question authoritarian claims.

Antifascist educators must be prepared to confront and challenge entrenched power structures, often facing significant resistance. They should foster a supportive and inclusive classroom environment where critical dialogue can thrive. Developing strategies to inspire and sustain collective action among students is essential, helping them to recognize and resist fascist ideologies in their communities. Giroux (2024, pp. 6-7) emphasized "the necessity for educators to engage in collective resistance, think on the edge of possibilities, and educate students to become critical agents who actively question and negotiate the relationships between theory and practice, critical analysis and common sense, and learning and social change."

Integrating antifascism into education is not merely an academic exercise but a call to action. Active participation in democratic processes and social activism is vital. Antifascist educators should engage in direct action and community organizing, encouraging students to participate and develop a sense of agency and responsibility. Building partnerships with community organizations and social movements provides students with opportunities for hands-,

heads-, and hearts-on learning. Teaching history as a tool for understanding the present and shaping the future is essential, as is developing historical and sociopolitical consciousness. Encouraging students to envision a more equitable and just society, fostering hope, and motivating action towards social change are crucial aspects of antifascist education. This proactive stance transforms schools into zones for civic discourse and reasoning, reclaiming educational spaces from authoritarian influences. An antifascist educator is prepared to teach students how to develop skill in public address and legal policy by fostering a socially and politically engaged pedagogy.

Becoming an antifascist educator is an ongoing process of self-reflection and growth. Educators must develop their identity, understand their psychological vulnerabilities, and engage in regular self-care. Reflecting on values and aligning them with democratic and antifascist principles is crucial. This process involves continuous learning and adaptation to remain effective in promoting democratic ideals and resisting oppressive ideologies, a kind of psychological readiness often overlooked in traditional democratic education. Freire's pedagogy emphasizes that educators must engage students in confronting their own lives and fears, breaking the cycle of psychological oppression. This involves teachers in dialoguing with their own fears, too, as representations of the oppressor's power within themselves, thus attaining freedom from these internalized oppressive relationships (Aronowitz, 1993, pp. 14-16). At bottom, antifascist education requires of educators what good teaching requires of all teachers: A commitment to fostering among the students they teach use of critical consciousness, promotion of social justice, and engagement in civic activism. Antifascist educators are advocates *with* their students. Antifascist educators guide and aid students in putting what they learn in school to use in the world to enhance their lives and improve their life chances. Antifascist educators uphold, defend, and model the democratic ideals that form the foundation of our society.

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Challenging Latinidad: Learning from Baseball in Teaching About Latinxs

Tim Monreal and Iman Lathan
University at Buffalo/State University of New York

Abstract: Baseball is commonly recognized as the United States' 'national pastime,' implying a sense of shared unity among fans and players of diverse genders, races, ethnicities, and languages. However, Major League Baseball (MLB) as a league and cultural institution can hardly be called progressive on matters of racial, gender, and sexual orientation inclusion. Through two concepts, *essentialist discourses of Brownness* and *queer diaspora*, we center professional baseball as a critical object of (curricular) inquiry illuminating essentializing aspects of Latinidad. Thinking with these two concepts, we examine two 'moments' from the podcast, *Black Diamonds,* to show how baseball is a way to highlight historical and contemporary racialization and (re)construction of Black, Latinx, and Afro-Latinx categories.

Purposes

The term 'national pastime' suggests inclusivity, a universal welcoming of fans and players from diverse genders, races, ethnicities, and languages. However, Major League Baseball (MLB), the world's most popular and profitable professional league, can hardly be cited as progressive on matters of racial, gender, and sexual orientation inclusion. In fact, according to Iber et al. (2011), MLB has resisted, and has been slow to adapt to racial and cultural shifts in US society. As Domino Rudolph (2021) notes, MLB's history is intertwined with white nationalism despite its outward appearance of being a welcoming, even multicultural sport. In line with the prevailing laws and policies of racial segregation, white baseball owners long barred African-Americans and Black players from participating in Major League Baseball. It wasn't until 1947 that Jackie Robinson broke MLB's color barrier and played for the Brooklyn Dodgers.

While Robinson's 'breaking of the color barrier' is now universally (and rightly) celebrated and recognized by schools, communities, and MLB as a major Civil Rights achievement, there remains relatively little attention paid (especially in educational studies) to how baseball shapes and is shaped by historical and contemporary understandings of race and racial categories. Popular discourse about race, racialization, and baseball largely mirrors a Black/white binary in which Latinx and Black identities are also understood as mutually exclusive categories. This is reflected by a number of comments by African-American media personalities and professional players. For example, in 2015, comedian Chris Rock asked, "Why don't Black people like baseball anymore?" as he described himself as "an endangered species, a Black baseball fan" (Cwik, 2015). A few years before Rock, outfielder Torii Hunter said, "People see dark faces out there and the perception is that they are African-American. They're not us. They're imposters" (Ruck, 2011, p. xi). Such comments, which seem to erase and/or ignore the possibility of a Black/Afro Latinx subject (Burgos Jr, 2015), sit alongside (education) scholarship that tends to position Latinx as a static and monolithic ethno-racial category, a notion that also "insidiously positions Blackness as [its] foil" (Gamez & Monreal, 2021, p. 13). Baseball, then, offers a window into the production and resistance of racial categorization and hierarchization that intersects through and with skin color, gender, immigration (and diaspora), language, globalization, class, and identity.

Offering professional baseball as a critical object of (curricular) inquiry in education provides a way to consider essentialized views of Latinidad, and necessarily, its relationship to and with Blackness (Beltran, 2004; Busey & Silva, 2021; Cahuas, 2019; Gamez & Monreal,

accepted). Examining baseball in this context sheds light on the ongoing racialization of the Latinx diaspora, signaling unique perspectives on Latinx and Black ethnic studies, cultural studies, and histories beyond the prevailing monoliths present in scholarly discourse (Lee & Martin, 2019; Mahler, 2018). Such singular notions of Latinidad, couched in universal *Brownness*, ignore the intractability of anti-Blackness (Busey & Silva, 2021; Vargas, 2018) a point made by the "Afro-Latino Jackie Robinson" (and now MLB Hall of Famer) Minnie Miñoso: "I wanted people to know that it didn't really matter where you came from. You're from here or there, and it doesn't really matter. But then, there were two skin colors — black and white. What was the difference, if you were black and born in Cuba, or black and born here in America? Your skin is black everywhere you go." and "I never used to have anything against fans because someone called me a name, or because I had to stay in a different hotel, or had to be in a different place. It was not the fans who made it that way — it was the law. The law was what said you could not be in one place or another [because of your skin color]" (Kahrl, 2015, para. 18). In a similar vein, another MLB Hall of Famer, Orlando Cepeda, remembered how his Puerto Rican superstar father, Pedro "Purecho" Cepeda, was too dark-skinned to (want to) play in the segregated Major Leagues, "My father was a proud man, as a Black man he had neither the inclination to endure segregation nor the temperament to buck racism in the United States" (Ruck, 2011, p. 71). These quotes evidence not only the prevalence of anti-Blackness in baseball, but also how the story of Black baseball in the United States is a diasporic story, one in which to be Black and Latinx are not mutually exclusive.

Thus, we ask how baseball reflects and offers new ways of thinking about (anti-Black) Latinidad and the ongoing diaspora of Latinx bodies across the US. As self-identified Black (Iman) and Chicano (Tim) scholars, we explore this theme as a matter of curricular and cultural study, particularly how popular media, discourse, and sport (re)make certain narratives of Latinidad and Blackness (im)possible (Flores, 2021; Gamez & Monreal, accepted; Garcia Peña, 2021). In particular, we select two discursive moments from the Negro Leagues podcast *Black Diamonds* that highlight the historical and contemporary construction of Black, Latinx, and Afro-Latinx professional baseball. In particular, in this largely conceptual paper we ask the following guiding questions: 1) *How does professional baseball recreate certain Black and/or Latinx subjects?* and 2) *How does professional baseball offer a curriculum for (re)learning Latinidades?*

The map of this paper is as follows. First, we outline the two elements of our conceptual frame: essentialized/monolithic Brownness and queer(ing) diaspora. We explain how these critical ideas push back against oversimplified notions of Latinidad while also helping to understand how marginalized bodies move through systems of whiteness. The lingering diasporic travels of baseball players provide insight into the malleability of race, especially vis-a-vis (anti)Blackness, while also offering innovative perspectives on how movement of Brown and Black bodies continues to be translated within, for, and against neocolonial, white supremacist institutions. Next, we outline our selection and use of discursive moments from the podcast *Black Diamonds*. We also add important context about how the podcast is (re)telling the stories of the Negro Leagues[1] and Black baseball more generally. We then move to analysis of the two moments before concluding with implications for researchers, scholars, and educators and additional areas of critical (curricular) inquiry for and with baseball.

[1] The Negro Leagues are best described as the professional league for Black baseball players when they were prohibited from playing in the MLB.

Conceptual Framework

Two concepts inform our inquiry and analysis of the discursive moments from the podcast *Black Diamonds*: essentialist discourses of Brownness (Busey & Silva, 2021) and the queer diaspora (Gopinath, 2018). These two concepts not only help us critically interrogate how race is and has been (re)made with baseball, but also provide an example of how baseball can be put to use as a curricular object. That is, these two concepts show how educators might approach their own examination of race in baseball or other sports (Monreal & Barrera, 2024) in their own spaces. Application to baseball of critical theories of race and diaspora open up new ways of thinking with and against contemporary understandings of Latinidad.

Essentialist Discourses of Brownness: At a most basic and uncritical level, Latinidad suggests a unifying ethnocultural identity for individuals sharing a Latin American and Spanish-speaking heritage (Negron, 2014). However, the history behind the development and deployment of Latinidad illustrates multiple examples of its anti-Black construction (Busey & Silva, 2021). Twentieth century Latin American political figures and intellectuals theorized Latinidad through the lens of hybridity and mestizaje, "utilizing notions of 'mixing' as a biological apparatus to undermine racial inequalities, Whiten the population, and foster assimilation" (Busey & Silva, 2021, p. 179). Hence, the desirability of a racially-mixed identity was to project a future disentangled from Blackness and Indigeneity (Busey & Cruz, 2017; Busey & Silva, 2021; Flores, 2021), and tied to the idea of racial progress as movement toward whiteness. Still, mestizaje proved to be a key feature of civil rights groups like the Brown Berets as they sought to inspire political subjectivities and cultural pride through appeals to a shared set of privileged knowledges and experiences afforded by this hybridity (Beltran, 2004).

Politically useful as a way to bring marginalized peoples together while creating broad coalitions through claims to exceptionality, mestizaje was made visible through the discursive intervention of intermediary Brownness. Soon, to be (the right kind of) Latinx was to be Brown and, importantly, not Black (Gamez, 2023). Wedding a Latinx subject to Brownness necessarily made, and makes certain representations and understandings of Latinidad (im)possible. Busey and Silva (2021) maintain that the creation of Latinxs as monolithically Brown necessarily draws boundaries that exclude Black and Afro-Latinxs. Busey and Silva (2021, p. 181) write, in categorically equating Brownness to Latinidad, "monolithic Brownness functions to create sublatinities [in which] singular ontological mappings of Latinxs as Brown situate Black and Indigenous identities as "second-tier." Thus, it is important that any research intent on theorizing Latinidad (and in our case its relationship with baseball) eschew the tendency to start with reference to singular Brown epistemologies and ontologies.

Providing an additional layer to essentialist discourses of Brownness is the idea that the US empire, through military intervention, ongoing colonialism, and economic exploitation, created the boundaries of normative Black subjectivities. That is, as US representations of Blackness are globally hegemonic, any other notions of being Black must then be translated through, to, and against this hegemonic lens. García Peña (2022, p. 12, emphasis original) observes that the ubiquity of the US Black subject, whether it be through global icons (like Barack Obama) or larger movements (like the Civil Rights Movement and Black Lives Matter) "have made U.S. blackness appear to be the *only* way to be Black *and* a citizen." Put another way, people and groups outside these dominant representations, for example multiethnic, heterogeneous, and diasporic Black Latinxs, must explain and/or translate "their other blackness to a larger US constituency" (García Peña, 2022, p. 13). Taking together the notion of "translating Blackness"

with essentialist Brownness provides tools to understand how Afro-Latinx baseball players challenge normative ways of understanding race.

Queer Diaspora: From the late 1990s into the 2000s, building on postcolonial and woman of color feminist theories of diaspora, scholars in queer studies introduced the concept of "queer diaspora." This term describes how the meanings and expressions of sexual desire, subjectivity, and practices change and evolve within the context of diasporic movement, migration, and residence (Gopinath, 2021, p. 68; Gopinath, 2005; Manalansan, 2003). Previous scholarship has applied the queer diasporic framework across various disciplines, including art, Black studies, queer studies, Asian studies, and discussions on race and racism. For instance, Gayatri Gopinath, in *Unruly Visions* (2018), examines the aesthetic practices of the queer diaspora through an exploration of diverse forms of visual culture. Gopinath's work illustrates how these artistic expressions disrupt conventional notions of gender, sexuality, race, and nationality.

Moreover, a queer diasporic framework serves as a valuable analytical tool, enabling us to locate stories of baseball players as diasporic. This perspective allows for a deeper understanding of their experiences and identities within a broader context of displacement and migration. A queer diasporic framework provides a tool to unmoor Latinidad from essentialized understandings and challenge "the normative ways of seeing and knowing [baseball] that have been so central to the production, containment, and disciplining of sexual, racial, and gendered bodies" (Gopinath, 2018, p.7). The concept of "queer diaspora" not only disrupts heteronormative and patrilineal norms inherent in conventional understandings of diaspora but also challenges "conventional framings of queerness... and a politics of invisibility which demands a way of thinking outside of a Euro-American frame but instead in relation to histories of colonialism and globalization" (Gopinath, 2021, p. 68). Thinking through baseball as a critical curricular object, this framework is instrumental in re-positioning Latinxs as vital voices in the retelling of American history, challenging dominant white, patrilineal epistemologies.

Practices of the queer diaspora emerge out of and respond to the legacies of colonial labor relations, which include the "dispossession of indigenous peoples, postcolonial nationalisms, the diasporas of racialized, migrant labor" (Gopinath, 2018, p. 8). A queer diasporic optic transforms how one views the extensions of colonial labor relations that are often revived and repurposed in contemporary postcolonial or diasporic contexts. The queer diaspora allows us to consider enforced fixity and enforced mobility as interconnected elements of the neocolonial nation-state's strategy to standardize, control, and eliminate social structures that are viewed as out of place in both contemporary and historical contexts. The strategy to standardize, control and enforce mobility is shown in the monolithic, anti-Black, singular conceptualizations of Brown Latinidad. By adopting a queer perspective and reimagining unruly boundaries of Latinidad (Gamez and Monreal, accepted), we grant ourselves the intellectual freedom to envision our baseball subjects in history in alternative and expansive ways. This approach disrupts conventional ideas of gender, sexuality, race, and nationality, especially important as educational research continues to approach Latinidad in singular and underdeveloped ways (Busey & Silva, 2021; Salinas, et al., 2016; San Miguel, 2012).

Discursive Moments

Our analysis focuses on two discursive 'moments' that we selected from the podcast *Black Diamonds*. *Black Diamonds* was originally created as part of the 100th-year anniversary of the Negro Leagues, and is hosted by the president of the Negro Leagues Museum, Bob Kendrick.

Describing the show, Kolgraf (2022, para. 1) writes "the podcast will showcase the history of the Negro Leagues, highlighting the players, people, and events that shaped them, as well as spotlighting the leagues' achievements and innovations during a time of segregation and inequality."

We define 'moments' as brief pieces of or excerpts from text and media that, while not representative, provide useful opportunities for analysis, particularly in conversation with specific theories. The selection and choice of moments is "a decidedly subjective and intentional process meant to highlight particularly generative instances" of thinking with and/or against theory (Monreal, 2024, p. 8). Perhaps most important is that these moments are often rather banal, meaning their content is not highlighted by the speaker/writer. Following Dumas (2016) we think about how common (sense) discourse produces and reflects normative knowledge; in turn (re)creating the boundaries of how we come to understand things (e.g. race, Latinidad, baseball, etc.). Put another way, we view 'moments' as entry points to interrogate how ordinary discourses operate with and through the processes of racialization and racial categorization.

We selected two moments for analysis after Tim first listened to specific episodes that referenced, and in some cases centered Latinxs in the Negro Leagues. Tim then sent these specific episodes to Iman, and we individually wrote down time stamps that referenced moments we thought deserved further examination and analysis. We met to share, talk through, and relisten to parts of the content we highlighted. We then collaboratively selected two examples as particularly rich moments to discuss and theorize with in greater detail.

Moment 1: "From being a Black kid without a job to a Cuban with a job" The first moment comes from the episode titled "The Cuban Stars" (Simplecast.com, 2021). In this episode, the Negro League Museum president Bob Kendrick highlights the long history of Black baseball in Cuba and the numerous Cubans who went on to star in the Negro Leagues. Although the episode stresses the star power of famous players like José Méndez, Cristóbal Torriente, Minnie Miñoso (12:25), and Martín Dihigo (31:49), it was Kendrick's recollection of a story about a nameless amateur player that struck us as a particularly illuminating instance of anti-Blackness, Latinidad, and baseball. Early in the podcast, Kendrick describes a young Black *"*player in the United States who begs the manager of an all-white team to play. Tired of having to tell the player "No" day after day, the white manager decides to put the Black player in a position to fail. The manager calls him out of the stands without warning in a bases-loaded situation." Kendrick continues: *"*The manager hoped that this experience would embarrass the "kid" enough to deter him from continuing to pester him. However, the "kid" hit a line drive, clearing the bases. This led the manager to exclaim, "Look at that Cuban run." This Black kid went from being a Black kid without a job to a Cuban with a job."

This moment demonstrates how baseball invited, and at times deployed the malleability of racial classification to control its interests. The moment also shows how anti-Blackness was marshaled in constructing the Latinx subject. The idea that Blackness and Latinidad were, and in many cases still are, mutually exclusive allowed for a Black baseball player to occupy a new subject position, 'Cuban'. While the podcast does not reveal what became of the newly employed 'Cuban,' what is important for our inquiry is that the appeal of and to Latinidad rested on its anti-Black construction (Flores, 2021). In other words, so long as the player was Latino, and hence not Black, he might have a *chance* to play Major League Baseball.

This, of course, does not mean that Latinidad guaranteed entry into a segregated MLB. There are but a few examples of Latinos, specifically Cubans, that signed major league contracts in the early 1900s. Two players, Rafael Almeida and Armando Marsans were required to sign a document attesting to European heritage, and not African heritage (Santana, 2021). Once again this shows that Latinidad, and any hint of Brownness, were acceptable only in relation to whiteness. Such understanding evidences the rationale that the development of Latinidad was tied to and theorized in terms of notions of *blanqueamiento* and racial progress (Busey & Cruz, 2017). As Black and dark-skinned Latinos had no recourse to the possibilities of being a white baseball subject, their options depended on the open arms of the Negro Leagues showing that the production and racial categorization and hierarchization intersected through and with skin color, immigration (and diaspora), and language, among other things.

That US Black baseball and Black baseball players became mainstays in countries like Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic in the US offseason — given the relatively lucrative (and often desegregated) winter barnstorming, exhibition, and league schedule (Corey & Harnischfeger, 2017) — necessitated a diasporic return to the US. Negro League teams and their Latinx owners would make appeals to Latinidad to try and garner support in North America. Team names like the New York Cuban Giants and the Cuban X-Giants "reflected the cachet that Cubans had acquired in North American baseball circles and the more tolerant attitude white Americans had regarding Cubans than they had towards African-Americans" (Ruck, 2011, p. 12). Ruck further maintains that such attempts to be more racially acceptable to white communities garnered mixed results, but most telling (like the story in the discursive moment we've considered in the past few paragraphs), is the attempt itself, an attempt that rested on drawing boundaries between Latinidad and Blackness.

Moment 2: "I knew English before I came to this country, but I had never heard the N-word."
The second moment features a live interview with two former Negro League players, Pedro Sierra and Sam Allen (Simplecast.com, 2022). Taped in front of a live audience at Major League Baseball's Play Ball Park in Los Angeles, Kendrick asks the former ball players to discuss their careers in the Negro Leagues. Pedro Sierra, born in Cuba, discussed how coming to the US was a learning experience in ways that extended beyond baseball. Sierra shared a couple of examples:

> [1] About 90% of the Negro League players at that time had played in Cuba…. Those young kids knew that we had the opportunity to play… There was a scout in Cuba that recommended me to the Negro Leagues… [and there was a] nurturing approach they [Negro Leagues] had toward younger players. It was more nurturing that Oscar Charleston [his manager] tried to speak Spanish… he came to the mound and said, "Chico, hombre no gusta curva" and I was like, "Mr., I know English…"
>
> [2] …but it was that the worst impact for me in the Negro Leagues because I knew English before I came to this country, but I had never heard the N-word. I didn't know what that meant. So, when the guys, a Cuban guy told me you had to concentrate on baseball, so when the guys said the N-word to me, you know what I said, "Chico, yo no hablo English" and then I cussed them back in Spanish and they say, "What the heck are you doing?" But I mean, that was is, it was a great experience, and they were always telling you. I learned from the Negro leagues: respect the managers, respect the coaches, respect your fellow players, and above all respect the game. It wasn't easy to play in the Negro Leagues…. But it was a

> great experience, I was forming my dream to become a baseball player…. That legacy I carry with me. I will never forget. I am very proud of that.

This discursive moment is an example of how baseball as an object of curricular examination provides new lenses on race and racialization via diaspora, globalization, and resistance. Sierra evidences that the opportunity to "form a dream" and be a professional baseball player rested upon leaving his native Cuba, and occupying a new racial subject position corresponding to US Blackness ("I knew English before I came to this country, but I had never heard the N-word."). Such practices are legacies of US colonial relations with Cuba and other Latin American places like the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico which baseball maintains to this day through "diasporas of racialized, migrant labor" (Gopinath, 2018, p. 8; García Peña, 2022). Queering such relationships also shows how diasporic subjects like Sierra challenge their shifting subject positions through interactions with his manager Oscar Charleston, US fans ("and then I cussed them back in Spanish"), and his teammates ("What the heck are you doing?"). These re-creations of race are made possible via diaspora and its translation of Latinidad to US hegemonic norms. Interestingly we might also think about how diasporic relations go both ways, as the Black players barred from the Major Leagues in the United States, were welcomed across the Caribbean (Corey & Harnischfeger, 2017; Ruck, 2011).

The concept of queer diaspora also allows us to analyze and nuance how exploitative labor relations and hegemonic socialization existed alongside deep relations of male care. Challenging conventional framings of the male sport figure, we might highlight how Sierra found the league to be "nurturing." This is further exemplified by the quote, "I learned from the Negro Leagues: respect your managers, respect your coaches, respect your fellow players, and above all respect the game. It wasn't easy…." Even as these individuals were expected to adhere to racialized norms of behavior and subjugation via obedience, structure, respect, and assimilation (Monreal, 2024), they tried to support each other's shifting racial subjectivities. And even as we might critique the anti-Blackness of a mestizaje Latinidad, the application of queer diasporic frameworks suggests the opportunity to pursue a more unruly Latinidad rooted in *complexities* rather than monoliths (Flores, 2021; Gamez & Monreal, accepted). In sum, Latinx men who migrated to the US to pursue baseball in the Negro Leagues were diasporic individuals. In their migration, they challenge traditional notions of race and nation by asserting their agency in both accepting, complicating, and at times refracting rigid notions of Blackness and Latinidad.

Conclusion

Annually on April 15, Major League Baseball commemorates "Jackie Robinson Day," symbolized by all players wearing #42 in his honor.[2] Nevertheless, as DiAngelo (2018) contends, a critical examination of US history necessitates scrutinizing social institutions reliant on whiteness to marginalize non-white individuals. The apparent re-appropriation of this event obscures MLB's initial motive to end segregation and brings into focus an ulterior motive for economic gain that rested on the raiding and ruin of Negro League teams. Furthermore, our analysis centers the complex relationships between baseball, race, anti-Blackness, and Latinidad. Importantly, this relationship is not resigned to the past as evidenced by Chris Rock and Torii Hunter's statements. Moreover, given the growing presence of Latinxs in MLB and the establishment of international youth academies in the Dominican Republic and Venezuela, the

[2] MLB celebrates Robinson's "life, values, and accomplishments… requesting that every player and all on-field personnel wear his No. 42 during games scheduled on Jackie Robinson Day since 2009" (MLB.com, n.d.)

MLB again faces allegations of youth exploitation that directly intersect with race, immigration (and diaspora), language, globalization, and class (Red & Thompson, 2020).

Offering (professional) baseball as a critical object of (curricular) inquiry interrogates the role of "America's National Pastime" in producing and reflecting race and racial hierarchization tied directly to historical contexts of segregation. It also holds the opportunity to expand what it meant, and means, to be a Latino/Latina/Latinx/Latine in the United States (Busey & Silva, 2021) and as such provides a curriculum toward openness and complexity rather than essentialist understanding of race. Finally, as researchers disrupting anti-Blackness within our own contexts, we hope educators are able to use baseball (with or without our critical frames) to do the same with their students and/or research. The extensive geographic scope of baseball throughout the western hemisphere, spanning North America, Central America, the Caribbean, and northern South America, coupled with our personal engagements with sport and education compels us to confront the anti-Black dimensions of Latinidad in our scholarly and pedagogical efforts.

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The Role of Cultural and Socioeconomic Capital in Students' Occupational Aspirations: United States, Finland, and China

Robert Niewiadomski, Ruoyi Zhang, and Jianing Li
Fordham University

Abstract: Utilizing PISA 2018 data and Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, this cross-cultural study examines the influence of cultural and socioeconomic capital on occupational aspirations of high-school students in the United States, Finland, and China. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) revealed cultural context shapes the impact of cultural/socioeconomic capital on students' career aspirations. Access to cultural and socioeconomic resources slightly elevated occupational aspirations among students in the US and Finland but slightly lowered occupational aspirations among Chinese students. This underscores the importance of considering cultural context when examining how forms of capital influence students' occupational aspirations, providing insights for policymakers/educators aiming to foster equitable educational opportunities.

This paper examines the influence of cultural and socioeconomic capital on individuals' occupational aspirations in Finland, the United States, and the B-S-J-Z areas of China (Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang). These countries offer distinct economic and cultural contexts. Previous research has highlighted social status, parental expectations, family, and cultural and socioeconomic capital that shape occupational aspirations (Rojewski, 2005). Structural factors and spheres of influence, such as social class, gender, and ethnicity, also affect aspirations (Archer, DeWitt, & Wong, 2014). However, prior studies have not explored how these factors interact in different cultural and socioeconomic contexts. To address this gap, our study examines how cultural and socioeconomic capital shape occupational aspirations among high-school-age students in three countries. By analyzing PISA 2018 data in the quite dissimilar contexts of China, the United States, and Finland, we attempt to understand how socioeconomic/cultural capital factors influence student aspirations. Our study emphasizes the importance of considering various types of capital to understand the complex factors shaping occupational aspirations. The study sought to explore how these factors influence students' desire to pursue career paths associated with a certain level of education.

As a theoretical framework, the study adopted Bourdieu's (1984, 1986) theory of social, economic, and cultural capital. According to this theory, economic capital refers to an individual's financial resources, while cultural capital encompasses non-financial assets such as knowledge, skill, and education. Social capital, on the other hand, is beneficial resources derived from social networks and relationships. These types of capital tend to reinforce each other and confer advantages upon those who possess them when seen as positive aspects of a person's portfolio. However, their value may vary depending on society's cultural norms and values. For example, in some cultures, educational qualifications and prestigious job titles may be highly valued as forms of cultural capital, whereas in others, family background and social connections may be more important. Overall, Bourdieu's theory provides a helpful framework for understanding how different forms of capital operate in society and how they can contribute to social inequality. By examining the interplay between economic, cultural, and social capital, we can better understand how power and privilege are distributed in different social contexts.

Several studies have highlighted the various factors that shape individuals' occupational aspirations, including social status, parental expectations, school resources, family, and cultural and socioeconomic capital. For instance, Sewell et al. (1957) found that youth's educational and occupational aspirations were associated with the social status of their families. In a study by

Moulton et al. (2018), parental socioeconomic background and involvement in learning influenced young children's occupational aspirations, underscoring the importance of early identification of antecedents of children's aspirations. The family also plays a critical role in shaping career aspirations and expectations. Hou and Leung (2011) found significant gaps in occupational prestige and sex type between the vocational aspirations of high-school students and their parents. Parental education, gender of the student, and school type were found to have a substantial effect on the prestige expectation and aspiration gap. Furthermore, Rowan-Kenyon et al. (2011) showed that school resources positively correlated with students' occupational aspirations and their understanding of the education required to achieve these aspirations, highlighting the importance of career development plans for low-resource schools. Aspirations are also influenced by structural factors such as social class, gender, and ethnicity, as well as different spheres of influence such as home/family, school, hobbies/leisure activities, and TV (Archer et al., 2014). These factors interact in complex ways, shaping individuals' occupational aspirations differently in different cultural and socioeconomic contexts.

To examine from a cross-cultural perspective connections between types of capital and students' occupational aspirations, we focused on three countries presenting distinct cultural and economic contexts: China, the United States, and Finland. With its collectivistic society and rapidly growing economy, China presents a unique perspective on how cultural and economic factors impact individuals' occupational aspirations. In contrast, American individualistic society and well-established market economy provide a different context for examining this issue. Finland, known for its social welfare policies, gender equality, and high-quality education system, offers yet another perspective. According to the Social Progress Index (Social Progress Imperative, 2024), Finland has the highest social progress out of the three countries, while China has the lowest social progress score (and rank) out of the three nations in our study.

While previous studies have examined the impact of various factors on individuals' occupational aspirations, such as social status, parental expectations, family, and cultural and socioeconomic capital, they have not explored how these factors interact in different cultural and socioeconomic contexts to shape occupational aspirations. Understanding the various factors that shape individuals' occupational aspirations is crucial for policymakers and educators. By identifying antecedents of individuals' aspirations, policymakers and educators can develop strategies that support individuals in achieving career goals. Each country's distinct features provide perspective on how occupational aspirations vary across cultural and economic contexts.

Methods

Study Design: We used a correlational design to examine the relationship between high-school students' occupational aspirations and cultural and socioeconomic capital. The study consisted of two stages in the following sequence: Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) to see how much and in what ways (if any) the effects of cultural and socioeconomic capital on 15-year-old students' occupational aspirations differed across the three different cultural contexts of the United States, Finland, and B-S-J-Z China.

Data: We collected data from the PISA 2018 dataset, which is publicly available and includes information on cultural capital, socioeconomic capital, occupational aspirations, and student demographics. PISA 2018 data randomly selected students born in 2001 from cuontries around the world, including the United States, Finland, and China. The total number of participants from

all participating countries was 612,004, with 3,820 participants from the United States, 3,890 from Finland, and 10,075 from B-S-J-Z China. The selection of participants from different countries allows for a diverse representation of cultural and educational backgrounds, enhancing the generalizability of the study findings. A randomized selection process also ensures that the participants represent the target population and minimizes potential bias in the sample.

Variables: Questions from PISA 2018 are the variables we included in our analysis. However, we decided to include them in separate categories because they reflected different domains. For example, a bloc of questions asked: How many of these are at your home? Different versions of the question listed different sorts of things: musical instruments and books seemed to connote cultural capital, defined in terms of access/exposure to cultural/educational resources at home. However, TVs, cars, cell phones with internet, computers with internet, quiet spaces to study, and baths/showers in the house spoke more directly to socioeconomic capital, understood in terms of parents' occupation and income. For ease of analysis, we separated responses according to our main independent variables, cultural and socioeconomic capital. Student occupational aspirations, the dependent variable, were assessed via one question on PISA 2018: What kind of job do you expect to have when you are about 30 years old? The question was followed by a request to type a job title in the provided space. Answers were scored using the *International Standard Classification of Occupations-08* (ISCO-08), which included highly skilled jobs at the top of the scale (International Labour Office, 2007). The higher a country's relative score, the more likely students from that country were to express occupational aspirations for jobs placed higher on the ISCO skill and qualifications scale.

Data Analysis and Findings

For this correlational research, we utilized two analysis stages: PCA and one-way ANOVA & ANCOVA. This section presents the steps of each of these analyses with results.

PCA: In the first stage, we performed two principal component analyses to observe the trends and create further components representing cultural and socioeconomic capital constructs. We selected and categorized survey questions that fell under cultural and socioeconomic capital concepts. The first statistical component, which best accounts for all the questions, was extracted and saved as the cultural capital component in our analysis. Overall, the loading values ranged from -.67 (number of books in the home) to .62 (classic literature in the home), indicating a moderate to strong association with cultural capital. In the same vein, socioeconomic capital was described by answers to survey questions. Similarly, we extracted and saved the first component as the socioeconomic capital component. The extracted component for socioeconomic capital indicated a loading value ranging from -.64 (computer in home for schoolwork) to .77 (number of computers in home), showing a moderate to strong association with socioeconomic capital. Using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy for the extracted cultural capital component (Kaiser, 1970; Kaiser & Rice, 1974), the PCA analysis explained 80.1% of the total variance, with a significance of .00 (<.05), indicating the principal component captured a significant portion of the influencing factors of cultural capital. As for social-economic capital, the PCA analysis, again using KMO, explained 85.5% of the total variance, with a significance of .00 (<.05), indicating that the principal component captured a significant portion of the influencing factors of social-economic capital.

ANOVA and ANCOVA: In the second stage, we performed a one-way ANOVA and ANCOVA in examining the dependent variable of students' occupational aspiration across the three countries, the United States., China, and Finland, as variables intervening upon cultural capital and socioeconomic capital. We compared students' occupational aspirations across the three countries with and without the influence of cultural capital and socioeconomic capital.

First, analysis was conducted without covariates (cultural capital and socioeconomic capital) to determine the effect of different countries on students' occupational aspirations. Without the influence of cultural capital and socioeconomic capital, students in China (B-S-J-Z) had the highest estimated marginal means of occupational aspirations at 67.81, with a slightly lower score of occupational aspirations at 67.42 from the American students and a much lower occupational aspiration score at about 60.00 from Finland. Then, the analysis was conducted with the inclusion of two covariates: cultural capital and socioeconomic capital. The estimated marginal means of students' occupational aspirations in the United States and Finland were about 1 point higher than those without the covariances. However, the estimated marginal means of occupational aspirations of (B-S-J-Z) Chinese students slightly decreased to 67.79. Therefore, the estimated marginal means of students' occupational aspirations in the United States became the highest at 68.19; however, students in Finland still possessed the lowest at 60.75.

Discussion

The PCA findings demonstrate that cultural and socioeconomic capital influence individuals' occupational aspirations. The results indicate that PCA captured a substantial portion of the variance in both cultural and socioeconomic capital, with moderate to strong associations between the two types of capital and occupational aspirations. These findings align with previous studies that have shown the significant impact of socioeconomic and cultural factors on occupational aspirations (Archer et al., 2014; Elgar et al., 2011; Sewell et al., 1957).

The ANOVA and ANCOVA results indicate that the impact of socioeconomic and cultural capital on occupational aspirations varies across different cultural and socioeconomic contexts. Without covariances, the estimated marginal means of occupational aspirations were highest among students in China, followed by those in the United States, and the lowest were among those in Finland. However, with covariances, the estimated marginal means of occupational aspirations in the United States became the highest, whereas those of Chinese students slightly decreased, and Finnish students, despite a small increase, remained the lowest. These results suggest that the influence of cultural and socioeconomic capital on occupational aspirations can be affected by other factors, including societal values (Hou & Leung, 2011; Moulton et al., 2018; Rowan-Kenyon et al., 2011). Comparing the countries, it can be seen that students' occupational aspiration scores in Finland are much lower under both conditions, with and without covariance, than those of China (B-S-J-Z) and the United States. The results indicate that Finnish students possess a relatively lower expectation of their future occupational status. This finding may have resulted from factors in socio-cultural values (Virolainen & Stenstrom, 2014; World Happiness Report, 2023).

Limitations and Future Directions

While this study provides insight into the relationship between cultural and socioeconomic capital and occupational aspirations among high-school students in three countries, we must acknowledge some limitations. First, the data collected from China was limited to only four

participating areas: Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang, which may only represent part of the country. Additionally, the limited sample size from China may have resulted in a biased sample, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other parts of China. Caution should, therefore, be exercised when applying the results to other regions in China. Last, the study was restricted by the number and type of questions already pre-designed in PISA 2018, which prevented the construction of a more robust set of questions. While the selected questions fit the construct, inclusion of other, more relevant questions, such as exposure to foreign cultures and travel abroad, could have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing cultural capital.

Future research should aim to expand these findings by including more representative samples from other regions and countries and by incorporating a broader range of variables to capture the complex dimensions of cultural and socioeconomic capital. Additionally, qualitative studies could provide deeper insight into the unique factors influencing students' aspirations in various cultural contexts. By addressing these areas, we can better understand and support students' diverse educational and occupational trajectories worldwide.

Conclusion

This study highlights the role of cultural and socioeconomic capital in shaping the occupational aspirations of high-school students across three diverse cultural contexts: the United States, Finland, and China. By leveraging PISA 2018 data and applying Bourdieu's theoretical framework of varieties of capital, our analysis underscores that the interplay between cultural and socioeconomic capital significantly varies depending on each country's cultural norms and values. Surprisingly, our findings indicate that while B-S-J-Z Chinese students generally exhibited the highest occupational aspirations, these aspirations were negatively affected by cultural and socioeconomic capital considerations. Perhaps collectivist traditions still outweigh opportunities for social mobility from a growing economy. In contrast, cultural and socioeconomic capital positively impacted occupational aspirations in the United States and Finland. The well-established market economy of the United States presents culturally and socioeconomically well-positioned students with opportunities for upward or parallel mobility. Despite the positive effect on Finnish students' occupational aspirations, Finns' lower overall occupational aspirations could be attributed to broader societal factors such as social welfare policies and vocational training priorities. The study suggests that in some but not all cultures, enhancing access to cultural and socioeconomic resources can potentially mitigate disparities in occupational aspirations among high school students. These insights are particularly relevant for educators and policymakers who are focused on creating supportive educational environments tailored to the diverse needs of students.

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Cultivating Science Cultural Capital among Preservice Teachers in an Online, Synchronous Science Method Course

Rupam Saran
Medgar Evers College/City University of New York

Abstract: This qualitative study examines production and reproduction of science cultural capital in a fully online science method course taken during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings revealed preservice teachers (PSTs) with daunting family responsibilities and COVID-19 challenges required extensive faculty mentoring and affirmation of positive science identities. Socio-emotional mentorship and engagement in well-scaffolded, inquiry based scientific activities enabled PSTs to develop positive science identities and participate meaningfully in science pedagogy. With positive science identities came higher confidence levels and development of pedagogically valuable science cultural capital.

The COVID-19 pandemic produced myriad challenges for education and added to the existing inequality and disparity in K-12 science education. The transition from the fully in-person classroom to the virtual classroom was almost overnight. Although there were institution-sponsored virtual workshops about navigation of the virtual classroom, there was no preparation time before transition to virtual modality. The sudden change was very stressful to students and faculty equally. It was vital to create an environment in the classroom in which a smooth transition from one type of learning to another type could take place. Faculty had to explore ways to create an academically productive, emotionally safe, and conversationally comfortable virtual classroom environment for their students.

Jennings & Greenberg (2009) state that teacher behaviors contribute to an optimal social and emotional climate for student learning. More specifically, Jennings & Greenberg stress that when teachers lack physical and emotional resources to effectively manage the social, emotional, and academic challenges of a classroom students show lower levels of achievement. In order to effectively manage and respond to social and emotional challenges and maintain a productive classroom, a prosocial classroom mediational model was adapted as an organizational framework for the class discussed in this paper. The prosocial classroom model hypothesizes that a teacher's social-emotional competency and well-being influences classroom climate and mediates student performance. A teacher's higher level of socio-emotional competency is a very important variable that contributes to the development of a supportive classroom environment and reduces students' negative beliefs and emotions, anxieties and disruptive behaviors as it increases empathy and provides tools for self-control. It also promotes enthusiasm and enjoyment of learning among students.

At the beginning stage of the virtual learning environment discussed in this paper, the emotionally exhausted pre-service teachers (PSTs) were at risk of failing and becoming depressed and demoralized. Many felt they had little to gain from continuing in the course. A number of PSTs dropped out of the teacher education program for the semester. To save PSTs from falling out of the course and to prepare them to be effective and successful in their future classrooms, it was essential to enable them to become socially and emotionally competent teachers. Socially and emotionally competent teachers understand and recognize emotions of others in and outside the classroom and they can navigate conflict and stressful situations (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Although PSTs were disturbed by challenging emotional environments outside the class, financial difficulties (many lost their jobs), ill-health, and lack of technology resources (poor or no internet connection, sharing one computer in a

family of four or five people, very old computers with no cameras) and extremely stressful familial situations, they managed their coursework throughout the semester with the help of constant scaffolding in the form of counseling through Zoom or phone meetings with the instructor of the class.

This study took place in a School of Education in Brown College (a pseudonym) which is part of an urban, commuter, pre-dominantly Black institution situated in a low-income, urban community on the East Coast of the United States. The PSTs at Brown College include first-generation college-going immigrants many of whom are non-traditional students (age 30 or over). Most have experienced limited professional career development opportunities due to persisting structural barriers. They struggle to achieve academic excellence since they face a myriad of social, familial, and economic problems. The majority of PSTs at Brown College are women preparing to become elementary school teachers.

Although science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education has recently been the focal point of a national teacher preparation conversation, comparatively little attention has been paid to STEM education among minoritized teacher candidates who in general have had less exposure to science in their own schooling. Herschbach (2011) and Rinke, et al. (2016), have demonstrated the need for greater attention to development of scientific literacy among these groups. The objective of this study is to provide insights into the process of production/reproduction of stronger levels of science cultural capital and more positive science identities among PSTs from minoritized groups. To address COVID-19-related socio-emotional challenges and long-standing disparities in science education among their students, teacher educators need to prepare effective teachers able to transform science education so that the minority K-6 children they are likely to teach may become successful in science classes and enjoy careers in scientific fields. (Tobin et al., 2005) Three research questions guided the study: 1) How do PSTs produce and reproduce cultural capital? 2) What was the role of pre-college science experiences and science background in acquisition of science cultural capital? 3) How did PSTs' negative science identities shift to positive ones?

Theoretical Framework

Cultural Capital: Using the theoretical frameworks of cultural capital (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu, 1986), and science identity (Carlone & Johnson, 2007; Estrada et al., 2011; Farkas, 2017) this study explores how cultural capital earned in the science method course enabled pre-service students to develop positive science identities that afforded them stronger levels of science cultural capital. The concept of "capital" is vital to Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction. Bourdieu (1986) conceptualizes capital as the pool of resources in a society that can generate forms of social privileges within specific fields such as education. Bourdieu defined four types of capital — economic, social, cultural, and symbolic — that individuals earn via interpersonal interactions. Cultural capital is expressed as habitus, a set of dispositions which guides specific actions and behaviors within various social contexts. Cultural capital refers to qualifications, dispositions, and cultural resources. While economic capital refers to money and financial resources, social capital refers to social networks and relations, including symbolic capital (prestige, recognition, and legitimation) which may be very powerful in earning social advantage. Bourdieu (1986) depicts economic capital as the original ground for cultural and social capital. His theory of social reproduction is grounded in the idea that an individual's actions are determined by factors external to persons (Rogosic & Baranovic,

2016). Economic and cultural capital do not operate in isolation, but interact to determine a person's position within their life world (Archer et al., 2015).

Science-Related Social Capital: Thompson et al. (2018) state that in science education research cultural capital has been used as a lens for understanding disparities in science education outcomes (Aikenhead, 1995; Brickhouse, 2001; Adamuti-Trache & Andres, 2008; Archer et al., 2015; Claussen & Osborne, 2013; Gazley et al., 2014; Thompson et al., 2016). Cultural capital can powerfully affect the degree to which students consider futures in science for themselves as "thinkable" (Archer et al., 2014). Thompson et al. (2012, p. 2) found that families who value science and embed science into day-to-day life, "whether as a result of family members' own interests and careers in science or through 'concerted cultivation' of science in the household, more effectively foster and support scientific aspirations among their children" (Archer et al., 2012 and Lareau, 2003).

Coleman (1990) discusses the influence of social capital on an individual's educational achievements, schooling experiences, and future options (Parcel & Dufur, 2001; Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2011; Portes, 1998; Pusztai, 2014; White & Glick, 2000). Differences in educational success can be attributed to different levels of existing social capital produced in the networks and connections of families and communities that a school serves. For example, knowing someone who works in a science field is a form of science-related social capital. Social capital supports educational success in the form of appropriate behavior in classroom and school environments and in the values that motivate students to achieve academically (Acar, 2011). The social capital stance views cultural capital as that set of resources resident in social relations. According to Lin (1999, 2001) the notion of social capital plays out in a person's life as expected benefits from investment in social relationships. In this study, all but two PSTs lacked science social capital. Not only were most of the study subjects unfamiliar with science know-how, they also had a strong fear of science.

Science-Related Social Capital and Science Identity: Archer et al. (2015, p. 922) have proposed the term "science capital" to refer collectively to "science-related forms of cultural and social capital." Science capital largely aligns with measures to operationalize *cultural capital* in science and science education: scientific literacy (knowledge and ability to apply it), scientific-related dispositions and practices (recognizing the value of science in society and having a positive attitude toward science), and recognition of the value of scientific know-how and credentials in the labor market (Thompson et al., 2016 and Huang & Liang, 2016). Anyon (1981) and Tobin (2016) note that cultural capital helps explain academic achievement gaps between minoritized and majoritized students; but that means improvement among minority students in science-related social capital is key to overcoming the achievement gap. As PSTs become confident in understanding and application of norms, dispositions, motivations, and identities characteristic of scientific work, they will overcome their own science-related cultural capital deficits and be able to help their students overcome similar deficits. In the context of science method courses, science cultural capital leads to a deeply embodied (and often unspoken) understanding of the "rules of the game" of science (Bourdieu &Wacquant, 1992), contributing to a desire to be active in science teaching and learning, developing confidence to enact effective science teaching strategies, earning recognition by others as a good science teacher, and achieving social mobility in the educational job market.

Beyond the science classroom, Bourdieu (2005, p. 55) notes that science-related social capital "can be converted into other kinds of capital, economic capital in particular." Archer et al.

(2015) fleshed out and broadened Bourdieu's point by observing that science-related resources in the form of science capital possess high symbolic value. Science disciplines have a high social and cultural status. Claussen & Osborne (2013) argue science qualifications command a strategic value in educational and labor markets. Furthermore, what Archer et al. (2015) call the scientifically literate ''science citizen'' is better placed to play an active role in modern society. Knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts, processes, and ''how science works'' enable individuals to interpret and apply the scientific knowledge that they cultivate in their everyday lives to make better informed choices (e.g., around personal health) and enable them to access, understand, respond to and even contribute to shaping scientific developments in society.

Science identity is 1) an internal sense of oneself as a "science person" who knows science and is able to do science, and 2) the personal recognition and development of one's science-self in social contexts of science teaching and learning (Gee, 2000; Carlone et al., 2011; Hurtado et al., 2009; Hazari et al., 2013; Trujillo & Tanner, 2014). Science identities are fluid and can shift directions over time (Brickhouse et al., 2000; Carlone et al., 2014; Gazley et al., 2014; Roth & Tobin, 2007). A student's science identity is a good predictor of whether a student opts or does not opt for a STEM career (Chang et al., 2011; Hazari et al., 2013). Science cultural capital affects development and cultivation of science identity among teachers (Varelas 2012.) Adams & Gupta (2013, p. 4) define teacher science identity as "the ways in which a teacher represents herself through her views, orientations, attitudes, emotions, understandings, and knowledge and beliefs about science teaching and learning." Stetsenko (2008) explains teacher professional identity development as an ongoing process of learning to teach guided by relations to others in specific educational contexts. Becoming a science teacher means learning and practicing how to navigate the continuous flow of the social practices of teaching and learning; "identities are the part of self that are defined by the different positions we hold in society" (Varelas, 2012, p. 3).

Science belief and science identity develop symbiotically in a continuous progression of learning to teach science. Identity construction is affected by contexts or fields in which one learns to teach and in which one teaches. Science belief is one's agency or a sense of empowerment that the self is capable of making the right instructional decisions, apply useful science resources in teaching, and confidence about constructing and maintaining an effective science learning environment. For science teachers, it also means confidence in content knowledge and ability to motivate and sustain science learning in students. In this study, although the COVID-19 pandemic negatively influenced PSTs' cultivation of science identity and they struggled early in the course, by the end of the semester PSTs in the study were successful in cultivating positive science identity and overcoming their negative beliefs about science. They realized that if they could do science in virtual environments, they would be successful in teaching science in in-person situations, as well.

Constructivism: The constructivist developmental psychological theory of Vygotsky is highly relevant to this study. The socio-cultural constructivism of Vygotsky sees cognitive development as largely dependent on social interaction and communication of learners with more knowledgeable others. Vygotsky (1978) stresses that the culture we live in provides us with a number of different types of cognitive tools with which we construct meaningful knowledge about our life world (Meletiou-Mavrotheris et al., 2009; Willis, 1998). Since there is relative homogeneity of intellectual practices among groups of experts within a single community, more knowledgeable others guide learners through investigative activities that are relevant not only personally but also to the social contexts in which instructive interaction occurs (Tobin &

Tippings, 1993). The fact that an individual's experiential world is socially mediated and exists as a constant negotiation between individual and social knowledge suggests the success of instructional interactions depends on the learner's internalization of the social context in which instruction takes place. Therefore, a constructivist environment, a 'classroom community', has to be built in order to provide learners the opportunities to construct knowledge (Meletiou-Mavrotheris et al.2009). The classroom environment must provide an information-rich context within which meaning of concepts and ways of understanding can be negotiated successfully by learners (Hannafin, et al., 1997). Rich environments like 'communities of practice' (Goos, 1997) are appropriate for optimal classroom learning.

Community of practice: Community of practice is a construct grounded in an anthropological perspective that examines how adults learn through social practices (Gray, 2004). A community of practice consists of a group of individuals with a shared domain of expertise, who engage in a process of collective learning about practices that matter to them (Wenger, 1998). In Wenger, McDermott & Snyder's (2002, p. 4) words, "communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis." Learning is an interpersonal social process. This stance envisions the relationship between instructor and students as a social process of learning in which participants don't necessarily work together every day, and their life worlds may vary from each other's, but they meet regularly to work on shared goals and find value in their interactions. According to Crawford (2004), in a community of practice there is a perceived need to rebalance the learning experience more positively towards collective experience by focusing on collaboration, communication, co-learning, and co-inventing. A community of practice approach to classroom learning requires a shift away from an individualistic perspective on learning to a social systems approach to schooling (Stahl, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978; Engeström, 2001; Wenger, 1998).

The theoretical construct of communities of practice is a useful analytic tool in outlining the theoretical underpinnings of the science method course discussed in this paper. In this course, teaching and learning took place in a virtual social context among groups of interested individuals who have the collective goal of learning how to teach science. PSTs enrolled in the class spent time together in synchronous virtual classrooms where they shared their past experiences with science and helped each other solve problems about science learning. They discussed their personal situations, their aspirations and their academic and social-emotional needs in class with their peers and the instructor. PSTs deliberated common issues and complexities of COVID-19, explored ideas and strategies of science teaching, and acted as sounding boards for one another. They created tools, artifacts, science standards, science fair designs, lesson plans, and other documents, and developed a shared understanding of science pedagogies. Participating PSTs formed a sense of community, interpersonal support, and personal satisfaction in knowing colleagues who understood each other's struggles and perspectives, bonded by the sense of accomplishment and reward that they found in learning together (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). They also developed a common sense of science identity as they formed a community of practice.

The concept of communities of practice is also especially relevant to this research because the research is about the process of facilitating *virtual* communities of practice. Internet encounters focused on establishing rapport and sharing experiences between participating PSTs and the educator. As Wenger et al. (2002) state, communities of practice do not reduce

knowledge — they make it an integral part of activities and interactions. Since the course was offered virtually it included space for discussions, breakout rooms, and application sharing between PSTs and instructor in online meetings. Participating in the out of the ordinary, online classroom environment involved a shift from individual activity to artifact-mediated, collaborative participation during class sessions (Lunds, 2008).

Research Design and Methodology

The study uses a Design-Based-Research (DBR) framework in which an educator-researcher seeks to improve impact, transfer, and application of education research into contexts of practice (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012; Brown, 1992). DBR is about an effective intervention that can migrate from experimental classrooms to instructional classrooms. In this study interventions are a form of positive feedback, Zoom meetings outside class time, and sharing family situations and discussing ways to deal with problems were applied constantly to fulfill PSTs' social, emotional, and academic needs.

Context of the study: EDUC 317, Teaching Science in Elementary School, is an undergraduate science method course for pre-service urban teachers offered at a commuter college in a poverty-stricken area of the northeastern United States. In mid-March 2020, six weeks after the class had begun, the course had to be suddenly transitioned to fully online synchronous mode from a face-to-face modality. In the synchronous modality, after participating in a 3-day emergency institute to facilitate transition to online instruction, the professor followed a set class time and met with students enrolled in the class on Zoom, a platform for digital instruction. There were thirteen students enrolled in the class. The demographic profile of the class was:

Sex	**N**
Female	11
Male	2
Race	
Black	11
Latina	1
Asian	1
Citizenship Status	
Immigrant to US	9
US Citizen	4
Family College Experience	
1st-Generation College Student	9
2nd-Generation College Student	4

Instructional Focus and Curriculum

The science method course focused on four key dimensions: technology-enhanced science learning with social-emotional mentorship, science pedagogy and production of science cultural capital, developing a positive attitude toward science, and cultivating positive science identity. Assignments included writing an ongoing science journal, teaching one virtual science lesson to a group of elementary-aged students, designing and demonstrating science experiments, and developing a science fair project which the PSTs enacted online for a group of K-6 students, an

event organized with the help of Community of Volunteer Educators (COVE). Science teaching videos were used as a pedagogical resource for modeling science teaching strategies. The course sought to develop communities of science learners that reflect the intellectual rigor of scientific inquiry and the attitudes and social values conducive to science learning.

PSTs wrote in their journal about their science experiences and their likes and dislikes of science that originated in their elementary, high school, and college introductory science courses, or during the pandemic. Topics included their experiences, perceptions, ideas, beliefs/mindsets, motivations, or attitudes toward science; their understanding, ease, and comfort with problem solving procedures and inquiry learning; their knowledge of science concepts; their confidence level to learn and teach science; and readiness to apply in the field recently acquired pedagogical knowledge about teaching science. Of particular importance to establishing a baseline scientific identity for each PST, in the first week of the class participants wrote a Walking Down Memory Lane reflection about their prior science experience. The assignment consisted of three sections: 1) elementary and high school science experience, 2) past science experiences gained from family science background and access/exposure to science activities outside of school, 3) science identity and self-efficacy/confidence level to teach science in elementary grades. The reflective journal provided a framework for the course instructor to guide day-to-day discourses of science instruction. Many PSTs came to the course with negative beliefs, fear of science, and very weak science cultural capital. However, success stories predominated among the PSTs by the end of the semester as the following accounts attest:

AH, a Caribbean, first-generation college student with initially weak science cultural capital, wrote in a late-semester entry to the reflective journal, "I was very skeptical of taking this course because I did not like science and I was intimidated by the idea of teaching science… but I am not scared of science now. If I can teach science to students in virtual classrooms and do Science Fair experiments for children and parents I can teach science in elementary grades."

KB, an African American PST with medium science cultural capital, described himself as a first-generation college student, coming from a family with no science background. He began to develop interest in science in the first year of college, when he took two biology courses with a professor who provided guidance and made science accessible to him. In the beginning of EDUC 317, he was very much interested in the course but after the first month he had to deal with his mother's COVID-19 illness and a death in his family. As a result, he became disoriented and was ready to drop the course. He needed constant mentoring and emotional support from the professor. He participated in phone calls and Zoom meetings with the professor almost every day for three weeks. Towards the end of the semester, he gained his confidence and completed missing assignments. After taking the science method course, **KB** developed confidence in his ability to teach science in elementary school. He described in his reflective journal how he was assertive in the science fair project; in planning, developing, and writing a unit plan; in teaching science lessons; and demonstrating science experiments for faculty and peers. He felt confident and proud of his science teaching abilities by participating in COVE activities.

GM, a mother of two children, was having serious emotional problems with one of her children due to COVID-19 which, along with her initially weak science cultural capital, complicated her participation in the class. In the beginning of the class, she explained her personal crisis to the professor and requested more time for all assignments. She had limited science exposure before the science method course. Throughout the semester she struggled to finish all work and needed faculty assurance and affirmation. However, all her work was well

researched and of exceptional quality. At the end of the course, after the science fair presentation, **GM** was very happy she could finish the course successfully. She came to the course with very limited science cultural capital but a high level of interest in science and achieved her goal to be a good, elementary-grades science teacher.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, PSTs put the needs of their family ahead of their individual academic needs. Although the close-knit family ties provided strong emotional and social support for PSTs' success in college, family responsibilities and needs posed immense constraints on them and pulled them away from their studies. That seemed like a lack of commitment to science and the coursework. This is consistent with the way **SM** framed her time away from college. She had to take care of her father and grandmother after her mother passed away during the first wave of COVID. Her family responsibilities were her priority and were competing with school work. Though **SM** did not show any resentment towards her academic responsibilities, an artifact of her initially strong science cultural capital, her family obligations contributed negatively to her science identity, her scientific dispositions, and to realization of expectations that earned recognition from the instructor. However, *recognition of arduous family responsibilities* from the professor provided a sense of relief and lessened **SM's** anxieties about completing coursework, lead to opportunities to develop science-related cultural capital, and, ultimately, to a positive science identity. When the professor demonstrated a *flexible attitude* and shifted expectations to accommodate students' family responsibilities, and provided supportive dialogue, PSTs in this study demonstrated their commitment to science curriculum and made attempts to complete course assignments. Specifically, focusing on the science fair while she juggled family responsibilities, enabled **SM** to develop and improve the key science fair assignment and enabled her to hone her science identity.

In the same vein as **SM**, **SS**, who had strong science cultural capital coming into the course but doubted her ability to teach science to elementary school children, shared in her reflective journal that "The science fair was a very good experience… I never thought I could do this… I mean doing a science experiment for children and parents, I can teach science… I am not afraid of science anymore." Proving beyond any doubt her newfound confidence as a science teacher, in Fall 2021 **SS** taught virtual science lessons for a whole 5th grade class as part of her student-teaching requirements. Based on her excellent performance, she was hired as a full-time science teacher by the principal of the school in which she served as a student teacher prior to her completion of the teacher education program at Brown College.

Building Science Cultural Capital through Socio-Emotional Mentorship

The professor's *expanded scope of recognition and encouragement* helped students develop science cultural capital. The instructor's words of appreciation boosted students' morale and motivated them to demonstrate their potential to develop scientific cultural capital. The broad scope of recognition supported PSTs with growing self-recognition and confidence. PSTs' narratives demonstrate that, when the professor looked beyond students' initial dispositions and expectations and recognized students' personal and academic hardships, work for the class affirmed students' potential as blossoming science teachers. *The open-door socio-emotional mentorship policy* proved to be the key dimension in keeping PSTs from dropping out of the course. The PSTs had the option to meet with the professor online seven days a week from early morning to nine at night to get not only the emotional support but also to discuss their developing identities as confident science teachers.

In terms of method classes, it is especially important for elementary school teachers not to experience science as a difficult and complex discipline, as this would inhibit their developing positive attitudes towards the subject. Just as some students do not feel a sense of membership in science, some elementary school teachers hold anti-science attitudes (Eshach 2003). These attitudes need to be addressed by ensuring new teachers begin to identify themselves as members of a science-centered community (Bellocchi et al., 2013). Contexts of teaching and learning shape learners' identities and their socio-emotional well-being. (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011). Stetsenko (2008) stresses that the quality of interactions with others is an important part of a learning context as our identities are shaped by our positioning in relation to others in a given context. This agrees with Adams & Gupta's (2015) notion of flow, where a teacher candidate engages in activity that is suitably challenging in a way that allows complete focus and immersion in teaching.

PSTs' experiences in EDUC 317 suggests a few strategies faculty can use to help strengthen science cultural capital. The suggested strategies are:

> Begin the science method course with the assumption that PSTs may not have adequate content knowledge. Start by teaching students "rules of the game" of science.
>
> Constantly provide academic *and* socio-emotional mentorship to help PSTs' realize their aspirations for teaching.
>
> Accommodate PSTs with a flexible attitude towards due dates for assignments, especially women and minoritized students, who likely come to college with competing family responsibilities.

Urban elementary school science education is a highly challenging field where effective science teachers are needed to teach science to minoritized children and narrow the achievement gap in science. Teacher educators have to encourage PSTs to develop science capital to teach science to a range of diverse learners in digital and in-person environments. Before COVID-19, virtual modes of teaching and learning were considered the yet to be realized future of education; but post-pandemic, virtual modes of learning have become a way of pedagogical life. Therefore, PSTs need to use virtual tools and opportunities for their own learning to expand their science cultural capital and become more confident and effective as science teachers.

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Panel Discussion of Dale T. Snauwaert's *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice: Toward a Pedagogy of Moral Reasoning*

(Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2023)

Dale T. Snauwaert, University of Toledo
Janet C. Gerson, International Institute for Peace Education
Jeffery H. Warnke, Walsh University
Greg Seals, CSI/CUNY

Abstract: Snauwaert summarizes his book as a "peace constitution project" aimed at facilitating pedagogically meaningful student discussion and development of main concepts (equality, recognition, reciprocity, impartiality) and issues (security, belonging, truth, sharing, power, resistance) determining the justness of society. Janet Gerson illuminates the power of pedagogical possibilities, both explicit and collateral, created by Snauwaert's positive (re)definition of peace as the presence of justice. Jeffery Warnke finds in Snauwaert's defense of a right to justification in a peaceful society a congruence between moral foundations of epistemology and the academic aims of education. Greg Seals reads Snauwaert's argument as a noncircular answer to the question, "Why be moral?" by showing how *Teaching Peace* provides separate accounts of what it means to be moral and how to inculcate moral behavior among groups of people.

Author's Summary of *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice: Toward a Pedagogy of Moral Reasoning*

Dale T. Snauwaert
University of Toledo

The purpose of this book is to articulate a normative philosophical framework for the development of an educational approach to teaching peace as a matter of justice, specifically through the lens of moral and political philosophy. The focus is to articulate a pedagogical framework for the development and exercise of citizens' capacities for moral reasoning and judgment regarding potential responses to the basic questions of justice necessary for a peaceful society. This pedagogy takes the form of a "peace constitution project," which provides a framework for students to deliberate and reason about principles of justice in response to basic questions of justice, thereby exercising and therefore developing their capacity for moral reasoning and judgment about justice. This development is essential for informed political participation of democratic citizens who are capable of being not merely recipients, but dynamic agents of justice.

John Rawls identified four roles for political philosophy (Rawls 2007, 10-11): (1) to be *practical*, working to resolve conflicts; (2) to provide an *orientation that* enables citizens to gain greater clarity about their political ideas and how to reason about them; (3) to enable *reconciliati*on, enabling citizens to understand, evaluate, and possibly affirm their social world; and (4) to help citizens probe the limits of what is possible in terms of the political organization of society. All four roles of political philosophy are invoked in the exploration of thinking about an education for peace and justice, however, *reconciliation* has a central role. As the 19th century German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel (1991 [1821]) maintained, *reconciliation* means that citizens come to understand and affirm the social and political institutions of their society, the basic structure of society, as expressing and being consistent with their dignity as free and equal persons (Rawls, 2000).

The ideal of realizing ourselves as free and equal persons within the context of just social and political institutional conditions is, however, contingent upon citizens coming to know and affirm that the institutions that shape our lives are reasonable and just. Reconciliation, the process of reconciling with one's social and political world, is therefore essential for a just and peaceful society. As Rawls suggests, to be a citizen means that "one understands that society is held together not simply by the satisfaction of particular interests but by a sense of reasonable [i.e., just] order …." (Rawls 2000, 355).

Furthermore, the importance of citizens becoming reconciled with their society is a key dynamic involved in creating and maintaining a balance of power between political institutions and citizens. Based upon the historical analysis of Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson in *The Narrow Corridor: States, Societies, and the Fate of Liberty* (2019), a balance of power between State and Society creates a narrow corridor of liberty. The dynamics of the creation and maintenance of this corridor of liberty occurs within the framework of a balanced, dynamic structure of state-society power relations — the right balance of power between the State (government institutions and the elites that control them) and Society (the people as citizens). Reconciliation paves the way to what Acemoglu and Robinson refer to as the "Shackled Leviathan": State power constrained by an informed and politically engaged citizenry. The mobilization and empowerment of a society of citizens in relation to the State balances the power between them, thus creating a "corridor of liberty."

It has long been recognized that rational and reasonable citizens are a necessary condition for democracy, and thereby for peace and justice. The conditions of peace and justice are contingent upon the informed political participation of citizens, and an essential aspect of citizens' capability to participate in the pursuit of peace and justice is their capacity of moral reasoning and judgment as *dynamic agents of justice*. This capacity cannot be transmitted but can only be developed through exercise and practice (Dewey 1916, 1995 [1910]; Freire 2005 [1970]; Reardon and Snauwaert, 2015; Reardon and Snauwaert, 2011; Rodowick 2021). Thus, the focus of this inquiry is to articulate a philosophical framework for, and a pedagogical approach to, the development of moral reasoning and judgment. The project is to engage in deliberation to construct a constitution of a just and peaceful society comprised of basic principles of justice by engaging students in inquiry into six basic questions of justice:

> *Whose Security?* Who should have an equal right to security of person?
>
> *Who Belongs?* Who should be considered an equal citizen and thus a full participant in the society?
>
> *Whose Truth?* What is the valid basis of determining truth?
>
> *Who Gets What?* What constitutes a just distribution of the basic goods and resources of a society?
>
> *Who Decides?* What constitutes a just distribution of political power?
>
> *Whose Resistance?* Is there a right and duty to resist and redress injustice? If so, what principles of corrective justice should guide that resistance? Who should bear this duty to resist?

Justifiable answers to these questions, in the form of principles of justice and political values, comprise the fabric of a *peace constitution*. A "constitution" is a statement of principles of justice and values that articulates fair terms for the regulation of the basic institutional

structure of society: it is a declaration of what a just society should be in principle. Moral reasoning concerns the normative justifiability of those principles of justice grounded in the elements of fairness (equality, recognition, reciprocity, and impartiality) as freestanding (from metaphysical claims) presuppositions of either the practice of moral reasoning and/or of the conception of persons as free and equal. Appeal to the normative criteria of fairness is a reasonable approach to normative justification in a world characterized by social and cultural pluralism. In considering the elements of a peace constitution students are asked to justify their choice of principles of justice and values from within the moral point of view of fairness:

> *Equality*: Do they recognize and treat all persons as equals?
>
> *Recognition*: Are they consistent with respect for persons?
>
> *Reciprocity*: Do they apply to all affected? Are they acceptable to all? Do reasonable persons have valid reason to reject them?
>
> *Impartiality*: Do they unfairly favor anyone? Do they serve the common good?

The peace constitution project is designed as a pedagogical means for the exercise and practice, and thus the development, of the moral reasoning capacities of students.

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Reflections on Snauwaert's *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice*

Janet C. Gerson
International Institute for Peace Education

Abstract: Snauwaert's ground-breaking idea is to define peace positively as the presence of justice. Orienting peace studies to the promotion of justice creates an instructional space in which students enact a pedagogy in developing social structures that constitute a peaceful society. Engaged in collaboratively writing a peace constitution, students reach toward shared understandings, accepting a congruence of opinion, and coming to consensus through shared decision-making. Following Snauwaert's conceptual and pedagogical innovations, students learn explicitly about the concept of peace as they collaterally bring peace into their own lives.

How do each of us know about justice? Where did each of us learn what we know? When do we encounter questions or dilemmas of justice in our research, teaching, learning, and in our daily lives? Institutions of religion, government, and education are foremost in shaping our sense of what justice is and how to apply what we learn. These are where principles and values of justice are taught and where we learn how to incorporate them into our lives. These institutions also formalize, hold, and stabilize the foundational principles and values of justice on the societal level. In these times of extreme polarization, when democracy seems to be weakening and threats of fascism rising, Dale Snauwaert reminds us of the urgency to strengthen the norms of peace, justice, and democracy. We are riveted to the news of wars, and yet we often feel helpless to act to stem rising violence. The challenge of climate crisis requires global cooperation, yet the reality of cooperative global problem-solving seems beyond resolution. How might education provide learning for citizen contributions to these urgent matters? *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice* (2023) offers key normative processes necessary to keep justice and peace efforts alive. In relatively simple terms, Snauwaert elucidates moral theory and practical classroom exercises to demonstrate how students can become agents of peace and justice. The process of agentic transformation begins with reconceptualizing peace and justice.

Conceptualization: Peace as the Presence of Justice

Snauwaert's ground-breaking idea is to define peace positively as the presence of justice. He states that violence has been "the operative concept" in peace studies, that is, that peace studies traditionally focused on the dangers and horrors of violence in order to prevent, eliminate or diminish it (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 7; Galtung, 1969, 1990). By contrast, Snauwaert emphasizes the urgency of reconceptualizing peace by finding justice at its normative core. Focus on the normative core contributes to advancing positive peace. He elaborates through five steps the idea of positive peace as justice.

First, Snauwaert defines peace as a social system regulated by principles of justice and ethical values essential for the pursuit of the good life. Establishing and sustaining peace within all levels of society is a basic and urgent matter of justice (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 2). Although the complex of violences assaults our individual sensibilities, he invites us to challenge violence from the point of view of a social-moral community of learners. This understanding of peace is succinctly defined as a social system that depends upon moral conceptualization. The moral conceptualization of peace is cultivated through reflective inquiry on questions of justice and modes of moral reasoning that bring together citizens into a shared moral community, one that better supports a just and democratic body politic.

The democratic view does not appeal to an independent moral order. Instead, the view invokes the authority of our human capacity to engage in moral reasoning for the purpose of constructing basic principles of justice that can be agreed upon by citizens (Snauwaert, 2023, pp. 2- 3). Snauwaert builds on John Rawls's conception of a citizen as "one [who] understands that society is held together not simply by the satisfaction of particular interests but by a sense of reasonable [i.e., just] order …" (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 4, paraphrasing Rawls, 2000, p. 355). A shared sense of reasonableness is the core goal of a peaceful society based on the presence of justice. This does not mean a uniformity of opinion or lack of contention, but a balance between state and society, a communal walk along the "narrow corridor" between political power and societal consent (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019). When political legitimacy is achieved through societal consent, state political power exists in balance with the power of society. Consent creates a space of positive peace within a society; and constitutes a *sphere of peace as a balanced structure of State-Society relations* (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 5, italics original) Furthermore, as Snauwaert (2023) asserts,

> "the importance of citizens becoming reasonably reconciled with their governing regime is a key dynamic involved in creating and maintaining a balance of power between political institutions and citizens. In other words, engaged, informed *citizens are both necessary and essential participants* in the pursuit of peace and justice, and… citizens need to be capable of exercising moral and political judgment regarding a complex array of basic conflicts and questions of justice, and not mere recipients of justice" (pp. 4-5, emphasis in original).

Thus, peace as a matter of justice does not depend solely on leaders/powerbrokers: peace and justice depend more fundamentally on citizens who can engage in and contribute to maintaining them.

Second, peace as "presence of justice" recognizes justice as more than reified moral principles and rarified ethical values. Justice also needs to evolve dynamically as societies face emerging challenges. The ecological crisis is a prominent example of how our consideration of moral inclusion in the scope of justice must broaden to include all living species sharing the environment of Earth upon which human survival depends (Opotow, Gerson, & Woodside, 2005).

Third, Snauwaert's idea of peace as the presence of justice is dependent upon citizens engaged in moral reasoning to maintain a balance of power with the state. Peace as the presence of justice takes us away from conceptions of justice as loyalty to Origin texts or rehearsal of already determined rules and laws. Citizen engagement in sustaining justice also demands engagement of considerate, reasoning participants who have concern for their society as a whole. The capacity to see beyond one's own personal interests is crucial to broadening the scope of justice to include a plurality of diverse concerns. Broad scope of moral vision is necessary to address the circumstances of our ever-transforming societal challenges.

Fourth, justice depends on moral reasoning that "seeks *consistency* between principles and values *and* fairness" (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 40, emphasis in original). This implies a balance between ideals of justice and the practical realities confronting people. These tensions can be deliberated using moral reasoning. Following Rawls (2001), justice as fairness recognizes the need of citizens, conceived as free and equal persons, for reminders to acknowledge and means to incorporate into their daily lives respect for their actual interdependencies.

Fifth, skillfulness at recognizing and improving justice is an *educatable capacity* realized through practicing methods actually usable in supporting society through process-oriented, inclusive decision-making processes designed to strengthen recognition of and response to the plurality in the collective. Learning the capacity for moral reasoning requires experience via replicable, thoughtful experiment, not rote repetition of moral regulation. Providing opportunities for students to become facile and skillful at promoting peace is education for civic engagement. And learning to undertake and execute moral action should not be relegated to training for technical schools, sports or for children or even the military; but should be welcome in higher education, as well. Like Reardon (2010), Snauwaert (2023) shows the value of practice and experiment accompanied by further "reflection on experience" (p. 66) as he elaborates justice as lived fairness.

Snauwaert's (2023) focus on *justification* as constituting justice identifies the need for achieving validity and legitimacy for norms, laws, policies, and judgments through rational deliberations guided by principles and *values in terms of the elements of fairness*. He writes, "We can and should ask whether the political values and principles of justice and the judgements concerning laws, policies, and practices based upon them are morally justifiable…. If so, what is their source or grounding?" (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 40). Here, Snauwaert refers to "grounding" as a means searching for and developing reasons that constitute justification in terms of a moral base. Distributive justice policies should aspire to "fair distribution of social goods and opportunities" (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 144). However, these ideals are always confronted with inequalities, tendencies to take unfair advantage, disinformation, and structured oppression. Therefore, ways to delve into the relevant values and principles that rationally support a given position must be found. Citizens involved and affected must deliberate to reach reasonable solutions which enact mutual compromises, finally agreed upon after grappling with a broad range of possible solutions. Educating citizens for promotion of positive peace through exercise of their capacities for moral reasoning and communicative deliberation can inculcate individual empowerment for increasing collective peacebuilding through inclusive practices of distributive justice.

Peace Pedagogy as Moral Reasoning

Snauwaert (2023) elaborates moral reasoning as both philosophical conceptualization and as "process-oriented, inquiry-based pedagogy grounded in the logical structure of moral reasoning and judgment" (p. 65). Snauwaert lays out moral reasoning as a pedagogy for peace based on *reflective inquiry*, the methodology Reardon (2010) used to engage students, in practices of reasoning and communicating. Participatory engagement is a safeguard against falling into ideological or polarized or passive citizenship. Moral reasoning is at its core a relational point of view supportive of peace thinking and engagement in citizenship. Working dialogically, students can become reflective, morally grounded, articulate, mutually cooperating citizens rather than depending on institutions to teach, maintain, and enforce justice.

If we review the sources Snauwaert has incorporated into his text, we recognize his comprehensive grasp of the vast literature on justice, peace, and the foundations of education. In the pedagogical section of his book, Snauwaert himself has also learned from teaching. With his undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and continuing education students, he has developed (seemingly) simple guiding questions for engaging in reflective inquiry pedagogy about justice. By resolving justice into a set of core questions societies must continuously answer, Snauwaert explains and demonstrates the interrelatedness of theory and practice in peace studies. Each

question of justice is elaborated in individual chapters. These questions are 1) Whose security? 2) Who belongs? 3) Whose truth? 4) Who gets what? 5) Who decides? 6) Whose resistance? and 7) How do we hold violators accountable? (pp. 9-10) These questions invite discussion facilitated by Snauwaert's resolution of fairness, drawn from Rawls (1971, 1990, 1993, 2000, 2001), into elements of 1) equality, 2) impartiality, 3) reciprocity, and 4) recognition (p. 52). Snauwaert further encourages the practice of communicative action by resolving that idea into aspects he elaborates (p. 40) as expression, explanation, justification, argumentation, and deliberation (Habermas, 1990, 1993, 1994; Forst, 2017; Forst and Flynn, 2012; Snauwaert and Reardon, 2011, 2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2022; Reardon, 2010; Gerson, 2013, 2019, 2020). As they provide answers to Snauwaert's questions, students operating under these guidelines enact a pedagogy in developing social structures that constitute a peaceful, that is, a just society.

Student-Generated Peace Constitution

Engaged in collaboratively writing a peace constitution, students are invited to aim toward reaching shared understandings, accepting a congruence of opinion, and reaching consensus through shared decision-making. Thus, the peace constitution project prescribes moral reasoning. On Snauwaert's (2023, p. 72) view, "A 'constitution' is a declaration and/or statement of principles of justice that articulates the fair terms of regulation of the institutions of society: it is a statement of what a just society should be, defining a just society in principle." Snauwaert devotes a chapter to each of his questions concerning central issues of justice. Each question-of-justice chapter ends with a summary and a "Peace Constitution Basic Template" which guides students through a series of steps involving inquiry and reflection on relevant principles. Students are invited to "[a]rticulate a justification of these principles by employing the elements of fairness" (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 72) — equality, impartiality, reciprocity and recognition.

The peace constitution project is structured so that students begin working individually and then bring their written work together in small groups to share with classmates and the instructor. Next, the students draft a combined statement using their individual findings. These statements are reviewed and revised with instructor suggestions. The final document is compiled from the collective group reports and framed by an introduction and conclusion. The project engages students in the logical structure of moral reasoning and judgment as they explore and construct a constitution of a just and peaceful society comprised by their reflection on the basic questions of justice (p. 73). These learning-in-action processes inculcate gains in cooperative action. Mutual commitment is generated through participation and on-going, joint decision-making. Each participant can claim some ownership in the outcome of the co-constructed peace constitution. Thus, through a reflective inquiry pedagogy, the participants have not only cooperated, but they have *collaborated* to produce something more than any one of them could have generated alone.

The structure of learning that Snauwaert lays out aims to empower students for intense engagement as citizens. This entails far more than voting or other bureaucratic procedures such as following rules and laws. Intense participation in democratic citizenship requires more than voicing opinions or being active in protests. Snauwaert (2023, p. 201, emphasis in original) writes, "…the pursuit of peace and justice is contingent upon the active and informed political participation of democratic citizens as dynamic agents of justice, which is the core of *political efficacy*… this agency is contingent upon the citizens' moral reasoning and judgment capacity. This development requires a pedagogical process that *exercises* their moral reasoning and judgment, a *pedagogy of moral reasoning*."

Snauwaert's theoretical and pedagogical assertions are in fact used and exemplified by two real world documents. First, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was developed by a pluralistic convening of global representatives in 1948 (Adami, 2012). This coincided with the formation of the United Nations (UN) which took UDHR as a moral foundation for its work. UDHR has guided deliberation and approval of many treaties and more specific documents of international law, including expansion of human rights. Second, the Earth Charter initiative was launched by the UN in 1987 and more fully developed in 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit. In 1997, the Earth Charter Commission brought together leaders of civil society and governments to begin deliberating and drafting the document that would become the Earth Charter. In 2000, the Earth Charter was launched and accepted as an official declaration of the UN (Earth Charter).

In conclusion, Snauwaert accomplishes the task of laying out the logical structure for both inquiring into the nature of justice as the basis of a peaceful society and for carrying out a pedagogy of moral reasoning as a method and means of teaching peace. To challenge current threats of fascism and authoritarianism, he asserts these can be resisted through "…citizens capable of exercising moral reasoning and judgment that enables them to effectively engage in public deliberation concerning justifiable principles of justice and who can further exercise reasoned judgment regarding laws, policies, and institutional practices and their effective enactments in the context of justice" (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 203). Snauwaert's shift in the paradigm of peace has potential to enable transformation of human societies by changing the ways people think so their deliberations regularly include moral consideration about others, communities, and societies. This transformational shift can bring us closer to a world in which we can all feel safe living.

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Epistemological Considerations in Snauwaert's *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice*

Jeffery H. Warnke
Walsh University

Abstract: In the peaceful society **t**he right to justification is a fundamental right. Justification forms a working framework for moral reasoning in the public use of reason. Snauwaert's *Teaching Peace* is not only telling us about or making a case for its recommended approach to the moral reasoning behind the constitution of justification and knowledge, but also inculcates epistemically valuable moral reasoning by presenting readers with opportunities to make reasoned judgments themselves. Snauwaert shows us how to show ourselves that there is an epistemological nature of justice and peace that coincides with and supports the academic aims of education.

In *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice***,** Dale Snauwaert (2023, p. 1) describes the purpose of his book to be "to articulate a normative philosophical framework for the development of an educational approach to teaching peace as a matter of justice, specifically through the lens of moral and political philosophy." Within this discussion of the normative philosophical framework of justice and moral reasoning is the question posed in Chapter Six "Who's Truth?" In his discussion of "Whose truth?", Snauwaert explicitly addresses the relationship between epistemology and justice while exploring questions of the meaning of reality and truth. In addition, Snauwaert discusses both the epistemological criteria that establish a basis for "knowing" truth and reality and the way knowledge and power are connected. However, epistemic beliefs are inherent or implicit in Snauwaert's discussion of moral reasoning and the educational theory underlying his pedagogy of moral reasoning. In this discussion, I will address these epistemological matters, both the explicit treatment of epistemological considerations in Chapter Six and the implicit epistemic beliefs underlying the normative framework and the pedagogy of moral reasoning discussed in the book.

Teaching Peace begins with an exploration and definition of peace, in a positive sense, as the presence of justice. Justice then hinges upon an idea of justification, or more precisely the right to justification (Forst, 2014). The right to justification is a fundamental right, it is mutual and reciprocal, grounded by values of equality and liberty. The free and equal status of persons includes freedom from coercion and a freedom to participate in the space of reasons, where moral reasoning provides criteria for validity and justifiability, including moral justification (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 50-52).

Yet, as an introduction to moral philosophy and normative theory, Snauwaert provides the student/reader with alternative, competing approaches or criteria for answering the questions regarding the source and basis for normativity, or more precisely normative justification. Alternatives discussed include objective moral truth and rational intuitionism, Kantian constructivism and the Categorical Imperative, communitarianism's cultural situatedness that rests justification upon "social acceptance," and the idea of moral reasoning. Snauwaert rebuilds the framework of moral reasoning from a political constructivist, social contractarian approach (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 40-52). In the ideas of reasoning, justification, and validity, we see clearly concepts that have an epistemological nature. For the reader, the text is an exercise in clarifying understanding of this field of political and moral philosophy and its key thinkers/authors. By 'understanding', I mean synthesizing a broad philosophical literature on justice, finding key insights, and making connections to the discourse on justice in forming a working framework for

moral reasoning and for the public use of reason. Snauwaert allows the reader to form their own judgments about these fundamental questions. Justification and validity as epistemic concerns are built from this intersubjective space of reasons and the iterative and recursive processes of reflection, dialogue, and (re)constitution. As Snauwaert developed the text, the questions of justice and the answers of various writers/philosophers to those questions, model the dialogical, reflective practice that forms the framework of moral reasoning. *Teaching Peace* is not only telling us about or making a case for its recommended approach to moral reasoning, but also demonstrates moral reasoning by presenting alternative conceptions and asking the readers to make reasoned judgments themselves. Snauwaert's *Teaching Peace* provides a dialogue in which to engage with these ideas broadly and deeply.

There is much in this text that is of interest. It is a wonderful contribution to several fields of study, especially Peace Education and Philosophy of Education. The text is an excellent resource for anybody teaching about justice and peace for its pedagogy of moral reasoning gets at the heart of any civic education in the democratic context. It is built upon epistemic educational aims that guide the development of critical knowledge constructing capabilities, that inculcate capacity to think critically about a set of fundamental questions of justice, and of ability to analyze and critique the testimony of philosophers' conceptions and responses to the questions Snauwaert poses. Furthermore, the reader is challenged to reflect upon the meaning and validity of positions Snauwaert presents, which recognizes the epistemic dependence of humans on others as a basis for developing capacities to make personal judgments on the validity of various positions. In this way, Snauwaert preserves the readers' epistemic autonomy. And finally, as a text for any course or group of readers, Snauwaert provides the tools for extending the reflective practice to the context of a learning community. Working through the Peace Constitution Project is a group effort which engages students in the deliberative and dialogical nature of public reason that is fundamental to both positive peace and justice (p. 72-73).

Snauwaert gives us a strong framework and outline, or even a lesson plan if you will, for setting up this novel learning experience. Students enter into dialogue with theory/theories and with peers to interpret and then negotiate a shared meaning. Participants not only learn content about the subject of justice and peace but engage those capabilities necessary for participation in the larger context of the public sphere. The pedagogy and the classroom become the model or microcosm of our democratic lifeways consistent with the Deweyan tradition (Dewey, 1916). The Peace Constitution Project is a space where the student can experience and practice value conflict and the political process of adjudicating that conflict through peaceful means. As they arrive at a place of shared meaning or a shared sense of a reasonable constitution, students have had the chance to be co-authors and co-legislators. Development of capacities for reasoning and justification are the educationally interesting aspects of this pedagogy. More important than any episteme of knowledge, the pedagogy gets at the very epistemic aims of education, which is to learn how to think freely, to understand the veracity of evidence and claims, to make judgments about the justifiability of those claims from a place of critical reflection, including a social or public use of reason which involves judging the veracity of testimony.

From an educator's perspective, I'm drawn to the idea of moral reasoning as a pedagogy and then, in turn, how this democratic purpose guides not only pedagogical considerations, but the very aims of education. Pedagogical themes of *Teaching Peace* converge on the intersection of the epistemic aims of education and the moral and political or social aims of education (Brighouse, 2009; Robertson, 2009). As Snauwaert shows, knowledge is connected to power,

and thus this relationship must be confronted and reflected upon. The road to validity runs through the social practices of what Snauwaert has described as "knowledge constitution". The elements of intellectual practices that are familiar to those of us in the academy (such as free, open, rational inquiry and critical public scrutiny where transparency, publicity, and replicability are essential), construct the epistemic beliefs of the educated community of practice. But they are not always the focus of education especially in the data-driven, standards-focused realm of K-12 formal schooling, where the answers are in the back of the book, where knowledge is objectified and measurable, where teachers are technicians delivering what Freire has described as a banking model of education (Biesta & Stengel, 2016; Freire, 2003). At its most insidious, the banking model is a form of indoctrination which amounts to what Miranda Fricker (2009) has described as "epistemic injustice" and, in terms of peace education, we can call forms of cultural violence (Galtung, 1990; Snauwaert, 2023).

Snauwaert has an excellent chapter devoted to the question of *Who's Truth?* that lays out a discussion of the epistemological nature of justice and peace. Epistemology is connected to the idea of moral reasoning and to democracy as a practice and way of life. In other words, the way knowledge is related to justice and the way knowledge creation is connected to justice is conceived as resting upon a right to justification. The challenges to epistemic beliefs or positions posed by alternative approaches to judgments about knowledge, including the challenge of authoritarianism, heightens Snauwaert's critique of the relationship between knowledge and power (Snauwaert, 2023, p. 121-123). Authoritarians use invalid justifications rooted in demagogic propaganda that uses, manipulates, and coerces through rhetorical device to blur rational judgments, to stir emotional/affective responses (Stanley, 2015). Such disinformation and misinformation create an ecosystem that challenges what is a fundamental educational concern: a capacity for persons to experience cognitive conceptual change. Where there is resistance to change of mind in the face of clear evidence for doing so or avoidance of the uncomfortable recognition of invalidity, Snauwaert sees positional bias and confirmation bias as environmental aspects of what he describes as a "post-truth ecosystem" (p. 122).

As is consistent with Snauwaert's perspective, education is a vital concern in a society that values democratic processes and patterns of life. And education derives its purpose from these democratic imperatives. Moral reasoning as the basis for justice and the manifestation of peace involves an intersection of epistemic aims with the moral, social, and political aims of democratic life. Civic education serves the development of the capacities of moral reasoning and is implicated in each of these spheres in an interconnected way. These tools of moral reasoning give us a way to reflect upon our deepest considered convictions, to find coherence among our own conflicts of value and to explore how to offer reasons to others and to listen to them authentically while assessing the veracity and reasonableness of their claims. This is the basis of what John Rawls (2005) has called public reason, with his idea of the burdens of judgment that represent those areas of conflict in values, interests, and meaning. And Rawls also suggests we enter this space of public reason with the duty of civility to offer reasons and to listen to others, moving from the "I and they" to the "we" in the constitution of knowledge. Emily Robertson (2009, p. 29) demonstrates this connection between epistemic aims and the social, political aims of education:

> The independent thinker is not someone who works everything out for herself, even in principle, but one who exercises a controlling intelligence over the input she receives from the normal sources of information whether their basis be

> individual or communal. Such a conception of epistemic independence does not require the impossible task of extricating oneself from social influences but, rather, that one become capable of evaluating and criticizing particular received views, assessing the credentials of experts, and examining the potential biases of social pathways to knowledge if there is reason to do so. Such assessments and evaluations will often be a collaborative enterprise… there is a social and political dimension to becoming an independent thinker: individuals should be taught to understand the importance of supporting social institutions that make us all less gullible. Here consideration of the epistemic ends of education becomes an aspect of civic education.

Studying epistemology shows us the fallibility of human perception and knowledge which puts us in reliance or dependence on others and on this social terrain. But if democratic values of freedom and autonomy are of any concern to us, this kind of epistemic dependence presents a challenge for us. We must be conscious of how power operates and manifests in forms of knowledge, how knowledge can be connected to injustice when it lacks validity and instantiates the conditions of oppression as normalcy or as natural, or when it arouses fear and animosity. Snauwaert's discussion provides a deep investigation of this conception and the pedagogy related to it, giving students/readers tools for naming, identifying, and conceptualizing both epistemological injustice and epistemological justice. As Snauwaert states:

> The constitution of knowledge is comprised of the rules, values, and principles that govern and support the pursuit of knowledge based in public critical scrutiny. These rules, values, and principles include the fallibilist rule, the empirical rule, basic rights to freedom of thought, conscience, speech, inquiry, and association, toleration, and the right to and duty of justification. Together they comprise the constitution of a well-ordered global epistemological social network. It can be arranged further that the principles of this constitution are normatively justifiable, that is, consistent with the elements of fairness. We also explored the ways in which society and the process of establishing justifiable claims to knowledge and truth can be undermined for political purposes through the weaponization of tribalism and bias through the propagation of disinformation. The method of science [in a Peircean sense] and the principles of the constitution of knowledge are a bulwark against post-truth, and thus, political authoritarianism. (p. 124)

One challenge I face as an educator is to have students recognize the distinction between moral or normative judgments and the factual or empirical judgments that are connected to observations of the world. I see the discussion here of moral reason as a way to help students make a connection to often abstract concepts and to see how normativity operates in our ways of thinking, and what that kind of inquiry entails. The collection of concepts and the way they are woven together into this task of constitution building through moral reasoning is a valuable approach to not only the epistemic aims of education, but also those political and moral aims of a democratic civic education. On p. 118, Snauwaert cites John Dewey's (1916; 1927) contention that "the knowledge most worth knowing is knowledge of the ways by which anything is entitled to be called knowledge instead of being mere opinion or guess-work or dogma." This speaks to Dewey's view of democracy as a conjoint communicated experience where peaceful resolution of conflict reigns and where free association and consent rest upon a shared practice of community actively building that space of shared meaning and interest we call the public. To

enter into dialogue with theory and with peers to interpret and then negotiate a shared meaning is to model the three forms of reflective equilibrium Rawls (1995/2005) describes in his "Reply to Habermas." Criteria and focus shift across the philosopher's domain of theoretical reflective equilibrium (*pro tanto justification*, judging the veracity of reasons within a conception of justice); the personal reflective practice of finding coherence between the concept of justice and one's personal moral and ethical convictions (comprehensive doctrine, full justification), and, thirdly, to the domain of public reason where reflective practice is shifted to an intersubjective dialogical and deliberative context (public justification). Snauwaert provides the framework, content, and exercises necessary for the development of these flexible cognitive capabilities: Capabilities fundamental to the aims of education and to the development of citizens who are agents of peace and justice.

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Noncircular Answer to the Question, "Why Be Moral?" On Dale Snauwaert's *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice*

Greg Seals
College of Staten Island/CUNY

Abstract: Snauwaert uses equality, recognition, reciprocity, and impartiality to assess society's morality. Educational theory supports a thought experiment on relations between societal well-being and factors constitutive of society by discerning three distinct theories of social efficiency: Darwinian, humanitarian, and utilitarian. Humanitarians address all four elements of social well-being, promising to function without fundamental flaw. The problem is how to start it and keep it running. Darwinians pay little heed to equality, reproducing inequalities disruptive of natural societal selection. Utilitarians pay lip-service to recognition, recognizing persons for their worth to society and not for their worth *per se*, causing widespread anomie. Humanitarian social efficiency may be sustained in society, Snauwaert argues, if individuals are taught to enact peace not as an absence of violence but as the presence of justice.

Dale T. Snauwaert describes his book as "a philosophical framework for, and a pedagogical approach to, the development of moral reasoning and judgment pertaining to basic questions of justice, including the knowledge of those questions and their normative basis." [1] In carrying out his project in these terms, Snauwaert lays ground for adequate answer to the question, "Why be moral?" Examination of an initial axiom and a "basic premise" animating Snauwaert's argument show how Snauwaert avoids charges that the question, "Why be moral?" is a pseudo-question, unanswerable without circularity. Snauwaert's axiom reads, "Peace is a necessary social condition for the pursuit of a good life." His basic premise holds, "…that the educational cultivation of citizens' moral reasoning and judgment capacities is of singular importance." (6) The false impression that "Why be moral?" is a pseudo-question arises when answers to the question confound two different aspects of the issue: a skeptical challenge that asks what reason an agent has to be moral at all and a priority challenge that asks why an agent's reasons to be moral tend to outweigh that agent's nonmoral reasons to act.[2] Prudential reasons typically given to answer the skeptical challenge make it difficult to give independent reasons to address the priority challenge. The result is a question-begging answer to "Why be moral?" that says something like, "Because it's the right thing to do." Keeping his axiom and his basic premise as logically distinct elements of his argument allows Snauwaert to meet the skeptical challenge and the priority challenge separately on grounds appropriate to each. Snauwaert's axiom answers only the skeptical challenge by demonstrating that, on the whole, being moral makes for an optimally well-functioning society. Snauwaert's basic premise answers only the priority challenge by arguing that education is key to forming habits among a citizenry that commit individual members to acting morally in their day-to-day interactions with one another, mostly as a matter of course. Morality, it seems, may not necessarily come all that naturally to humans. However, to function well, a society offering freedom for all requires love for one another. Therefore, morality must be cultivated among us.

[1] Dale T. Snauwaert, *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice: Towards a Pedagogy of Moral Reasoning* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2023), 1. Subsequent references to Snauwaert will be made with parenthetical page numbers in the body of the paper.
[2] Douglas R. Paletta, "Frances Hutcheson: Why Be Moral?" *Journal of Scottish Philosophy* 9, no. 2 (Autumn, 2011): 149-159.

Examples of circularity in answering the question "Why be moral?" may be found in philosophical traditions of both the East and the West. For example, W. H. Davis draws upon the Western theoretical tradition of innate moral sentiment when he asserts, "We are intuitively and irreducibly aware of the *moral* imperative within our field of experience, and it is experienced as the ultimate and imperative judge of all we say, do, think, and even desire."[3] Similarly, neo-Confucianism constructs an answer to the question of "Why be moral?" upon the presumed fact that to be genuinely human is to find joy in performing moral actions. Moral action is the distinguishing mark of humanity in the sense that the more fully moral an agent becomes, the more that agent becomes fully human.[4] Neither example succeeds. Both commit the naturalizing error, a generalized version of the naturalistic fallacy. The naturalistic fallacy is the meta-ethical error of assuming "human nature as such was a fit source from which to draw moral norms."[5] The more general naturalizing error is the methodological mistake of "appeal to nature as a self-justified description dictating or limiting our choices in moral, economic, political, and other social contexts."[6] Without an independent account of the goodness of what is put forth as "natural," the "natural" has no claim to goodness beyond the potentially limited and limiting unilateral say-so of the enunciating moral theorist. Naturalistic answers to "Why be moral?" run in a circle by assuming what they need to prove. Worse, projecting one's own view of the "natural" onto others not only privileges the author of the canons of naturalness but also risks detaching understanding of moral thinking and description of moral action from the lived circumstances and shared experiences of actual moral agents.[7] In addition to an independent account of the good, then, an adequate answer to the question "Why be moral?" requires an account of how we intend to get folks to do moral things. Snauwaert supplies both, but independently of one another, thus avoiding circularity in explaining why morality is the way to go. Separate treatment of the skeptical challenge and the priority challenge breaks the circle that commonly foils attempts to answer adequately, "Why be moral?"

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[3] W. H. Davis, "Why Be Moral?" *Philosophical Inquiry: International Quarterly* 13, nos. 3-4 (Summer-Fall, 1991): 1-21. The quote may be found on 1. See Gregory W. Trianosky, "On the Obligation to be Virtuous: Shaftesbury and the Question, Why Be Moral?" *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 16 (July, 1978): 289-300 for an explanation as to how "Why be moral?" haunts theories of ethics based on supposition of an inherent human moral sentiment.

[4] Yong Huang, "'Why Be Moral?'" The Cheng Brothers' Neo-Confucian Answer," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 36, no. 2 (June, 2008): 321-353. Connecting humanity to morality is also a feature of Aristotelian philosophy. See Jennifer Whiting, "Aristotle's Function Argument: A Defense," *Ancient Philosophy*, 8 (1988), 32-43 and Rina Marie Camus, "Comparison by Metaphor: Archery in Confucius and Aristotle," *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 16 (March, 2017): 165-185.

[5] For this nice turn of phrase see 370 of Francis Michael Walsh, "The Return of the Naturalistic Fallacy: A Dialogue on Human Flourishing," *Heythrop Journal: A Bimonthly Review of Philosophy and Theology* 49, no. 3 (May, 2008): 370-387. For the original statement of the naturalistic fallacy see G.E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, revised edition, ed. Thomas Baldwin (Cambridge University Press, 1922/1993), Chapter I, "The Subject Matter of Ethics," Section B., 10. Standard commentary on the idea may be found at David P. Gauthier, "Moore's Naturalistic Fallacy," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 4 (October, 1967): 315-320. Darryl F. Wright, "Diagnosing the Naturalistic Fallacy: *Principia Ethica* Revisited," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 32, no. 4 (Winter, 1994): 465-482 digs deeper to find logical roots of the naturalistic fallacy in Moore's discussion of 'the doctrine that all propositions assert a relation between existents' (*Principia Ethica*, Chapter IV, "Metaphysical Ethics," Section A., 67 and Section B., 69). Finally, see Julian Dodd and Suzanne Stern-Gillet, "The Is/Ought Gap, the Fact/Value Distinction and the Naturalistic Fallacy," *Dialogue: Canadian Philosophical Review* 34, no. 4 (Fall. 1995): 727-745 for a careful delineation of three related but distinctive errors in argumentation.

[6] Douglas Allchin and Alexander J. Werth, "The Naturalizing Error," *Zeitschrift fur allgemeine Wissenschaftstheorie* 48, no. 1 (March, 2017): 3-18.

[7] Michael D. Bayles, "The Complexity of 'Why Be Moral'?" *Personalist* 54 (Fall, 1973): 309-317.

In undertaking the work of defining the constitution of a just society (8), Snauwaert exploits a happy ambiguity in the idea of "constitution."[8] Constitution may refer to some written procedural document(s) guiding action in some social-political context(s). In this sense, actions may be described as constitutional in the sense of "being in accord with the constitution" of some society. Call this the practical sense of constitution. But constitution may also signify "that which is constitutive of," as in "the basic structure of society" (39) or "defining a just society in principle" (72). Call this the philosophical sense of constitution. Snauwaert's fundamental philosophical argument in answer to the skeptical challenge to "Why be moral?" is that societies are best positioned for continued flourishing when their practical constitutions comport well with the philosophical constitution of society.[9]

Because it is important to prevent charges of circularity when dealing with the question, "Why be moral?" I am stating this proposed connection between practical and philosophical constitutions of societies causally in the following hypotheses: Societal well-being improves to the extent and the degree to which equality, recognition, reciprocity, and impartiality are commonly practiced in a society. Contrapositively, the hypothesis runs, societal well-being declines as equality, recognition, reciprocity, and impartiality are found absent from or thwarted by common social practice. Societal well-being may be measured in two ways: individually, in terms of the likelihood of continued survival of a society, and ecologically, in terms of the capacity of a society to reproduce organizations that also exhibit societal well-being.[10] Restating Snauwaert's argument as two hypotheses helps avoid moral language, including a common distinction between moral truth and normative rightness. Normative rightness is concerned with what we might call meta-moral rules, rules that guide the creation of social rules: "If you want a good game of society then proceed thusly in setting it up and carrying it out."[11] In contrast to this meta-moral approach, I am giving the idea of the constitution of an optimally sociable society a more empirical spin to make constitution something analogous to what we mean when we speak of a person having a hearty constitution. That is, the philosophical constitution of society identifies a set of causal, rather than normative, factors by which to measure the health, strength, and appearance of any body politic. As already listed in the hypotheses offered above, Snauwaert discusses four elements of societal well-being: "equality, recognition, reciprocity, and impartiality" (52). He details each as follows:

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[8] In making good use of the ambiguity, Snauwaert follows Akhil Reed Amar, *America's Unwritten Constitution: The Precedents and Principles We Live By* (New York: Basic Books, 2012).

[9] Snauwaert's strategy parallels that of Robert Kuttner's *Everything for Sale: The Virtues and Limits of Markets* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996). Kuttner uses ideal conditions of markets (perfect information, perfect competition, mobility of factors, exogenously set preferences, and absence of externalities. (See 16-17 of *Everything for Sale*) to recommend regulation of non-ideal market circumstances to keep markets undertaken in nonideal circumstances from malfunctioning. In the same way, Snauwaert establishes ideal conditions of sociality and recommends a regulative reconstruction of society in schools and beyond to promote the realization of ideal conditions.

[10] See William P. Barnett, "The Dynamics of Competitive Intensity," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 42, (March, 1997): 128-160.

[11] Snauwaert borrows the idea of meta-moral rules from three sources: John Rawls, "The Independence of Moral Theory," in *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, ed., Samuel Freeman (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990): 286-302; Jürgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*: *Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990); and Ranier Forst, *The Right to Justification: Elements of a Constructivist Theory of Justice*, trans., Jeffrey Flynn. New Directions in Critical Theory (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

1) Equality: "the presupposition that every human being should be considered as possessing an equal, inherent value." (52)[12]
2) Recognition: "respect for one's inner dignity" (54).
3) "*Reciprocity… what one claims for oneself, one cannot justifiably deny to others*" (57, emphasis in original).
4) Impartiality: "free of the bias of exclusive self-interest" (58).

Making equality, recognition, reciprocity, and impartiality crucial elements in thought and in deed is fundamentally what Snauwaert means by being moral. A society is moral when its members are in the habit of treating each other as respected equals interested in working things out together to mutual benefit.

The history of educational theory provides material to run a brief thought experiment on the question of the causal relation between societal well-being and factors constitutive of society.[13] Recent revisionist historical work on the idea of social efficiency in education finds a pluralistic rather than a monolithic concept.[14] Null describes the situation as one in which "the idea of 'social efficiency' meant different things to different people depending upon the different ends they sought to achieve by using it."[15] Three discernible versions of social efficiency have been described — Darwinian, humanitarian, and utilitarian — that range between extremes of mutual struggle and mutual aid.[16] The humanitarian version of social efficiency addresses all four elements of social well-being and, as a result, promises to function without fundamental flaw. The problem is how to get it started and keep it running. Both the Darwinian and utilitarian versions of social efficiency slight an element of social well-being and suffer because of it. The Darwinian version pays too little heed to equality and, as a result, tends to reproduce inequalities that run contrary to purely natural processes of societal selection. The utilitarian version of social efficiency pays only lip service to the element of recognition by recognizing persons primarily for their worth to society but not, for the most part, for their worth as persons *per se*. The result is a widespread malaise of anomie among people living in conditions of utilitarian social efficiency.

Late-19th Century British sociologist Benjamin Kidd got the conceptual ball rolling by giving social efficiency a Darwinist spin.[17] Social life is to be understood as "a silent and strenuous rivalry in which every section of the race is of necessity continually engaged."[18] Knoll further quotes Kidd, saying, "Other things being equal the most vigorous social systems are those in which are combined the most effective subordination of the individual to the interests of the social organism with the highest development of his own personality."[19] For Kidd, education

[12] The quote from Snauwaert borrows from Will Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).
[13] In treating the factors as independent variables I depart from Snauwaert to some degree. The departure is for analytic purposes only. Snauwaert (52-60) discusses the interconnectedness of the four factors.
[14] J. Wesley Null, "Social Efficiency Splintered: Multiple Meanings Instead of the Hegemony of One," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 19, no. 2 (Winter, 2004): 99-124 and Michael Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey: The Origin and Meaning of 'Social Efficiency'," *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 41, no. 3 (June, 2009): 361-391.
[15] Null, "Social Efficiency Splintered," 99.
[16] Beth Eddy, "Struggle or Mutual Aid: Jane Addams, Petr Kropotkin, and the Progressive Encounter with Social Darwinism," *The Pluralist* 5, no. 1 (Spring, 2020): 21-43.
[17] Benjamin Kidd, *Social Evolution*, new edition (New York: Macmillan, 1894).
[18] Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey," 364, paraphrasing Kidd, *Social Evolution*, viii-ix.
[19] Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey," 364, quoting Kidd, *Social Evolution*, 65.

contributes most profoundly to social efficiency when it focuses not so much on academic learning but on inculcating self-discipline and strength of character.[20] Perhaps surprisingly, Kidd's plan for schools leaned heavily towards

> Equality of opportunity… [as] a crucial element in his concept of democracy, liberty, and social efficiency. It included, among other features, provisions for free public education, an extended electoral franchise, equal access to the market, and sharply increased taxation for the rich. Society profited best, Kidd contended, when all children had a chance to develop their potential to the utmost and — starting from the same point — compete successfully with their fellow citizens. By equalizing the basic conditions of life and helping people to 'stand on their own feet', democracy — combined with huge space for contest, competition, and differentiation — provided, in Kidd's opinion, the most efficient system for recruiting skilled specialists, competent experts, and able elites, i.e. those individuals who should run the companies, direct the colleges, and rule the country.[21]

However, while Kidd recommended compensatory, competition-enhancing measures within his own society, he did not extend those considerations to societies in competition with his own society. Instead, he unsurprisingly argued, "'strength and energy of character, humanity, probity and integrity, and simple-minded devotion to conceptions of duty', distinguished the members of the Anglo-Saxon race. And it was the high ethical standard of social efficiency that justified the UK's benevolent rule over India and Egypt and the US's imperialistic aspirations in the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean."[22] By taking this tack, Kidd expresses the problem facing any attempted Darwinian approach to social evolution. What is in the interest of the overall competition is not necessarily in the interest of any individual competitor. Yet, even among the most dedicated of social Darwinists (for instance, Kidd), devotion to the survival of the overall competition often gives way to devotion to the survival of some competitor(s) over some other(s). As competition routinizes around perpetual winners and perpetual losers, inequality links to chauvinism and chauvinism to imperialism. When that happens, weak competitors are likely to survive.[23] Such intervention has no place among processes of "natural" social selection. However, the "naturalness" with which interference of this kind creeps into enacted social Darwinism virtually guarantees a spoiled competition every time. Considerations like these have prompted biologist Douglas Allchin to point out that not only was Darwin himself *not* a social Darwinist, social Darwinism has *nothing at all* to do with Darwin. Allchin demands fellow scientists openly challenge the phrase "social Darwinism" every time it is voiced in their presence.[24]

Certainly, perpetually (re)institutionalized inequality is how social Darwinism has played out for schools. As Laurie Rudman and Lina Saud explain, social Darwinism is marvelously well-designed for reinforcing structural inequalities of gender, race, class, etc. Social Darwinism

[20] Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey," 365.
[21] Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey," 365.
[22] Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey," 364. The quote within the quote is from Kidd, *Social Evolution*, 325.
[23] Barnett, "The Dynamics of Competitive Intensity," 144.
[24] Douglas Allchin, "Was Darwin a Social Darwinist? What Is a Proper Evolutionary View of Human Culture and Morality?" and "Social Un-Darwinism: How Does Society Relate to Nature in an Evolutionary Perspective?" *American Biology Teacher* (National Association of Biology Teachers) 69, no. 2 (January, 2007 and February, 2007): 49-51 and 113-115, respectively.

operates as a "system justification belief" by providing, first, a rationale for competition in the claim that competition is good for humankind because competition makes competitors stronger and, second, a mechanical explanation for the results of competition in the idea of natural selection.[25] Neither the rationale nor the justification is necessarily true, and both have recently been refuted by attempts such as No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top. These programs, designed to bring schools into competition with one another to decide who continues to receive federal funding and/or who will receive enhanced federal funding, have predictably failed many competing schools. The fatal flaw is to be found in the spirit of bad faith in which faulty "meritocracies" were built into the programs. Poorer schools tended to be penalized from the start of the competition for serving populations less ready for formal schooling than were students in schools in already better-off and better-educated parts of town.[26] Without competitiveness-enhancing compensations like Kidd described in initially proposing social Darwinism, the game was over before the game was afoot.

Kidd, of course, was not without critics. Most trenchant among them, John A. Hobson, an economist and journalist at the University of London, decried Kidd for assessing societal well-being in purely quantitative terms. Quality of life had to be brought into serious consideration, as well. As Knoll remarks, "For Hobson (in opposition to Kidd), social efficiency depended upon the limitation of competition, contest, and conflict and upon the realization of participation, co-operation, and unconditional solidarity." From Hobson's criticism grew a humanitarian interpretation of "social efficiency" to challenge social Darwinist interpretation of that idea. For humanitarians: "Social efficiency had nothing to do with struggle, survival, and the 'quantity of goods' but with peace, justice, and the 'quality of life.'"[27] William Bagley, one of the principal founders of the Essentialism movement in education, did much to systematize and promote the humanitarian point of view. Seemingly on a mission from 1909-1934, "He [Bagley] argued relentlessly against excessive individualism…. [Bagley] referred to the concept social efficiency-social service using different terms, such as simply social service or fidelity to humanity." Other phrases used by Bagley as synonyms for "social efficiency" included "moral character" and "social harmony."[28] Main themes expressed in Bagley's humanitarian synonyms for social efficiency find efficient summary in McLinn's concise description of social efficiency as "the all-important matter of developing the boy and girl into capable and efficient members of society, strong in initiative, willing in co-operation, ready in resource."[29] Despite holding some

[25] Laurie A. Rudman and Lina H. Saud, "Justifying Social Inequalities: The Role of Social Darwinism," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 46, no. 7 (July, 2020): 1139-1155. See Kurt W. Back, "Biological Models of Social Change," *American Sociological Review* 36, no. 4 (August, 1971): 660-667 for the claim that the mechanical nature of the explanations sought by social Darwinists for social phenomena are a main attraction of the thinking.
[26] Rodolfo Levya, "No Child Left Behind: A Neoliberal Repackaging of Social Darwinism," *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies* 7, no. 1 (June, 2009): 364-381 and Christopher Tienken, "Neoliberalism, Social Darwinism, and Consumerism Masquerading as School Reform," *Interchange* 43, no. 4 (May, 2013): 295-316.
[27] See Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey," 367 for both quotes in the paragraph.
[28] Null, "Social Efficiency Splintered," 103-104 and "William C. Bagley and the Founding of Essentialism: An Untold Story in American Educational History," *Teachers College Record* 109, no. 4 (April, 2007): 1013-1055. Also, see William C. Bagley, *The Educative Process* (New York: Macmillan, 1905): 58-59. The beginning and end of Bagley's crusade for social-efficiency as moral service to society are marked, respectively, by "Pedagogy of Morality and Religion as Related to Periods of Development," *Religious Education* 3 (April, 1909): 91-106 and *Education and Emergent Man: A Theory of Education with Particular Application to Public Education in the United States* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1934).
[29] Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey," 103-104 quotes C. B. McLinn, "The Social Side of High School Life," *Journal of Education* (1911), 345.

sway for some time, Bagley's idea of social efficiency as social service met an unhappy fate when it bifurcated into opposing lines of thought, one emphasizing associational aspects of social efficiency, the other emphasizing service aspects of social efficiency.

Bagley's idea of social service as broadly philanthropic in spirit was severely twisted out of shape by thinkers inclined towards a utilitarian understanding of social efficiency. Utilitarian appropriation of Bagley began with a redefinition of social service as vocational service: In Bobbitt's words, "Occupational labors clearly represent the basic service to humanity, the most fundamental social service."[30] New definition in hand, curriculum became mostly a matter of training students to do a job, keep the job, and advance in the job.[31] The nature of jobs to be planned for children in schools was roughly to parallel the design of jobs in the work world.[32] As industry became the inspiration for curriculum, Holt notes: "Industrial personnel expert Charles R. Mann stressed that 'the personnel game is the educational game ultimately,' and suggested a system whereby 'industry will be setting down specifications all the time, and schools will be using them all the time as instruments for the discovery and development of capacities in children."[33] On this model, schools were imagined as rightly transformed into sorting machines for productive employment of students.[34]

The planned transformation, however, was not without belligerence and remonstrance from the utilitarians. In what was designed to be an exchange of ideas, Bagley and David Snedden, a proponent of utilitarian social efficiency who was at the time Commissioner of Education for the State of Massachusetts, presented papers on their respective points of view at the 1914 meetings of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association held in St. Paul, Minnesota. The title of their session was "Fundamental Distinctions between Liberal and Vocational Education."[35] For his part, Bagley reiterated arguments about quantitative measures missing qualitative aspects of the good life and expressed new concerns that the task of sorting students into occupational categories would require for accurate placement an administrative maze of tests, trials, and interpretation of data collected in those assessments. For his part, Snedden avoided substantive issues and "painted Bagley as hopelessly old-fashioned, unscientific, and 'unprogressive.'"[36] Elsewhere, Snedden referred to his opponents in Bagley's

[30] Null, "Social Efficiency Splintered," 113 quoting Franklin Bobbitt, *The Curriculum* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1918), 55-56.
[31] Charles A. Prosser, [Executive Secretary of the NSPIE (National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education)], and Thomas H. Quigley, *Vocational Education in a Democracy*, revised edition (Chicago: American Technical Society, 1912/1950), 454-455 quoted in Null, "Social Efficiency Splintered," 173.
[32] Arthur G. Wirth, "Issues Affecting Education and Work in the Eighties: Efficiency versus Industrial Democracy, a Historical Perspective," *Teachers College Record* 79, no. 1 (September, 1977): 55-67, especially, 59.
[33] Mara Holt, p. 76 "Dewey and the "Cult of Efficiency": Competing Ideologies in Collaborative Pedagogies of the 1920s," *Journal of Advanced Composition* 14, no. 1 (Winter, 1994), 73-92 quoting from the final page of Charles R. Mann, "Scientific Personnel Work," *Business Management as a Profession*. ed. Henry C. Metcalf (Chicago: Shaw, 1927): 126-141.
[34] Classic discussions include Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America* (New York: Basic Books, 1976) and Raymond E. Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).
[35] David S. Snedden, "Fundamental Distinctions between Liberal and Vocational Education," and William C. Bagley, "Fundamental Distinctions between Liberal and Vocational Education," *Proceedings of the National Education Association* (Winona, MN: National Education Association, 1914): 150-161 and 161-170, respectively.
[36] Null, "Social Efficiency Splintered," 108 quoting Snedden, "Fundamental Distinctions between Liberal and Vocational Education," 158.

camp as "simple-lifers" and "romantic impracticalists" yearning for days gone by. Universal education in an age of industrialization required "…school grades, uniform textbooks, promotional examination, … strictly scheduled programs, mechanical discipline and hundreds of other mechanisms…."[37] Granted, life may become routinized at school and work under a system of utilitarian social efficiency, but specialization in production would promote longer, more comfortable, leisure-filled lives for all. For Snedden and the social efficiency utilitarians, the "American dream" was all about everyone sharing in an ever-increasing cycle of material prosperity.[38] Snedden similarly alienated John Dewey by saying in a letter published in the *New Republic* that he felt discouraged "to find Dr. Dewey apparently giving aid and comfort to opponents of a [namely, Snedden's] broader, richer, and more effective program of education." Dewey lashed back in his own letter in the same issue of *The New Republic*, explaining that the sort of vocational education he could support "is not one which will 'adapt' workers to the existing industrial regime… [but one] which will first alter the existing industrial system, and ultimately transform it." Snedden expressed only hurt and bewilderment at Dewey's reply.[39]

The seeming incapacity of proponents of utilitarian social efficiency to recognize the arguments of opponents as valid positions needing to be assessed and debated in an ongoing discussion points out a flaw in the theory itself. The theory of utilitarian social efficiency fails to recognize people as persons in their own right. Instead, the view recognizes people only as they are perceived to fit into the economic system. The system is not to be adapted to the students, but the students to the system. In this way, utilitarian approaches to social efficiency depersonalize schooling or, rather, make personalization of schooling a process of finding students' best fit within a preselected menu of options. Student preferences take a backseat to productivity needs. To fit students into the preset system of occupational categories, vocational education must teach students habits of thinking and habits of doing that make them the sort of persons they are destined to be in the workplace. Among these habits for most students, however, are obedience to and acceptance of orders from the boss. In a prototypical program set up at the Dunwoody Institute in Minnesota to retrain adult workers for industrial jobs, "Students punched in on time clocks, and instructors behaved like shop foremen rather than public school teachers. A no-nonsense attitude prevailed. If students were not punctual, orderly, and efficient, they were asked to leave."[40] The system of education envisioned by utilitarian social efficiency was permeated with a spirit of what Mara Holt calls "scientific paternalism, the expectation that those who are categorized by ability should be content with their categories because they are objectively determined, and therefore indisputable."[41] Paternalism of a more political nature also permeated the social utilitarian conception of the work of teachers. Writing to history teachers about the relation of their work to the examination and assessment of social values, Snedden advised that "the teacher should remember that he was a public servant and as such had the obligation to teach the 'opinions and valuation of the controlling majority.'"[42]

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[37] David Snedden, *Toward Better Educations* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College Press, 1931), 330-331 quoted in Wirth, "Issues Affecting Education and Work in the Eighties," 58.
[38] Arthur G. Wirth, p. 177 "Philosophical Issues in the Vocational-Liberal Studies Controversy (1900-1917): John Dewey vs. the Social Efficiency Philosophers," *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 8 (September, 1974): 169-182.
[39] See David Snedden and John Dewey in *The New Republic* 3 (5 May 1915), 40 and 42, respectively. Quoted in Wirth, "Philosophical Issues in the Vocational-Liberal Studies Controversy (1900-1917)," 176.
[40] Wirth, "Philosophical Issues in the Vocational-Liberal Studies Controversy (1900-1917)," 174.
[41] Holt, "Dewey and the "Cult of Efficiency," 85-86.
[42] Wirth, "Issues Affecting Education and Work in the Eighties," 59. The quote within the quotes is from p. 280 of

Updated developments in the theory of utilitarian social efficiency only make matters worse. Use of big data and artificial intelligence (AI) to select workplace production roles for students, argue researchers at the National Education Policy Center, creates a situation in which "even a person with knowledge of a black box AI program's initial coding cannot explain how it produced its results. Not surprisingly, machine learning inevitably produces outcomes that may be incomprehensible, untrue, or incorrect in a variety of unknowable ways. If such systems are used, neither teachers nor administrators will be able to understand, explain, or justify the conclusions the programs reach, much less audit or document their validity."[43] "Learning technologies" purporting to "personalize" schooling actually take education out of the hands of persons (students and teachers) and promote among students the corporatization of learning processes, goals, and outcomes. The system of utilitarian social efficiency stresses "human capital development, the expansion of data-driven instruction and decision-making, and a narrow conception of learning as the acquisition of discrete skills and behavior modification detached from broader social contexts and culturally relevant forms of knowledge and inquiry."[44] As paternalism spreads throughout the system of schooling and more and more major life decisions are made *for* rather than *by* individuals, feelings of powerlessness spread throughout the system, too. Snauwaert notes: "*Powerlessness* designates being in a social position where persons have limited power to decide the conditions of their lives. Persons in a position of powerlessness must *prove* their worth rather than having it recognized as inherent in their humanity" (18, emphasis in original). Recognition of worth as a person becomes perverted into recognition as a commodity of value to the production of goods and services. Such recognition tends to come with a hierarchical assessment of worth to the system rather than assumption of worth as an individual *simpliciter*. As the number of winners shrinks and the number of losers grows, recognition gets harder and harder to come by. Feelings of powerlessness predominate among the populace. Hopelessness may become rampant, a social problem expressed in Dante's *Inferno* when Virgil says of himself and others condemned to the first circle of hell:

> "Lost are we and are only so far punished,
> That without hope we live on in desire."[45]

Under such circumstances, hopes for creation of sustainable social structures tend to succumb to avaricious pursuit of short-term gain, attempts at fairness meet with frustration.

Discounting of their ideas by opposing theorists did not stop social efficiency humanitarians from continuing to develop their own theory. Humanitarian social efficiency proposed cooperation and community and opposed both the competition endorsed by Kidd and the elitist specialization favored by Snedden et al. In a felicitous phrase intended to complement the organization under whose auspices he completed his work on the history of social efficiency, Knoll, perhaps inadvertently, summed up the idea at the heart of humanitarian social efficiency

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David S. Snedden, "Teaching History in Secondary Schools," *History Teachers Magazine* 5 (1914), 277-282. On this issue also see Snedden, "Liberty of Teaching in the Social Sciences," *School and Society* 12 (1921), 185-186.

[43] Ben Williamson, Alex Molnar, and Faith Boninger, *Time for a Pause: Without Effective Public Oversight, AI in Schools Will Do More Harm Than Good* (Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center, 2024), 20. http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/ai

[44] Heather Roberts-Mahoney, Alexander J. Means, and Mark J. Garrison, "Netflixing Human Capital Development: Personalized Learning Technology and the Corporatization of K-12 Education," *Journal of Education Policy* (January, 2016): 1-16. The quote comes from p. 1.

[45] Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, Inferno, Canto 4, trans. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow https://www.logoslibrary.org/dante/comedy/inferno04.html

when he described his working conditions as "an atmosphere which stimulates friendship and thought."[46] In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey put the position in the following terms: "social efficiency as an educational purpose should mean cultivation of power to join freely and fully in shared or common activities." But Null attributes the best statement of the view — for its detail, comprehensiveness, and historicity — to Irving King's *Education for Social Efficiency*. There King forthrightly states humanitarian social efficiency's intent "…to make of them [students] not individual self-seekers, but *members of a real social community*, capable not merely of cooperating with others not merely for their own individual gain, but *also able to appreciate and strive for the welfare of the community*."[47] Humanitarian social efficiency seems to verge on a sort of prototypical Freiren conception of education "as a transformational mechanism to improve lives rather than a tool to train and inculcate children to imitate and be subservient to the dominant culture."[48] In a way, for the humanitarians among theorists of social efficiency, schools model an ideal conception of the welfare state. In an ideal welfare state, government action provides fluidity of opportunity without loss of security, enables habits of self-help, and builds supports for social soundness and preventions against social dysfunction.[49] The humanist program for social efficiency sees schools as places to develop sociality among students by upholding in word and in deed ideals of "communication and participation, interaction and co-operation, social intelligence and social service."[50]

To object that humanitarian social efficiency eliminates the possibility of competition from the model is to misunderstand competition. True, social humanism discredits social Darwinism's evolutionary war of all against all just as it rejects Snedden and Bobbitt's competition of many for the placement of a few in the upper echelons of hierarchical work structures. In place of these socially dysfunctional conceptions of competition, humanitarian theorists of social efficiency recommend competitions that are not merely healthy but are also healthful. Social efficiency humanitarians seek to take us beyond competitions that are going strong, whatever may be the (potentially ill-) effects of those competitions on competitors, to participation in active competitions that are strengthening competitors as they compete. Competition theorist Sheryle Drewe argues that competition is inherently positive when understood in terms of an original meaning of "to strive (alongside another) for the attainment of something." Drewe further suggests that this sort of competition expresses an ideal relation between teachers and students in their shared educational spaces as they develop skill in attainment of excellence.[51] Alice Kildea has developed a Model for the Conception of Competition useful for assessing the positive and

[46] For the quote see Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey," 384. Knoll makes the point about humanitarianism's opposition to social Darwinism and social efficiency utilitarianism on 380.
[47] Irving King, *Education for Social Efficiency: A Study in the Social Relations of Education* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1913), 138-139. Emphasis in original. Quoted in Null, "Social Efficiency Splintered," 107. The quote from Dewey may be found at Null, "Social Efficiency Splintered," 115 and at John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* in *John Dewey: The Middle Works, 1899–1924,* Vol. 9 (1916), Jo Ann Boydston, ed. (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press), 1980.), 113.
[48] Tienken, "Neoliberalism, Social Darwinism, and Consumerism Masquerading as School Reform," 295.
[49] See Johano Strasser, "Organized Solidarity between Social Darwinism and the Over-protective State: Toward a Modern Concept of the Welfare State," *PRAXIS International* 6 (April, 1986): 32-42.
[50] Knoll, "From Kidd to Dewey," 381.
[51] Sheryle Bergmann Drewe, "Competing Conceptions of Competition: Implications for Physical Education," *European Physical Education Review*, 4, no. 1 (1998): 5-20. Although Drewe frames her argument specifically for Physical Education classes, the same applies to other academic areas. Where students and teachers are viewed as striving together for mastery of course material competition is both healthy and healthful. For the word history of 'competition' see the entry in the *Online Etymology Dictionary* at https://www.etymonline.com/word/competition

negative effects and outcomes of competitions. Much depends on the theory and working definitions that frame the competition: zero-sum, two-way, many-winner, win-win, etc.[52] The conceptual framework of the competition identifies what counts as fairness in the competition. In answer to the question, "Why be moral?" business ethicists have discussed the possibilities of reframing the idea of competition in business. John Corvino sees the question, "Why be moral?" as likely unanswerable for businesspeople until corporate reform takes place.[53] Such reform, argues LaRue Hosmer, requires as a beginning point of consideration that "Trust, commitment, and effort on the part of all of the stakeholders are essential for long-term corporate success."[54] At the macro-economic level, Eric Ricker sees as crucial to humanistic corporate reform a move away from economic growth as a guiding principle of capitalist competition to a conception of corporate success as economic development. Whatever the rate of economic growth, economic development aims at production of a culturally fulfilling and materially satisfying life among a population. Economic growth, however, can be at a high rate but run on the exploitation of natural resources and human beings, which is the antithesis of economic development.[55] "Healthful competition," then, is the brief, humanitarian social efficiency answer to the skeptical challenge to "Why be moral?"

To object that humanitarian social efficiency offers only ethical idealism when what we need is moral realism is simply to restate a fundamental problem of moral philosophy: the distinction between moral theory and moral motivation. Once you know what it means to be moral, you are left with the problem of how to get people to act in accord with the moral code. As David Hume infamously describes the difficulty, "It is not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger."[56] But not only does the motivation to be moral lie beyond reason, the world also seems resistant to moral behavior. Applying that point to business ethics, Edmund Byrne fears that, guided as business practice is by social Darwinist thinking and military-style strategizing, "Business ethics will remain futile, unfortunately, so long as its practitioners assume a peacetime state of affairs and businesses assume a state of war."[57] So, what can be done to answer the priority challenge to "Why be moral?" What will it take to get the morality of peace — equality, recognition, reciprocity, and impartiality — working in a world that sees itself in a state of war? Enter Snauwaert. We have to teach peace not as the absence of violence but as the presence of justice — expressed in the equality, recognition, reciprocity, and impartiality we feel at work in our lives and the lives of others (2). When people form emotional attachment to peacemaking by seeing it work to the benefit of all at school in their social interactions and academic inquiries, peace education will have helped produce world peace. Snauwaert is right that education needs to be hard at work designing curriculum and delivering lessons that are most likely to incline people to live

[52] Alice E. Kildea, "Competition: A Model for Conception," *Quest* 35, no. 2 (!983): 169-181.
[53] John Corvino, "Reframing 'Morality Pays': Toward a Better Answer to 'Why Be Moral? in Business," *Journal of Business Ethics* 67, no. 1 (August, 2006): 1-14.
[54] LaRue Tone Hosmer, "Why Be Moral? A Different Rationale for Managers," *Business Ethics Quarterly* 4, no. 2 (April, 1994): 191-204, 191 for the quote.
[55] Eric W. Ricker, "Economic Thought and Educational Policy Making: An Historical Perspective," *The Journal of Educational Thought (JET) / Revue de la Pensée Éducative* 14, no. 3 (December, 1980): 168-186. See 180 for the quote.
[56] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896/1978), 416 http://files.libertyfund.org/files/342/0213_Bk.pdf
[57] Edmund F. Byrne, "Give Peace a Chance: A Mantra for Business Strategy," *Journal of Business Ethics* 20, no. 1 (May, 1999, Part 2): 27-37, 27 for the quote.

amicably together. In coming up with a plan to teach peace, Snauwaert breaks the circle typically stymying answers to the question, "Why be moral?" His curriculum inculcates moral motivation independently of but collaterally along with growing conceptual awareness that society functions optimally when all are moral together. Education is a way to inculcate morality as a second human nature. While moral sense theorists are wrong that humans are innately oriented to sensing that the moral thing to do is what *must* be done, Snauwaert rescues the theory by arguing that a moral sense can be instilled in humans through peace education. On Snauwaert's view, school is a place where everyone needs to have the chance to learn and share the human joy of doing moral things.

Educational Abundance

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