TABOO

The Journal of Culture and Education

Volume 22, Number 2, Summer 2024

Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education
Volume 22, Number 2, Summer 2024

Publisher:
Alan H. Jones, Caddo Gap Press
3145 Geary Boulevard, PMB 275
San Francisco, California 94118 USA
415-666-3012
alanhjones@caddogap.com
www.caddogap.com

ISSN 1080-5400

Table of Contents

Introduction:
A Note... 3
Shirley R. Steinberg

bell hooks Three Years on From Her Passing 5
Peter Mayo

Insights From Educators:
Navigating the Technology Landscape in K-12 Schools 13
Giuliana Cicinelli & Leelan Farhan

Western Hospitality's Notions of a Good Human:
Exclusion Perpetuated Through Urban Discourses 25
Teresa Anne Fowler & Sylvie Roy

Engaging Undergraduate Science Students Through Hip-Hop:
Battle Rap as Revolutionary Science Instruction 50
Jamie Parker

The Self-Reflexive Religious Subject:
A Habermas Analysis of German Islamic Religion Textbooks 81
Kemal Inal

Tale of Two Women of Color in Academia 102
Elma Kaiser & Zakia Clay

Critical Pedagogy, De-MAGA-fication,
and the Struggle for Democratic Life 112
Eric J. Weiner

Tradition as Transformation:
The Role of Pashtun Hujra in Conflict Resolution,
Peacebuilding, and Social Change 128
Aamir Jamal, Omer Jamal, & Khawaja Naveed

Editors and Editorial Board ..... frontmatter

Guidelines for Authors 144

Subscription Form for *Taboo* 146

Introduction: A Note...

Shirley R. Steinberg

I can't recall the exact date we launched *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education.* Strikes me that it was mid-1990s, it was Peter Lang Publishing's first attempt at printing an academic journal. Joe Kincheloe started *Taboo* with me, the idea of creating a critical journal, one that was committed to social justice and radical pedagogies was incredibly energizing, as was combining education with cultural studies. We launched *Taboo* in the exhibit hall of AERA, with great ceremony, we wheeled out a wire bookshelf packed with black coffee mugs branded with *Taboo.*

Taboo was one of the first journals in education with a completely social theoretical structure and content. As the journal grew, we became friends and colleagues with our contributors, branching off to books, conferences, and grant writing. After several years of the journal, Lang sold it to Alan Jones, owner and publisher at Caddo Gap Press, and a terrific human being. The journal grew, and morphed, often highlighting doctoral students and opened up to different subject areas and constructs. After Joe's death in 2009, it was difficult for me to continue to edit the journal without my beloved partner and co-editor. Diifferent academics edited and published *Taboo* for several years. It became apparent last year that it was time to come back to *Taboo*, freshening the journal and co-editing with J. Cynthia McDermott.

While the original mandates of *Taboo* are still in place, Cynthia and I have decided to publish special issues at least once or twice a year interspersed with

Shirley R. Steinberg is a professor in the Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. She is the founding editor and current co-editor of Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Edcuation. Email address: msgramsci@gmail.com

non-topical volumes, reflecting general topics. Our first issue since becoming co-editors was edited by Cynthia and Adam F. C. Fletcher: a unique Spring 2024 Issue on Adultism. This editorial introduces our second issue: a bricolage of unique pieces. Our commitment to *Taboo is* at least two issues a year, for 2024, we are planning four to give the updated journal a new start. Cynthia's and Adam's fall 2024 issue will focus on democracy and the year-end winter 2024 issue I will edit will reflect upon the genocide of Palestine and Gaza (see below for our emails if you wish to place an article, narrative, or creative piece in either or both journals).

It's such an honor and joy to be back with *Taboo* and to welcome you to read, disseminate, disagree with, or champion our dear *Taboo.* To our new readers: welcome, welcome, welcome! And to our longtime readers: thanks for your continued loyalty.

May we see better days, keeping our hearts and mind with those who suffer the needless effects of arrogance, fascism, genocide, and toxic dominance. As Joe Kincheloe would say at the end of his speeches and classes: *Peace be with you.*

—Shirley R. Steinberg

Fall 2024 Democracy issue: contact Cynthia at mcdprof@hotmail.com

Winter 2024 Genocide issue: Contact Shirley at msgramsci@gmail.com

bell hooks Three Years on from Her Passing

Peter Mayo

Continue to rest in peace, Gloria Watkins alias bell hooks, almost three years since many colleagues and I were stunned by the devastating news of your departure. Like leaves to trees in autumn are we to life; it sheds us each in turn. It shed you suddenly, you who have made many of us learn to appreciate life itself from different angles and from different standpoints, your voice making us wary of intersectional crossroads. You captured the minds and hearts of many with your simple but not simplistic writing in *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* (hooks, 1989) with its lovely lucid essays on various topics and the pain felt with regard to multiple oppressions. They comprise the intersections of race, gender (including sexual orientation and the scourge of homophobia) and social class. The same applies to your acclaimed *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre* (hooks, 2014), arguing for intersectionality with other oppressions to do justice to the struggles of women. You found a kindred spirit in Paulo Freire, whom your comrade, the Rev. Cornel West (1993) proclaimed an 'organic intellectual,' despite what you call his (Freire's) "phallocentric paradigm of liberation" (hooks, 1993, 1994b). The two books by him you cite over and over are *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Education for Critical Consciousness*. Later, for instance in *Teaching Community* (hooks, 2003), you bring other more recent texts from Freire into the discussion, notably *Pedagogy of the Heart* (Freire, 2016) or, to cite it in its Portuguese original, *Sombre desta mangueira*. You never managed to do a 'talking book' with Paulo even though you admitted that this would have been

Peter Mayo is a professor and UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education at the University of Malta, Msida,Malta. He has published on critical pedagogy, sociology (social theory, sociology of education and culture), adult education, museums, cultural studies, and fine arts. Email address: peter.mayo@um.edu.mt

a consummation devoutly to be wished, to repeat Shakespeare's phrase reserved for Hamlet, given that you love poetry and majored in English at Stanford. What a great conversation this would have been. You took certain white feminists to task with your first *Ain't I a Woman* (hooks, 1981) which must have incurred the wrath of many but would have won the admiration of others. I recall your writing that you had a hard time finding a publisher for this book which came with the subtitle, "Black Women and Feminism." This struck me as a very powerful, impassioned piece which belied the young age when you wrote it. You come across as unsparing and uncompromising in your critique of everyone you target, some you trounce with devastating, scathing, but cogently argued criticisms of their assumptions and assertions. Others you deal with more prudently and with the respect they deserve, as they are strong allies in the struggle against domination by imperialist white structures, capitalist structures at that. These structures have been relegating many to disposable beings, denied their humanity. If there could have been any doubt as to what constituted one of the greatest examples in history of oppression, then your erudite and historically informed account of the slave trade, dispels this. It is a tour de force of cultural history highlighting its strong sinister side. One feels the weight of history that you carried on your back as a Black working-class woman. It reinforced my view, if it needed any reinforcement, that the much glorified cultural "achievements" of Europe, the continent from which I hail, is heavily tainted by human blood and degradation. And slavery has left its deep-rooted scars as shown by the novels of Toni Morrison among others (see the complex *Beloved* and the exposure of the international and transnational slave effort in, for instance, *A Mercy*)—the subject of your doctoral thesis. This aspect of international history reveals a world in which certain humans were and still are projected and treated as 'subhuman,' whose lives are meaningless and whose identities are buried in the heaps of many dead bodies. This, lest we forget, was the case of millions of Jews during the Holocaust under Nazi ruled Germany. It was, and still is, the case of the Indigenous of many Settler Colonial territories. It was and is the case of many Palestinians from the late 1940s onward and today. As I write, their bodies pile up or are scattered beneath the rubble in Gaza, also victims of Settler Colonial rule and made to suffer 'collective punishment.' The same applies to close relatives of the many victims of Hamas's terrorist attack on October 7th, 2023. There is a deep-seated antagonistic disposition on both sides. Your overall message, however, is one of hope, an 'Educated hope' as Giroux would say, not the forlorn hope of the two tramps at the end of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.

Ain't I a Woman might have started as a piece of undergraduate writing, as you state time and time again, and can well be dismissed by detractors for your being too gung ho, but I find it very revealing and instructive in its vast expanse of coverage and for its pain which underlines the passion with which you write. And yet all this is tempered by your deep sense of humanity and writing with love

which enables you to transcend any sectarian politics to reach out. You are not among those who simply construct alterity in terms of whiteness or masculinity. You transcend the sectarianism of the early Black Power movement and the initial uncompromising stance by Malcolm X. Your political end is the healthy utopia of people 'breaking bread,' a Christian metaphor (Last Supper, Emmaus) for communion (hooks, 2002; hooks & West, 2016), predicated on feminist love, where one learns from the other, from different histories inscribed in our bodies as persons who, though different, are not or do not remain antagonistic. The extension of the hand to people, if genuine dialogue is involved, does not entail eschewing the troubling and unsettling questions concerning the politics and historical residues of difference. These include the many contradictions that you expose in various formats. As cultural critic (hooks, 2004a), you demonstrate these, in paintings, especially the expressionist art of New Yorker Jean Michelle Basquiat, and films. This highlighting of social contradictions, both deliberately, critically exposed by the artist (e.g., Basquiat), or those of which the artist or critic (Camille Paglia) is perceived by you to be guilty in a white colonising way (superficially sounding radical while defending the Canon as if its very existence is threatened) is a strong feature of your contribution to cultural politics and to Cultural Studies. This is an area which, together with Women's Studies, and, I would add, post-9/11/2001, Middle East and Postcolonial Studies, is viewed with suspicion and disdain by traditional academics or cultural custodians (often self-styled?). You however underline the potential that Cultural Studies has to help us read the world critically and in a manner that can be liberating: Reading cultural works critically for their politics of representation, contestation and renewal, as "the practice of freedom."

These are recurring points in your work but are highly concentrated in such volumes as *Outlaw Culture* (hooks, 2004 a). Once again, it is not only in white supremacist cultural productions that you found great occlusions and contradictions but also in works directed by African American icons such as Spike Lee. They are also evident in your very insightful and friendly exchange with Ice Cube, the well-known rapper and star in *Boyz n'd Hood*, directed by the late John Singleton and launched in 1991. I recall watching it on television a year later, when I was concluding my doctoral residence period in Toronto. It was precisely the time when I was delving deeply into your work. I first came across your name in early 1991 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE/University of Toronto). You were all the rage then as a strong anti-racist movement made its presence felt at the institution. Your name, together with those of your friend and *aide de camp*, Chandra Mohanty, whose allure took you to Oberlin College, Angela Davis, *noblesse oblige*, and Stuart Hall constituted 'hallowed territory.' I am not sure you would have blushed on hearing this as you do not exactly hold back, in your essays, from asserting your writing prowess. Of course, you often do this to highlight the way you were often badly treated by teachers in mixed race schools, following your earlier different, more encouraging and morale boosting

experience in an all-black school, when there was still school segregation. This reminds me of certain pro-segregation feminist arguments that girls tend to get a raw deal in co-ed schools. Segregation, as you strongly point out, persists in various ways, subtle and overt, even following legislation to end it. *Legal* equality never translates on its own into *real* equality.

You must have ruffled feathers with your challenging intellectual attitude and behaviour. Despite your cult status among students in Toronto, I also came across a white feminist professor, whom I greatly respect, who took umbrage with some of the things you wrote in your first book (hooks, 1981). Of course, the title of this book you borrowed, out of deep respect, from Sojourner Truth, the abolitionist and campaigner for civil rights who escaped, with her infant daughter, from slavery and whom you quote extensively in this and other works. Though, I repeat, you provide a *tour de force*, you at times went 'on the rampage.' You somewhat mellowed in your later works which are nevertheless imbued with that radical edge that is your hallmark, tempered by your strong overall streak of love of life and humanity. Your revolutionary commitment is an act of love, as you express throughout your work but which is boldly expressed in the title of one of your more recently republished books (hooks, 2018), with its echoes, in its title, of Antony and Cleopatra in John Dryden's Restoration drama (*All for Love*), but which goes beyond the romantic as it entails healing and redemption, providing a vision of a world not as it is but as it can and should be. It also involves being of service to others, in a world, you painfully remind us, that tends to treat such service, and those who offer it, with contempt (hooks, 2003, p. 83). Gone are the days when vocations such as nursing were esteemed and socially rewarded not in pecuniary terms but, in London, England, at the height of the NHS, with different acts of recognition, such as cab drivers ferrying nurses for free. Despite your assertiveness, there is an openness and sense of yearning for human connection in your work which cuts across race and gender lines. Yet this, as you experienced, judging from your narratives, was not always appreciated both when you occupied subordinate roles as a student in traditional classrooms, developing enduring friendships with chambermaids during holiday periods on campus, when you could not afford the fare to travel home, down South (hooks, 1988), and even later as a fully-fledged academic.

Certain white professors you came across at university provided bitter chastening experiences with their 'white supremacist' self-fulfilling prophecies about Black and working-class students at elite 'Ivy league' institutions and their Western U.S. equivalents. You also had the added dimension of being a woman who would not passively accept things without problematizing. Talking back (hooks, 1988) or being assertive as a student in graduate class can prove too much for certain white dons, who have a strong sense of entitlement and consider only a special breed of student (invariably white and middle class with unmistakably bourgeois demeanour) as the 'ideal type.' Despite my shades of whiteness, as a

Mediterranean person, I too faced some of these professors, often among those who were full of substance but arrogant or others who were suspect, without command of the material they taught, and like those professors to whom you alluded, relied on the same old notes they had been using for several years; like leaves in the Fall, the paper turned yellow. I assume the feeling of being threatened by students, perceived as 'upstarts' or who would, wittingly or innocently, show up professors for their mediocrity, is writ large when racial differences are involved. These personal anecdotes from your life trajectory give your writing the flavour of a compelling and instructive narrative. Your attempts at rupturing the codes of white bourgeois-conditioned academia are there for all to see, though they do not detract from your rigorous approach to intellectual life. I would not be surprised however to hear of the academic top brass at universities complaining, as they did to Cornel West at his previous 'Ivy League' university, that your output is not academic enough, despite being a best-selling read, affirming you as a public intellectual. Given your stature as such an intellectual communicating organically with a large audience, in the age of the so-called 'impact factor,' you could have always, as Cornel West did, given them the two-finger salute and move elsewhere.

Your interweaving of theoretical musings with personal biography is the hallmark of your style which makes your work come alive, or, more accurately, provide the grounded anecdotal personal narrative foundation for your conceptualisations. So, you ruffled feathers as student, as academic who stood up for students against dominating colleagues, as anti-racist feminist activist, pulling up fellow African American men for their sexism, as a discerning critic finding fault with political and cultural icons such as Malcolm X and as an African-American woman who would denounce those feminists who acted racist while criticising patriarchy, therefore keeping the White Imperial Capitalist structure intact. And yet, once again, you were always open to dialogue, motivated by love (hooks, 2002, 2018) for humanity and led by a vision that transcends identity politics and social class, gender, and racial oppression. You were open to engaging with women and men who were white and worked hard to unlearn their privilege and to counter gender and racial oppression. Unlike Malcolm X who, as portrayed by Denzel Washington in Spike Lee's film, uttered a curt "nothing" to the young white woman, who asked what she can do to join the black liberation struggle, you saw potential for the "practice of freedom" among people socially located differently from you. In this respect, you emulated Malcolm X who, as you write, later recanted from his earlier rigid position, having been touched by meeting Muslims of different colour and nationality in Mecca during the Hajj. Races can mix and do so in a genuine spirit of conviviality and solidarity, one of the recurring themes in your work, well-articulated in *Teaching Community* (hooks, 2003). The search for education and cultural work, governed by love, in its wider humanistic and visionary sense, brings back one of your major sources of inspiration who also spoke the same emancipatory language. Paulo Freire wanted to be remembered as one who,

like you, loved and that is why he wanted to be an educator. This assertion could well have been his own epitaph.

Teaching to Transgress (hooks, 1994b), with your landmark essay on Freire, first published around the same time in a memorable anthology of essays on the Brazilian educator (*Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter*) by Peter McLaren and Peter Leonard (1993), can be treated as *de rigueur* when analysing Freire. What a coincidence you departed in Freire's birth centenary year. You broached many topics such as the blonde, white feminine hegemony embraced by Madonna which you piercingly decried, in *Outlaw Culture* (hooks, 2004a), for its politics of representation, which contrasts sharply, in your view, with her early daredeviltry. When I first started reading *Teaching Community* (hooks, 2003), while teaching summer school as Visiting Professor at University of British Columbia, Vancouver, I felt you wrote one book too many. I felt you used up too much space telling us how tired you are and that you needed a break. The book itself had initially struck me, not without a possibly perceived, in some circles, 'touch of malice,' as living testimony to your being spot on in this regard. My reaction, at the time, was that the book culture industry must have 'got to you' by then, in the same way it could have got to Paulo Freire. I now hold up my hand to say that I was mistaken. I caught hold of the book recently and reread from the beginning rather than took off from where I left it fourteen years ago in the solitude of my room in Vancouver. I am glad I did as I came to appreciate the point you were making about teacher burn out and admired your taking an unpaid 'sabbatical' leave which rejuvenated and refreshed you to seek other publics. The later chapters provided fresh insights regarding the challenges faced by those who treat education and cultural work as an act of love. Again, your later works are full of love for humanity and empathy with those who suffer as marginalised. You follow the School of Barbiana motto, I Care, as opposed to what its director, Don Lorenzo Milani denounces as the Fascist maxim of *me ne frego* (I do not care). And you left this world at a time when Fascism and a new authoritarianism is on the rise and has been so for years.

Exemplary as a writer in English, you have been translated into several languages and your impact can be felt well outside the U.S. and Britain to include Italy and Paris, the former as indicated by the Universitas Alma Mater Studiorum, Bologna electing to confer on you an *honoris causa* degree (which made you miss the Pedagogy/Theatre of the Oppressed Conference, alongside Paulo Freire in Omaha, Nebraska, March, 1996) and the latter through the setting up of the bell hooks-Paulo Freire Institute.

I saw and felt first hand your charisma and magnetic power at a talk you gave in 1992 at York University in Toronto where several halls were packed to the rafters. Reading your work at the time, I simply had to be there, making the long trek by metro and bus from downtown Toronto to the contained campus that is York University. It was one of the highlights of my stint in Toronto. You reminisced on your youth and on Malcolm X that day and the latter's legacy. Spike Lee had

upped the ante with brief quips on his then eagerly awaited film, commented on earlier. I recall your insisting that a person from the audience, who struck a discordant note met by a chorus of boos, had the right to speak, a gesture that enhanced your genuinely democratic credentials. It confirmed what you, as revealed in your narratives, are all about: always extending your hand to anyone willing to engage and perhaps change as a person in process, the same way your writing reveals your having been a person in process. Again, we are here speaking of people who are different but not antagonistic, as Freire would say.

I followed you and heard your soft voice over and over on YouTube many years later. These included your recorded conversations at the New School in New York City. Despite your fame as writer and speaker, you seem to have kept your feet firmly on the ground keeping 'closer to home' as you say in one of my favourite essays from *Talking Back* (hooks, 1988). It is an essay I shared regularly with prospective teachers in an undergraduate course unit I taught in Sociology of Education at my home university (the University of Malta) titled 'Language, Identity and Difference.'

Of course, it is that stage in my life—I turn 69 as I write—when I see family, friends, and icons move on from being around in this beautiful but terrible world of ours where forgiveness, in the Martin Luther King and Madiba (Nelson Mandela) sense, is a desideratum. Hope, Healing, Love and Service are key elements in your cultural and pedagogical work. You are for empowerment of the downtrodden, the oppressed but not in a manner, as you point out, that marked the old black power, blacks for and unto themselves. You transcend these divisions, any type of 'mind forged manacles' be it 'self-harm,' as you call out, the 'inner plantation' of mental slavery, in Eric Williams' terms, or 'the oppressor within,' in Audrey Lorde's phrase. Yours is a visionary politics that rise above Capitalist supremacist culture of domination, which also impinges on the oppressed who, in Hegel's Master-Slave dialectical relationship, echoed by Audrey Lorde, as just indicated, and Paulo Freire's discussion of the internalisation by the oppressed of the oppressor image (Freire's quote in this regard is surprisingly missing from your work, especially your discussion of the scars of slavery in hooks 1981), projects a utopian vision of human beings living in communion (hooks, 2003) with others, breaking bread with them (hooks & West, 2016).

I imagine you in the celestial pantheon exchanging views and exuding your loving warmth with Audrey Lorde, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, James Baldwin, Stuart Hall, Thich Nhat Hanh, Aretha Franklin, Paulo Freire, and the great maternal grandmother whose name you adopted as pseudonym and wrote in small case throughout as a sign of deference to her. You shall always be loved as you yourself loved (hooks, 2002, 2018). Rest in power!

References

Freire, P. (2016). *Pedagogy of the heart (*Reprint edition*).* Bloomsbury Academic.

hooks, b (1981). *Ain't I a woman: Black women and feminism*. South End Press.

hooks, b. (1988.) *Talking back. Thinking feminist, thinking black*. Between the Lines.

hooks, b. (1993). bell hooks speaking about Paulo Freire. The man and his works. In P. McLaren, & P. Leonard, (Eds.) *Paulo Freire. A critical encounter*, Routledge.

hooks, b. (1994a). *Outlaw culture. Resisting representations*. Routledge.

hooks, b. (1994b). *Teaching to transgress*. Routledge.

hooks b. (2002). *Communion. The female search for love. (Love song to the nation)*. William Morrow Paperbacks.

hooks, b. (2003). *Teaching community. A pedagogy of hope*. Routledge.

hooks, b. (2014) *Feminist theory. From margin to center.* Routledge.

hooks, b. (2015). *Talking back, thinking feminist, thinking black* (revised edition). Routledge.

hooks, b. (2018) *All about love*. *New visions.* William Morrow Paperbacks.

hooks, b., & West, C. (2016). *Breaking bread. Black insurgent intellectual life*. Routledge.

McLaren, P., & Leonard, P. (Eds.) (1993). *Paulo Freire. A critical encounter*. Routledge.

West, C (1993). Preface. In P. McLaren & P. Leonard (Eds.) *Paulo Freire. A critical encounter*. Routledge.

Insights From Educators: Navigating the Technology Landscape in K-12 Schools

Giuliana Cucinelli & Leelan Farhan

Abstract

Despite the rise of technology's ubiquity, Canadian teachers are still struggling to find the best, most curriculum-enriching and supportive methods to integrate technology into their classrooms. Building on previous research that lists lack of timely training, proper devices, fear of digital distraction, and sufficient technical support for teachers as reasons for this technological stagnation, this exploratory study delves into the perspective and experiences of 16 teachers using technology in their classrooms. The results reveal that teachers cited several disadvantages and advantages to technology integration. Moreover, our findings reinforce previous research by highlighting the primary drawbacks of technology in the classroom as identified by these teachers: limited availability of technology, teachers' lack of expertise in utilizing technology effectively, and the issue of digital distractions. Additionally, our research findings uncover novel aspects that warrant further investigation. Specifically, teachers identified previously unexplored barriers, including privacy concerns, lack of alignment with the curriculum, and students' proficiency with technology. These emerging areas provide valuable insights for future exploration in the field. In addition to explaining the results of these interviews in depth, the authors also provide an innovative way for readers to experience the interviews through kinetic-type videos.

Giuliana Cucinelli is an associate professor and Leelan Farhan is a Ph.D. candidate, both in the Educational Technology Program in the Department of Education at Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Cucinelli's research-creation program focuses on the social, cultural, and educational impacts of technology. Farhan's interests are at the intersection of technology, communities, social justice, and policy. Email addresses: giuliana.cucinelli@concordia.ca & leelan.farhan@concordia.ca

Keywords: classroom technology, technology integration, technological pedagogical knowledge, digital distraction, technology access, technology policy

Introduction

As K-12 teachers are increasingly encouraged to integrate technology in their classrooms for pedagogical purposes, the educational system faces a mass critical need to aid our teachers with effective professional development and technical support. Over the years, Canadian school boards and schools have taken the initiative to integrate and provide modern technology in their schools in the form of Smart Boards and high-end tablets (Saine, 2012; Martin, Shaw, & Daughenbaugh, 2014; Ruggiero & Mong, 2015). However, one of the major barriers to proper adoption continues to be a lack of technical assistance and pedagogical training offered to our teachers, preventing them from thriving in a technologically mediated classroom (Martin, Shaw, & Daughenbaugh, 2014). The argument here is not that technology should be integrated in all classrooms, at all times. Instead, we aim to collectively try to find what is referred to in economics as a "sweet spot"—setting a policy that provides the optimal balance. Several teachers interviewed in this study are at the cutting edge of technology integration in their classrooms. However, many of them are paving their own ways and methods, without much support, and often with a steep learning curve and many trials and tribulations before a successful balance is achieved.

In this article, we aim to explore if, and how, teachers are integrating technology in their K-12 classrooms. We identify a series of advantages and limitations, as well as elucidate what tactics teachers are employing to cope with them. The next section provides a brief overview of the current research on technology integrations in the classroom with a specific focus on teachers' perspectives, knowledge, and competencies. The paper will then discuss our interview methodology, followed by an analysis of our interviews and examples of technology integration in classrooms. Furthermore, to introduce a new form of knowledge mobilization, we embed three kinetic typography videos that present the teacher interviews overlaid with motion and text to express their ideas. Kinetic typography is a form of animated letter and word that mixes motion, words, shapes, and text to convey an idea, message or feeling.

Literature Review

Although access to technology in schools has increased with the rise of its ubiquity, there still seems to be a lack of actual utilization of technologies in the classroom. Namely, while schools are increasing the number of computers, tablets, and other digital devices available for classroom use, many through "one-to-one" device/laptop programs and "bring-your-own-device" initiatives (Alberta Education, 2018), there has not been an increase of teachers using these devices

to enhance curriculum (Weston & Bain, 2010; Preston et al., 2015). For example, technologies are being used in the classroom for primarily special needs and increasing accessibility (Campigotto, McEwen, & Epp, 2013; Burke & Hughes, 2017), but not as much for regular integration into various curricula through thoughtful assignments (i.e., projects that necessitate and teach through technology, such as a podcast or video).

Recent research has indicated that there may be four main reasons for teacher's under-utilization of technology: (1) 'digital distraction'—teachers fear that children will use the devices for non-academic purposes, and thus be distracted (Duncan, Hoekstra, & Wilcox, 2012; Grimshaw, Cardoso, & Collins, 2017; Tondeur et al., 2017); (2) teachers' perspective towards digital devices in the classroom (Ertmer et al., 2012; Ifenthaler & Schweinbenz, 2013); (3) their knowledge of and competency with educational technologies (Daniels et al., 2014; DeCoito & Richardson, 2018); and (4) lack of access to appropriate classroom technologies (Daniels et al., 2014). In this literature review, we briefly address these reasons.

Digital Distraction

Although devices such as interactive whiteboards have seen a wide classroom integration, it has been less so for personal devices such as tablets, laptops and cellphones. This is mostly out of a fear of 'digital distraction' – even if the device is meant to be used for classroom purposes (McCoy, 2016; Delello et al., 2020). Indeed, Delello et al.'s (2020) exploratory study on high school educators' beliefs about digital distraction found that 80% of 225 educators who completed the survey believed that students were multitasking during class time. Further, 61% of these teachers felt that multitasking was impairing the students' ability to learn (Delello et al., 2020). McCoy's (2016) study on students' use of digital devices found that students used their devices only 11 times on average per day for non-class purposes. So, while devices are used for non-class purposes, educators seem to misperceive how often that happens, and what that means for students' learning. More importantly, these misconceptions and fears drive teachers' and administrators' decisions on whether or not to permit digital devices in the classroom at all (McCoy, 2016; Delello et al., 2020).

Teachers' Perspectives on Digital Devices

Since there does not seem to be a consensus in the literature concerning whether technology training or perspectives on technology are greater predictors of teachers' device integration into the classroom, they both likely contribute. For example, Moore-Hayes (2011) found that teachers' perspectives towards technology integration may be a more significant predictor of teachers' preparedness than training. Regardless of the type of training, teachers generally felt the same about how prepared they were to bring incorporate technology into their class-

rooms. Namely, when teachers were asked a pre-survey, then trained, and asked a post-survey, they felt equally prepared, or still not prepared, after the intervention. This is likely due to their perception of future support, or when the devices would be integrated. Indeed, Martin, Shaw, and Daughenbaugh (2014) found that teachers felt underprepared not due to a lack of training, but rather when the timing of the training happened. Many teachers stated that the training happened so infrequently and was so far removed from when devices—such as SMARTBoards—were introduced into the classroom, that it rendered the training's effect moot (Martin, Shaw, & Daughenbaugh, 2014; DeCoito & Richardson, 2018). This finding is bolstered by DeCoito and Richarson (2018), who also found that teachers cited the "lag" between technological training sessions and actual device implementation as a strong barrier to integration.

Teachers' Knowledge and Competency with Digital Devices

When asked about their "technological pedagogical knowledge" or competency, teachers are likely to assess themselves very positively (DeCoito & Richardson, 2018). In fact, in the DeCoito and Richardson's (2018) study, 100% of teachers surveyed had positive responses to their "technological pedagogical knowledge". The likelihood that all teachers *truly* are fully competent is slim. It is more likely that this is a reflection of their perception of their teaching practice. Indeed, the same study noted that teachers cited a "lack of awareness or familiarity" with technology as a prominent challenge (DeCoito & Richardson, 2018). As such, there is a clear discrepancy between teachers' perceived knowledge with technology, and actual knowledge when it comes to implementing it in the classroom.

Similarly, Saxena's (2017) literature review on teachers' information and communication technology (ICT) competency reveals that the biggest barrier to classroom ICT integration is a "lack of knowledge/skill". As such, we should not be quick to discount the importance of teachers' continued pedagogical engagement with technology. What is most interesting is that the literature shows that teachers' assessment of their technological knowledge and competency is closely related to perception.

Lack of Accessible Technologies

Another perspective for why technology may be utilized by teachers in some schools but not others is due to a lack of accessible, usable devices (Daniels et al., 2104). In terms of accessibility to technology, Daniels et al. (2014) found that many teachers struggled to incorporate technology in the classroom due to the school's lack of access, the quality of technology provided, and sufficient availability for the class. Further, despite efforts to increase student engagement through technology, the pilot program saw very little change in both student engagement and teacher use. An additional way in which technology is inaccessible

to teachers for use is through the physical architecture of the school itself, such as the design of computer lab placement, hallways, libraries, and alcoves (Jenson & Rose, 2006). Jenson and Rose (2006) compared recently built Canadian schools that have had the opportunity to consider technological integration into the architecture and engineering of the school itself, with older schools that were built pre-computer/tech boom. The role of design impacted accessibility and ease of use. For example, the authors found that schools built more recently designed computer stations in hallways, so that they were in an open space and always accessible to students, rather than only having a computer lab/room that would be booked by classes at specific times. More importantly, these 'designed-for-tech' schools saw an increase in both student and teacher usage.

Research Questions

Although some of the literature cited offers a Canadian perspective, most of the research on teachers' perspectives on technology and technical pedagogical training is based in the United States. We hope that this exploratory study can shed much-needed light on the perspective of Canadian teachers. Over the past three years, several Canadian provinces have increased funding efforts to assist schools in purchasing more technology. Most recently, Nova Scotia invested $10 million in its EdTech Refresh Plan, which will include purchasing laptops, tablets, and computers to support students and teachers across the province (*Province Invests in Technology for Students, Teachers*, 2023). In 2020, the Quebec provincial government contributed $150 million to tablets and laptops due to COVID-19 (The Canadian Press, 2020), this has vast implications for future educational policy and Canadian teachers. As we have stated, and as the research summarized in this literature review shows, funds and devices are not enough if adequate training and policies are not followed.

Given the findings, the present study sought to examine Canadian teachers' perspectives on technological integration and classroom digital device policies. The following research questions guided the study: (1) What are the current practices used by Canadian teachers to integrate technology into their classrooms, and how do these methods align with curriculum enrichment and support? and (2) What are the perceived advantages and disadvantages of using technology in the classroom?

Methodology

A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate as it allows for a deeper exploration of the nuances underlying the context of the teachers' classrooms, schools, and school boards. By directly engaging participants and eliciting their perspectives, opinions, and practices, the authors were able to capture a more comprehensive understanding of their experiences. The qualitative approach also

provided a valuable space for participants to expand on their answers, offering valuable insights.

Recruitment of Participants

Participants for this study were recruited from two different school boards in Montreal. Our research team reached out to the educational technology department for the first school board. They organized a one-day symposium where teachers were invited to attend. The educational technology department sent an initial email to all teachers attending informing them that we would be contacting them about on-site interviews. Shortly after, we sent an email to teachers who had expressed interest in being interviewed.

The authors had an initial meeting with the school board research committee composed of teachers, administration, and staff. During this meeting, the committee had to vote on accepting our research project in their schools. After the initial meeting with the research committee, teachers were invited by the school board educational technology team to attend a series of technology-based workshops over three months. An initial letter was sent to the principals and teachers before attending the workshops. All participating teachers from both school boards were required to sign a consent form if they were interested in participating in our interviews.

Participants

This study was composed of 16 interviews conducted in English, across two different English school boards in Montreal, and included both elementary and high school teachers, two of which were special education teachers. Due to school board restrictions and difficulty entering schools, we were limited to one school. See Table 1 for the composition of participants, and also see the 'Limitations' section for more information on the sample size and future directions.

Instrument

The interviews were composed of eight questions and administered in a structured format (see Appendix A: Interview Questions). The questions were aimed at gauging teachers' perspectives about the advantages and disadvantages of using digital devices in the classroom, as well as their thoughts on any school policies

Table 1:
Participant Composition

Type of Teacher	*N*
Elementary	9
High School	6
Resource	1

toward integrating said technologies. The structured interviews were coded thematically by the second author using Dedoose—a qualitative data analysis software and then validated through a second round of coding by the first author. Both rounds of coding followed analytical coding guidelines and used an open coding format, such as that described by Gibbs (2007). Specifically, we used a blending of both analytical and categorical coding.

The first level of codes was categorical, in that, since the questions were structured, each question was converted into a category. For example, for the question "Does your school have any rules/regulations/policies regarding digital devices?," the question was classified as: "Awareness of Technology Policy," Then, for the second-level codes, which were analytical, analysis of the teachers' answers to the question yielded subthemes. For example, for the same question above, answers indicated that teachers were either, "aware and use the policy," "aware and do not use the policy," or "not aware of any policy." These categories were based on straightforward answers and not assumptions. Teachers are either aware of policies or are not. All other questions were coded in the same fashion. For the full list of questions, see Appendix A.

During the second round of coding, both authors discussed the codes, and 100% agreement was met. This was not surprising, given the straightforwardness and structure of the questions asked. Not only does this method capture all the answers from the interviews, but also lends itself well to mixed methods analysis of results. After all of the 16 interviews had been coded in this manner, they were validated and discussed.

Results

Thematic analysis of the interviews revealed that most teachers, both elementary and high school, tend to use technology in more superficial ways, to increase student engagement and teach "21st Century Skills," rather than a complex use that aims to deepen and enrich curriculum content and learning. Indeed, most teachers explained that they used technology for classroom sites, emailing parents, and/or Google Docs for student project collaborations and word processing. Please note, that you can click on several of the pseudonyms from various quotes to access and watch the corresponding kinetic typography.

> *I show them videos. We have a class website that we update regularly. We use it for art. We go into Pinterest. I try and get them to use their own phones.*
>
> —Catherine

> *I also put up all of the notes for the students online on Schoology. I use Schoology a lot to communicate with parents and students. I post every day their homework, I use the calendar to notify them when the quizzes are gonna be, and when all the assignments are due.*
>
> —Margret

However, there is a unique subset of teachers that use technology in complex, curriculum-enriching ways, such as getting students to create podcasts, multimedia projects, Scratch coding, and using mobile devices for process mapping.

> *I use videos. I let them take pictures of any notes or anything like that, use QR code readers. It's a hard question to answer because it's integrated into everything I do.*
>
> —Natasha

> *They create movies, they capture their learning using the camera, the video, even just taking pictures of their work to document the work along the way.*
>
> —Tami

There were also a few teachers' responses that fell in the middle of a continuum from complex to superficial use of technology. These "middle" teachers also tended to be more concerned with using technology for the purpose of student engagement, rather than curriculum enrichment, either through games or QR codes. For example, a language teacher was using Duolingo to engage students in language learning.

Regardless of how technology was integrated, all 16 teachers interviewed cited student engagement and learning—frequently referred to as "making it fun—as the biggest advantage of using technology in the classroom. Interestingly, in terms of whether curriculum enhancement was an advantage, only one teacher mentioned it, whereas another teacher explicitly voiced that technology "does not enhance the curriculum."

> *I think it's being on their level.*
>
> —Melissa

> *I find that technology keeps the kids much more engaged. As a teacher, it's really hard to compete with it sometimes.*
>
> —Andrea

> *So for some of them who's turned off by school, it gives them another way of seeing school.*
>
> —Clorinda

> *It brings the stuff out of them that I know is in there. That I can›t access with a piece of paper or a traditional lecture.*
>
> —Catherine

In terms of disadvantages, 12 out of 16 teachers expressed that technical difficulties are the most pressing barrier and concern to using technology in the classroom. Others echoed recent research on barriers to integration by expressing that a lack of access to necessary devices was a disadvantage, citing things like out-of-date devices, or not enough of the devices for an entire classroom.

Table 2 displays a full list of advantages and disadvantages mentioned by the study respondents.

Sometimes we have five-year-old computers or new computers and they're mixed and matched and the software isn't always the same, so that's a bit of an issu.

—Paul

In our school, a lot of the computers, the internet doesn't always work. You can't depend qon it. Sometimes a program will work with one browser but not on another browser.

—Julie

We have to wait to go through a whole process, which I kind of understand, but at the same time it kind of limits us because sometimes you find an app that you would like to use right away and you have to first speak to your principal about it, then get the technician to upload it to the computers.

—Steven

Discussion

Perhaps the most telling takeaway from this exploratory study is that teachers cite more disadvantages than advantages to classroom technology integration. Interestingly, the concerns cited in the literature review seem to be confirmed in our research as well. Namely, the lack of access to technology, teacher's proficiency with technology, as well as digital distraction. Some additional concerns were also raised, such as privacy concerns, lack of relatability to the curriculum, and the student's proficiency with technology. We hope that our current larger study, as well as future research, will yield insights into these newly cited disadvantages. Specifically, it would be of great interest to explore students' proficiency with technology, especially when there is a prominent, preconceived notion that students who are 'Gen-Z' or 'Millenials' grew up with technology, and therefore have no issues with proficiency (McCoy, 2020; Mokhtari, Delello, & Reichard, 2015).

In addition to these advantages and disadvantages, our study continues to bolster past and current literature's findings that overall, teachers integrate technology in superficial ways, such as using Google Classroom, PowerPoint, an online portal, or even emailing parents. Based on research trends on educators' per-

Table 2
Full List of Advantages and Disadvantages to Integrating Technology in the Classroom

Advantages	*Disadvantages*
Accessibility	Lack of Access to Technology
Convenience	Technical Difficulties
Student Engagement/Learning	Student Proficiency with Technology/Abilities
Curriculum Engagement/Enhancement	Teacher Proficiency with Technology
	Digital Distraction
	Privacy Concerns
	Lack of Curriculum Integration

ceptions and training, this is likely due to two things: (a) lack of proper training on actual devices, and (b) teachers' perceptions on what constitutes a 'classroom technology,' as well as how proficient they are with it. It is likely that, coupled with a lack of pedagogical support on 'cutting-edge' software and tools, teachers will gravitate to using what they are already comfortable with. Future research could expand on this finding by exploring what "technology integration" itself means to teachers. For, it seems that this definition varies widely across teachers within the same school, let alone across the country.

Limitations and Future Directions

The primary limitation of this study is its small sample size. However, as emphasized in the methodology section, this was because of two factors. Firstly, this study was an introductory exploration into the sentiments of teachers towards technological integration. A larger, more robust and grant-funded study by the primary author is now underway to look further in depth at the themes of this study. We recognize the small sample size as a limitation of the study. Secondly, given the restrictions of school boards and difficulty in accessing classrooms, we were only able to interview within this one school.

In terms of future directions, as stated above, there are two major directions in which future research can take these findings, the first being a deeper exploration of privacy concerns, lack of relatability to the curriculum, and the student's proficiency with technology as reasons for educators' struggle with technological integration. The second area for future research is a study exploring educators' perceptions and definitions of "technology integration" as a concept. What does it mean to them, and what constitutes the use of technology in the classroom? We believe that these are the most fruitful and interesting upcoming research possibilities.

Conclusion

Teachers are integrating various forms of technology in their K-12 classrooms; however, they generally lack the technical and pedagogical resources necessary to advance their practices. Furthermore, some teachers find ways to include technology in basic ways such as using word processing tools or surfing the internet, while others are pushing the technology by integrating virtual reality engagement, podcast creation and multimodal use of technology for creative products. The most mentioned advantage of technology integration in their classrooms was the rise in student engagement, whereas, in contrast, the most common disadvantage was the level of technical difficulty and lack of access to technology in general. Overall, teachers are likely to integrate technology in their classrooms regardless of privacy concerns, even though they are aware of the risks (Shade & Shepherd, 2013).

The need for strong, research-supported educational policies and pedagogical

technical support for teachers is needed now, more than ever, with COVID-19 pushing the reality of virtual classrooms closer and closer. It is simply not enough to provide the technologies and funds without incorporating educators' realities into the decision-making process.

References

Alberta Education. (2010). *Emerge one-to-one laptop learning initiative: Final report*. https://education.alberta.ca/media/3227624/emerge-final-report-2010-10-17.pdf

Burke, A., & Hughes, J. (2018). A shifting landscape: using tablets to support learning in students with diverse abilities. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, *27*(2), 183-198.

Campigotto, R., McEwen, R., & Epp, C. D. (2013). Especially social: Exploring the use of an iOS application in special needs classrooms. *Computers & Education*, *60*(1), 74-86.

Daniels, J., Jacobsen, M., Varnhagen, S., & Friesen, S. (2013). Barriers to systemic, effective, and sustainable technology use in high school classrooms. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology/La revue canadienne de l'apprentissage et de la technologie*, *39*(4).

DeCoito, I., & Richardson, T. (2018). Teachers and technology: Present practice and future directions. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *18*(2), 362-378.

Delello, J. A., Kiekel, J., Poyo, S. R., Williams, M. K., & Kerby, D. (2020). Educator perceptions of digital devices: Multitasking and distractions in the classroom. In *Disruptive and emerging technology trends across education and the workplace* (pp. 193-220). IGI Global.

Duncan, D. K., Hoekstra, A. R., & Wilcox, B. R. (2012). Digital devices, distraction and student performance: does cell phone use reduce learning?.*AAS*, *219*, 235-08.

Ertmer, P. A., Ottenbreit-Leftwich, A. T., Sadik, O., Sendurur, E., & Sendurur, P. (2012). Teacher beliefs and technology integration practices: A critical relationship. *Computers & Education*, *59*(2), 423-435.

Gibbs, G. R. (2007). Thematic coding and categorizing. In *Analyzing qualitative data* (pp.38-55). SAGE Publications.

Grimshaw, J., Cardoso, W., & Collins, L. (2017). Teacher perspectives on the integration of mobile-assisted language learning. *CALL in a climate of change: adapting to turbulent global conditions—short papers from EUROCALL*, *2017*, 135-139.

Ifenthaler, D., & Schweinbenz, V. (2013). The acceptance of Tablet-PCs in classroom instruction: The teachers' perspectives. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *29*(3), 525-534.

Jenson, J., & Rose, C. (2006). Finding space for technology: Pedagogical observations on the organization of computers in school environments. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology/La revue canadienne de l'apprentissage et de la technologie*, *32*(1).

Martin, S. F., Shaw, E. L., & Daughenbaugh, L. (2014). Using smart boards and manipulatives in the elementary science classroom. *TechTrends*, *58*(3), 90-96.

McCoy, B. R. (2016). Digital distractions in the classroom phase II: Student classroom use of digital devices for non-class related purposes. *Journal of Media Education, 7*(1), 5-32.

McCoy, B. (2020). Gen Z and digital distractions in the classroom: Student classroom use of digital devices for non-class related purposes. *Journal of Media Education*, *11*(2), 5-23.

Mokhtari, K., Delello, J. A., & Reichard, C. (2015). Millennial multitasking: Constantly connected yet distracted. *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, *45*(2), 164-180.

Moore-Hayes, C. (2011). Technology integration preparedness and its influence on teacher-efficacy. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology/La revue canadienne de l'apprentissage et de la technologie*, *37*(3).

Nova Scotia. (2023). *Province invests in technology for students, teachers.* News Release. https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2023/04/05/province-invests-technology-students-teachers

Preston, J. P., Moffatt, L., Wiebe, S., McAuley, A., Campbell, B., & Gabriel, M. (2015). The use of technology in Prince Edward Island (Canada) high schools: Perceptions of school leaders. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *43*(6), 989-1005.

Ruggiero, D., & Mong, C. J. (2015). The teacher technology integration experience: Practice and reflection in the classroom. *Journal of Information Technology Education*, *14*, 161-178.

Saine, P. (2012). iPods, iPads, and the SMARTBoard: Transforming literacy instruction and student learning. *New England Reading Association Journal*, *47*(2), 74.

Saxena, A. (2017). Issues and impediments faced by Canadian teachers while integrating ICT in pedagogical practice. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-TOJET*, *16*(2), 58-70.

Shade, L. R., & Shepherd, T. (2013). Viewing youth and mobile privacy through a digital policy literacy framework. *First Monday*, *18*(12).

The Canadian Press. (31 May 2020). Quebec Announces $150 Million for Tablets and Laptops for Fall Classes. *CTV News*. https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/quebec-announces-150-million-for-tablets-and-laptops-for-fall-classes-1.4962376.

Tondeur, J., Van Braak, J., Ertmer, P. A., & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, A. (2017). Understanding the relationship between teachers' pedagogical beliefs and technology use in education: a systematic review of qualitative evidence. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, *65*(3), 555-575.

Weston, M. E., & Bain, A. (2010). The end of techno-critique: The naked truth about 1: 1 laptop initiatives and educational change. *Journal of Technology, Learning, and Assessment*, *9*(6), 5-24.

Appendix A
Interview Questions

1. Name
2. Position/Grade Level
3. How do you integrate technology into your classroom?
4. What are the advantages of using technology?
5. What are the limitations of technology?
6. What are your views on mobile devices in the classroom?
7. Does your school have any rules/regulations/policies regarding digital devices?
8. What do you consider ideal situations in schools for digital devices?

Western Hospitality's Notions of a Good Human: Exclusion Perpetuated Through Urban Discourses

Teresa Anne Fowler & Sylvie Roy

Abstract

In this article, we look at discourses stemming from the legacy of 'Western Hospitality' in the Young Canadians program offered by the Calgary Stampede in Alberta, Canada.Calgary Stampede is an international known rodeo shows organized every July in the province. The Young Canadians, the program examined in this article, is a program where youth learn performance skills in vocals and dance culminating each year with a performance at the Grandstand Show at the Calgary Stampede each July. Youth also follow a curriculum developed by the Calgary Stampede Foundation called the Youth Development Framework, which includes students learning what it means to be a good human. Using a photovoice methodology in addition to interviews with the participants, we looked and gained an understanding of how students were using the idea of being a good human in their everyday lives. In this small study, students explained what it means to be a good human, including being respectful of others, following the rules, and being kind. In using Bourdieu's notion of habitus, field, cultural reproduction and power, we noticed that our participants are also part of a privileged group that is

Teresa Anne Fowler is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Education at Concordia University Edmonton, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Sylvie Roy is a professor in the Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Fowler's research expertise centers around critical white masculinities, exploring the complexities of gender identity, challenging traditional notions of masculinity, and promoting healthier and more inclusive understandings of masculinities. Roy's areas of expertise are sociolinguistic, ideologies, discourse analysis, bilingualism, and ethnography. Email addresses: teresa.fowler@concordia.ab.ca & syroy@ucalgary.ca

recruited and trained in a specific way in order to reproduce the notion of being a good human amid a discourse of 'Western Hospitality' in a white, middle-class and patriarchal culture. From our critical lens, the legacy of 'Western Hospitality' perpetuated through the Calgary Stampede discourse, needs to open up and intentionally welcome a more diverse and inclusive space to better represent a more realistic view of Canadians.

Keywords: Western hospitality; photovoice; cultural reproduction; Bourdieu

Introduction

Whiteness, power, and privilege have become the 'usual suspects' in the practice of *othering*, of deciding what narratives represent an identity for both individuals and communities. This practice moves through dominant narratives so innately that to question it causes a disruption and, importantly, calls into question the role of social institutions in reproducing discourses which *other*. The Annual Calgary Stampede is an internationally and nationally renowned rodeo show that swells the city of Calgary's population for a period of two weeks as Calgary becomes a vibrant and lively city during the "greatest outdoor show on earth" (Calgary Stampede, 2021, "Main Page"). Calgary transforms itself to become the exemplar of 'Western Hospitality' with free pancake breakfasts across the region, Calgary downtown becomes a united beer garden, businesses cover their windows with painted western iconography, employees dress up as cowboys and cowgirls and can have extra time off to enjoy the spectacle (if they are not in the service industry). This demonstration of a united vision was derived from settlers colonizing the western frontier, and Stampede celebrated agriculture, a specific way of seeing Indigenous Peoples, and "American Wild West Shows" (Joudrey, 2016, p. 28). Evolving into the greatest outdoor show on earth, today's stampede also consists of a parade, unique food choices on the busy midway filled with carnival games, rides, and the highlight: the Grandstand Show and Rodeo.

'Western Hospitality' within the context of the Calgary Stampede has its usual suspects, including "the Mountie, the cowboy, and the Indian" (Adese, 2012, p. 489). It upholds 'Western Hospitality' as a value in addition to community spirit and "pride of place," and "Calgarians don't want to lose these values" (Foran, 2008, p. 334). However, the Stampede has personified the usual suspects as well as who is *othered*. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP, aka Mounties), featured at the Stampede in their iconic red blazers, have been responsible for enforcing the Indian Act in Canada and have a long history of racism against Indigenous Peoples (Palmater, 2016; Spiegel, 2021). For example, a class action lawsuit has been filed by racialized individuals who worked or are working for the RCMP (Klein Lawyers, 2022). Another iconic figure, the cowboy represents rugged individualism, the ability to engage in hard physical labour, adhere to the "cowboy's code," and represents how the West was won (Palmer Seiler, 2008, p.

179). While the Stampede was heralded for providing a space for First Nations Peoples to have a space where they could engage in their traditional ways of living without fear of repercussion from the Indian Act, the Stampede needed First Nations representation in order for Stampede to be successful.

The Calgary Stampede is also part of a bigger organization with school programs, art and dance programs for children and youth supported through the Calgary Stampede Foundation (Calgary Stampede Foundation, 2021, "Main Page"). The Calgary Stampede Foundation is committed to providing the youth of Alberta with opportunities "to develop strong roots in their culture and heritage through programs that enhance personal growth, citizenship and education" (Calgary Stampede Foundation, 2021, "Programs"). However, the Calgary Stampede Foundation is also criticized by authors for promoting a discourse of 'Western Hospitality' throughout its programs (Joudrey, 2016; Williams, 2021). That discourse is associated with whiteness, misogyny, and power, as Stampede is a site where white men's superiority dominates and where conventional and heteronormative gender roles persist (Joudrey, 2016; Williams, 2021). Through the children and youth arts program, the Young Canadians, we examined how it reproduces the notion of 'Western Hospitality' through its curriculum. The Young Canadians perform each year at the Grandstand Show, which is meant to represent what it means to be a Young Canadian through dance and singing choreographed performances. This opportunity for youth and young children is seen to be part of a group of artists and performers and to be part of something 'fun.'

This article will share results from our study with the Young Canadians who engaged with Photovoice to understand better how the curriculum used at the Young Canadians program reproduces 'Western Hospitality' and how participants perceived and performed this identity in their communities. We use a Bourdieusian analysis to consider how the relationship between habitus and field increases cultural capital and the ways in which critical consciousness can work to disrupt the 'usual suspects' hold on propagating 'Western Hospitality's' dominance. The role of social institutions, which are a site of cultural reproduction, must be critiqued amid social justice movements that have revealed how the 'usual suspects' continue to *other*.

Bourdieu Goes to Stampede

For our theoretical framework, we use Bourdieu's (1991) notions of habitus, doxa, field, symbolic power, and capital. Bourdieu defines habitus (1977) as a system of structures, schemes of perception and action common to members of the same group or community who share the same worldview. The collective entity defines, establishes, and reproduces dominant social and cultural conditions, and individuals internalize those rules. Some classificatory schemata of how to behave are constructed as good (we are good humans) while others are not (wom-

en should be in the kitchen). Bourdieu refers to these sets of beliefs as doxa, which, when unquestioned, may engender conscious struggles by social agents in particular fields. Doxa is the universe of undisputed or undiscussed. The doxa takes the form of symbolic power, which is mediated by different forms of capital and reinforced by power fields in institutions such as churches, schools, media, and workplaces. For our article, doxa is reinforced by the discourse of 'Western Hospitality' during the Calgary Stampede, which is a discourse from the past and transmitted heritage. Those who hold the dominant values possess cultural capital that affects how social and cultural relations are made and remade by whom and for whom. Bourdieu's work allowed a better understanding of how specific homogenous communities used rules of engagement for their members. The dominant group will defend doxa and will establish orthodoxy. Orthodoxy is defined as a system of acceptable ways of thinking and speaking in the natural and social world, which rejects the opposite as blaspheme. Those in power will use strategies to 'justify' the legitimacy of symbolic domination and will punish (or marginalize) those who don't adhere to the rules (Bourdieu, 1979). For example, in our study, specific 'students' are recruited to be part of the youth program. To continue with Bourdieu's theory, the dominated, if they also want to access fields of power, have the interest to push back on doxa's limits and expose the taken-for-granted rules through heterodoxy. This is where Bourdieu's 'field of opinion' allows a space to question doxa by heterodoxy from the margin, which competes with orthodox stances.

The interplay between habitus, field, and cultural capital demonstrates the deep connections between how the Young Canadians come to continue to both draw youth into seeking to become a Young Canadian and how the Young Canadians discourse perpetuates an illusionary idea of what it means to be Canadian. Being a Canadian means different things to different people. However, the Young Canadian's are meant to embody the iconography of being a Canadian, which opens historical legacies of power and oppression, such as through the lens of the Mountie. The habitus reflects an individual's absorption of the narratives of social institutions and informs how individuals move about within the field in which structural relations are determined (Grenfell & James, 2004; McNay, 1999). When one benefits from the relationships exchanged, their cultural capital increases, giving them more perceived power in the field (Pinxten & Lievens, 2014). The field here consists of the Calgary Stampede. We tease this apart by considering the relationship between social institutions and the Calgary Stampede, the discourse of 'Western Hospitality,' and a point in the curriculum of the Young Canadians of being a good human. We, critical theorists, like to push the reflection on Calgary Stampede, push back the limits of doxa and expose what has been taken for granted for decades. We do this because the world has changed, and diversity (the *others*) need to be included in all discourses of society without reproducing the "old ways."

City and Social Institutions: The Calgary Stampede

In consideration of the role of the city and social institutions within urban centres, we gain insights into the ways in which cities are a confluence of "moral worlds" (Flanagan, 2010) and imagined or ideological spaces (Yeoh, 2006). Within cities, individuals have opportunities to engage in numerous ways to experience diversity, privileges, and freedom but also constraints due to the discourse to which the city seeks to maintain and the consolidation of political and social power (Fischer, 1975; Yeoh, 2006). When cities have a group of individuals who share similar beliefs, values, and identities, they begin to form a dominant culture to which others, such as communities, especially families and their children or newcomers to a country or city, are drawn. Cities thus begin to form their own dominant cultures and provide pathways for individuals to follow to feel a sense of belonging (Flanagan, 2010). Pathways that reproduce a dominant discourse are accessed through forms of media, celebrations, festivals, and events that attract national and international recognition. That dominant discourse uses those events as commodification of goods and practices for the city's prosperity, such as the commodification of languages and cultural artifacts to attract tourists (Layton & Wallace, 2006; Petrovic & Yazan, 2021).

In Calgary, Alberta, the dominant discourse has been one of 'Western Hospitality,' rugged individualism, and the cowboy way of life, which increasingly both draws and pushes people away (Williams, 2021). The peak of the dominance of this way of life culminates every year at the Calgary Stampede. However, the message is "much more than a ten-day long celebration with midway rides and bucking broncos. The Calgary Stampede is a gathering place that hosts, educates, and entertains visitors from around the world" (Calgary Stampede, 2022, "About Us"). This cultural dominance celebrated by/at the Calgary Stampede draws in a sense of belonging based on a pioneering spirit of domination and conquest. As the city of Calgary and its neighbours engage in celebrations such as free community pancake breakfasts to feel a sense of belonging to a Western spirit, this Western spirit preserves layers of racism, misogyny, classism, and sexism throughout the province (Williams, 2021). The historical myth of 'Western Hospitality' is not one without controversy. As a form of urbanization, the myth of 'Western Hospitality' unites Albertans and newcomers to Alberta through impenetrable discourse. A discourse that rejuvenates "the existence and power of racism and white supremacy" through a collective celebration "legitimated by Stampede-related cultural texts," which offers an alluring draw into the culture of the Calgary Stampede (p. 165).

Social institutions, through reproducing nationalist ideologies through the lens of 'Western Hospitality,' leave little room for individuals or other cultural groups to find a sense of belonging. Bourdieu (2003) calls into question the role of institutions in reproducing "a certain vision of the social world" and causing those who want to be a part of the Calgary Stampede to adopt the language used by

the Stampede to enjoy and participate in the experience (p. 106). As the Calgary Stampede is "the greatest outdoor show on earth," it encompasses what it means to be an Albertan during the month of July but also through the programming which is ongoing throughout the year and in schools (Calgary Stampede, 2021, "Main Page"). The Young Canadians train and practice for the goal of performing at the Grandstand Show during Stampede as the pinnacle of their year of work. However, within the programming, children and youth are using "vocabularies of established languages" rather than their individual dispositions grounded in different cultural experiences (de Certeau, 1984, p. xviii). The City of Calgary is not a homogenous community as 25% of the population are immigrants to Canada, with a majority coming from South Asian communities (City of Calgary, 2013). With First Nations communities surrounding Calgary, including Tsuut'ina Nation (2700 people), Stoney-Nakoda Nation (3700 people), and Siksika Nation (7800 people), the city also has approximately 3% self-identified Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuk residing in Calgary (Alberta Government, 2022; City of Calgary, 2013).

'Western Hospitality'

The Calgary Stampede, one of Canada's longest active celebrations, presents an ideological form of 'Western Hospitality' that "preserves and promotes our western heritage, cultures and community spirit" or as previously pointed out, preserves an exclusive environment (Calgary Stampede, 2021, "About Us"; Kelm, 2009). A culture grounded in the notion of 'Western Hospitality' informs the structure of the Calgary Stampede Foundation as built by the 'big four'—the founders of the Calgary Stampede: wealthy Alberta cattlemen Patrick Burns, George Lane, A. E. Cross, and Archibald J. McLean (Calgary Stampede, 2021, "Early Years"). The 'big four' provided funds to American Guy Weadick, who, after travelling to Calgary in 1908, returned with plans to host a "Frontier Days Celebration and Championship" (Calgary Stampede, 2021, "Early Years"). In addition, the Calgary Stampede became a means to attract people to settle in Alberta as well as begin a strong tourism industry and connections to the oil and gas industry (Williams, 2021). Alberta's petroleum industry has deep roots within the Calgary Stampede and not only drives the economy in this province and Canada but also "defin[es] provincial economics and politics" (p. 39). As colonization swept through Western Canada, the Calgary Stampede began to become embedded within the culture of the 'new West.'

'Western Hospitality' continues to be associated with a romanticized and historical view of society, including "cowboys and Indians, cattle drives, and the great narrative of civilising the frontier" (Rosenthal & Schäfer, 2016, p. 48). The 'White Hatting' ceremony continues to inscribe a cohesive identity within the Calgary Stampede. Benefactors of a White Hat, including past dignitaries such as

Queen Elisabeth II, Governor General of Canada Michaëlle Jean, Oprah Winfrey, and Vladamir Putin, must recite the following oath:

> I (NAME), havin' visited the only genuine Western city in Canada, namely Calgary, and havin' been duly treated in exceptional amounts of 'heart-warmin,' hand-shakin,' tongueloosenin,' back-slappin,' neighbour-lovin,' western spirit, do solemnly promise to spread this here brand of hospitality to all folks and critters who cross my trail hereafter. On the count of three, we will raise our hats and give a loud YAHOO! (as cited in Rosenthal & Schäfer, 2016, p. 48)

Within this ideology are counterpoints that represent a dissonance between an evolving and heterogeneous society with respect to masculinity, femininity, culture, and sexual identity. While a certain nostalgia still emanates from the Calgary Stampede organization, a movement has been made to promote more diversity through a Pride Day held during the Calgary Stampede, which promotes gender diversities (Fieldberg, 2019). In addition, there is also increased representation of Indigenous Peoples (Joudry, 2014), an increase in highlighting of the role women played in the history of stampede (Murray, 2016), a call to move the organization to become more diverse (Korol, 2015), and a means to offer hope during a pandemic (McDermott, 2020).

However, these movements can be tokenistic, performative, and misguided. An ad, as seen in Figure 1 from 2015, meant to depict "all Calgarians," fell short and reinforced traditional masculine and feminine roles as well as left visible minorities and diverse bodies excluded. During Stampede, a collective identity is sought as Calgarians are encouraged to dress in Western wear, attend pancake

Figure 1

All Calgarians (Youtube/Calgary Herald)

Note: This image as cited by Stark, E., 2015, *National Post*. https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/it-is-utterly-beyond-me-what-on-earth-stampede-thinks-theyre-selling-ad-for-calgary-event-lacks-diversity-critics

breakfasts, and move workspaces to corporate beer gardens and party buses (Bourgon, 2015). Families are supported to attend Stampede with value and family days and through performances at the Grandstand Show, which features the Young Canadians. In 2021, the Young Canadians (our participants in this study) dressed in costumes representing the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, which was considered problematic due to historical and ongoing incidents of racism enacted on Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Hobson, 2021; Morin, 2021).

Calgary Stampede Youth Program: The Young Canadians

Our participants in this study were part of the youth program called the Young Canadians. Programs for youth funded through the Calgary Stampede Foundation seek to provide "youth with opportunities to develop strong roots in their culture and heritage through programs that enhance personal growth, citizenship and education" (Calgary Stampede Foundation, 2021, "Programs"). The characteristics associated with the Calgary Stampede Foundation are embedded within their Youth Development Framework, which guides the children and youth programming. The framework is not grounded in a literature review but is based on the Alberta Education Ministerial Order on Student Learning and work completed by other organizations and includes the concepts of performance skills, skills for life, and good humans (Alberta Education, 2020). Good Humans, the focus of this study, has five components, including integrity, creating a welcoming environment, valuing diversity and inclusion, respect and responsibility, and commitment to community. While the Young Canadians do not have a formal curriculum, the Youth Development Framework is embedded in the programming.

The Young Canadians program is facilitated in the Young Canadians School of Performing Arts and has been running for over 50 years. The school offers dance, music, and theatre performance to children and youth in the Calgary area between the ages of 7 to 21. For the Young Canadians, an audition for the program is required, and it is very competitive as they are looking for specific physical and soft skills. Training occurs between September and July, culminating with a performance at the Grandstand Show during Stampede. Performances also occur throughout the season, and time commitment is extraordinary, with older students having eleven classes a week and younger students having six classes per week. Students are divided into divisions including senior (14 to 21 years old), intermediate (11 to 14 years old), and junior (7 to 11 years old). The Young Canadians is a performance-based program, and students work with faculty members trained in dance, voice, and performance to "foster[ing] technical development, artistic creation and performance excellence" (Calgary Stampede, 2021, "Young Canadians"). Instructional content includes a variety of dance techniques such as ballet, hip hop, and jazz, and students also learn about conditioning and choreography. Instruction moves between the group and individual, and upon acceptance into the

Young Canadians, students choose either a dance or voice focus with additional instruction in theory, recording, and voice instruction.

Being A Good Human

A good human is typically viewed as one who is of "good character" which can be defined as the development of ways of life which allow one to live a good life (Agulanna, 2001, p. 139; Johnson, et al., 2016). Often, youth regard adults in their close relationships as role models of good character and extend their role models to include teachers and celebrities who share ideals of perceived value to them. Several suggested characteristics define a good human, including respecting the social and cultural norms of a community, honouring historical legacies, following dominant moral codes within a community, being an engaged citizen, being kind and generous, living life with enthusiasm and passion, as well as being hopeful and optimistic (Agulanna, 2001; Coghlan & Filo, 2016). This process of becoming/developing traits of being a good human is elevated through arts-based methods as well as being in community and solidarity with others (Demirci & Eksi, 2017; Ennis & Tonkin, 2016; National Assembly of State Arts Agencies [NASAA], 2019). The character traits meant to foster a good human identity also increase positive mental and emotional well-being, which is realized through "purposeful activities" members of the community engage in (p. 283). In addition, these activities are further grounded when one has a supportive and caring family, and this creates a holistic means to develop good human character traits, as mentioned, as well as helping others, achieving personal goals, staying out of trouble, being genuine and authentic, treating others well, being honest and non-judgmental, being thankful and putting others first (Demirci & Eksi, 2017).

The underlying curriculum, which seeks to foster a good human identity lay influences from religious and ethical understandings, which lead to cultural influences on and with the curriculum in place (Bronk, 2008; Demirci & Eksi, 2017). Cultural differences also influence how youth perceive 'good' and an intrinsic desire to be 'good' (Arpaly, 2014; Smith & Smith, 2007). These differences create challenges and opportunities in schools, in communities and in developing a curriculum for activities that fosters a good human identity as globalization has moved what it means to be a good human from the local context to the global, including issues of human rights, poverty, and the climate crisis into the minds of youth. This moves the idea of being a good human into action and behaviours and this movement to act is well suited to arts-based curricula (Smith & Smith, 2007). The arts increase engagement and motivation and help youth find meaning and purpose through purposeful activities that induce creative and critical thinking. As NASAA (2019) states, the connection between arts and human development strengthens.

The Youth Development Framework at the Calgary Stampede states that a Good Human develops "characteristics are those which are not specific to the ac-

tivity and go beyond life skills towards youth making a positive impact on others and the world around them" (Calgary Stampede, n.d., [underline original]). These characteristics include integrity, creating a welcoming environment, valuing diversity and inclusion, respect and responsibility, and commitment to the community. While Demirci & Eksi (2017) believe activities to becoming a good human need to be purposeful, the Youth Development Framework, from our observation does not seem to support this as the Young Canadians are expected to engage in training to enhance their performance and represent what it means to be Canadian at the greatest outdoor show on earth. Where does being a good human fit within the Youth Development Framework as grounded in 'Western Hospitality'? For this study, our goal was to see how the Young Canadian performance program facilitates reproducing what it means to be a good human, and we engaged with an arts-based methodology to allow us, outsiders, a view from their eyes and experiences.

Research Design

To enquire into the ways in which participants in the Young Canadians program understood what it means to be a good human outside of the Young Canadians program, we used Photovoice as a methodology (Wang, 1999). Photovoice draws from three theoretical approaches, including Freire's critical pedagogy, feminist theory, and a community-participatory approach to using photography (Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001). Critical pedagogy seeks to understand and disrupt forms of power within education through reflection and introspection (Freire, 2013). Through Photovoice, reflection and introspection arise as participants engage in the research process through gathering and analyzing data and drawing attention to their lived experiences. Indeed, participant photography can uncover social constructions of identity as images are mirrors of communities and reflect the social realities that inform people's lives (Liebenberg, 2018).

Feminist theory, as part of our Photovoice approach, is grounded in a relational perspective to explore the taken-for-grantedness of daily life by engaging in the research with—not on—participants (Liebenberg, 2018). Accountability to participants and a horizontal positioning between participants and researchers must intentionally reduce power dynamics within the research (Freire, 2013; Liebenberg, 2018; Wang & Burris, 1999). This relational connection must be established from the beginning of the research study to facilitate dialogue and awareness of how positionality forms within ideologies of power, race, and class (Frankenberg, 1994). As a community participatory approach to research, Photovoice goes deeply into the social realities of participants and, thus, grounds knowledge with the participants (Liebenberg, 2018). Photovoice incorporates the tenets of participatory research, including research, action, participation, and social change through participants engaging in data collection, analysis, and reflection on their lived realities. A participatory approach requires a collective commitment to share

knowledge and facilitate critical conversations about participant images. In this way, participants are not research objects but subjects with/in the research process (Freire, 2013; Liebenberg, 2018; Wang & Burris, 1999).

The images participants use are not just a snapshot as the process of deciding which image arises from within and reflects thoughts on the situation, taking the picture, and then interpreting the image, slowing the research process to be more attuned to participant needs (Liebenberg, 2018). Differing from photo-elicitation, which uses images created for the research as prompts, Photovoice invites participants to think through their lived realities and depict them in a way that makes meaning. Participants in this study used photography to document their lived reality and relationships with the curriculum from the Young Canadians and how this informed how participants understood what it means to be a good human and depicted the interaction with the field and their habitus. As Wang and Burris (1997) identified, Photovoice has three main goals, beginning with participants forming the centre of the research as information collectors. The second goal is to use the visual images to engage in a reflective dialogue about issues important to the participants; the third goal is to use the research to reach those who create and maintain policy. With a deep structure built on activist research and problem-based inquiry, Photovoice contributes to social action by committing to participant-based research and revealing the impact of dominant discourses in youth programs (Wang & Burris, 1997). However, we experienced a challenge with using Photovoice in that we only met the first goal with our participants and somewhat met the second through our focus group, where we were able to talk about issues important to them, but there was a lack of connection to the broader discourse, and we were not able to follow through with the third goal despite attempts to move the dialogue into action.

Discourses of Young Canadians

Data included interview data with 13 participants, focus group data with 8 participants, 86 images, and a digital content analysis of the Young Canadians, Calgary Stampede Foundation, and Calgary Stampede Corporate websites. All our participants were in the intermediate dance program in the Young Canadians, and some were also dancing for another organization in their community or at their school, and a few were also singers or doing other artistic activities such as painting. Most participants attended a regular school in their neighbourhood, and some were home-schooled. As well, only one participant was a visible minority, with the remainder being visibly white, and there was only one identifying male in the group. Most participants had siblings who participated with the Young Canadians, and all participants enjoyed being in the Young Canadians group.

Analysis was completed using Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus and capital to disrupt the 'usual suspects' discourse. There needs to be a means to analyze

the conditions youth engage with as members of the Young Canadians and the interplay between the 'usual suspects' and the process of *othering* (Carr, 2016). Bourdieu's (1990) oeuvre calls for a disruption to the taken-for-grantedness of the 'usual suspects' hold on the narrative being played within social institutions; however, when whiteness, power, and privilege have been fueling the economic success of the Calgary Stampede, the challenge lies in will the disruption hold? Major themes included the ability to access the Young Canadians program, what being a good human means, and strategies of reproduction. We looked at discourses, which is how the youth describe their experiences. We connect that to 'official' discourses on the website and how those discourses are reproduced and transmitted through what our participants mentioned. In the following, we look at different themes, such as who can access the programs, what it means to be a 'good human' for the participants, and reproduction strategies. These themes allow us to answer this paper's question: How is the discourse of 'Western Hospitality' introduced and reproduced and who is marginalized in the process?

Accessing the Young Canadians Program

Accessing the Young Canadians program as a student came about either through information received from family or close friends and/or watching the Grandstand Show at the Calgary Stampede via online/television. Concerning family, one participant stated, "my cousin talked about it at a family reunion, and I thought it was really cool, so I auditioned." Another participant also gained access through the family as her "sister had been in it for a year, so she had already kind of experienced it, and I had just heard a lot of really good things and thought that would be a really cool thing to try out and be part of the Calgary Stampede." For those without family in the Young Canadians access came through knowledge of the Calgary Stampede: "in 2018 I went to the grandstand for the first time, and I loved how they were all out there having the time of their life and I just really wanted to do that… so… That's why I started wanting to become a young Canadian." Another participant said, "So I've never been to the stampede before, but I've seen their shows online, and I just saw, it just felt like an entire family and felt how together they are, and it really felt like they were one person. One really happy person on stage they were dancing and singing. I love both of those things, so um, I auditioned actually last year, but I didn't get in."

Concerning the audition process, participants frequently spoke about having to fit into a specific identity the Young Canadians were looking for. One participant who was unsuccessful at their first audition stated, "I didn't know how to, like, look and things, and I didn't know what kind of qualities they were looking for." This theme continued: "They were looking for a lot of performance. So, a lot of facial, kind of not just you dancing and the like, the top half from your neck up is like missing. They need expression, they need sass, they need, you know, all

of that. So, to kind of put character into the dance." The audition process for the Young Canadians listed on their website includes a video audition first; if successful, youth are invited for a call-back. The video audition needs to have three components: an introduction, flexibility and movement, and a dance. Students are encouraged to keep their hair tied back and no jewellery or loose-fitting clothing (Young Canadians of the Calgary Stampede, 2021). Despite this idea of showing their personality, each participant was enamoured by the choreographed homogenous performances. This prompted them to desire to be a Young Canadian: "Ever since then, I've been hooked on I've really wanted to be a young Canadian."

Participants overwhelmingly stated that the Young Canadians feel like family when they are participating in the program and that it is a safe space, and this also was evidenced in participant images in Figure 2 below. One participant stated, "whenever I feel like I need help, I can just talk to them and I don't feel uncomfortable around them at all, and I know that they just want to help, and they are all just friends and family here in YC." Another stated that they feel "happy," another feels like the Young Canadians are "part of a family, and that like everybody is connected, and everybody is very kind and nice, and I feel like I am part of something big. It feels good." Another participant added diverse considerations of the idea of a family and being with a group of friends: "Everybody is friends. No matter what age you are, whether you're a boy or a girl, they're just all friends."

This camaraderie of friendship and family led to feelings of safety at the Young Canadians based on common interests. One participant spoke about feeling happy as "there's so many people around you that just make you feel happy and make you feel welcome." Another stated that everyone is "immediately accepted into the group," with another participant saying that at the Young Canadians, there are "better stories" shared amongst the dancers than at school or other or-

Figure 2

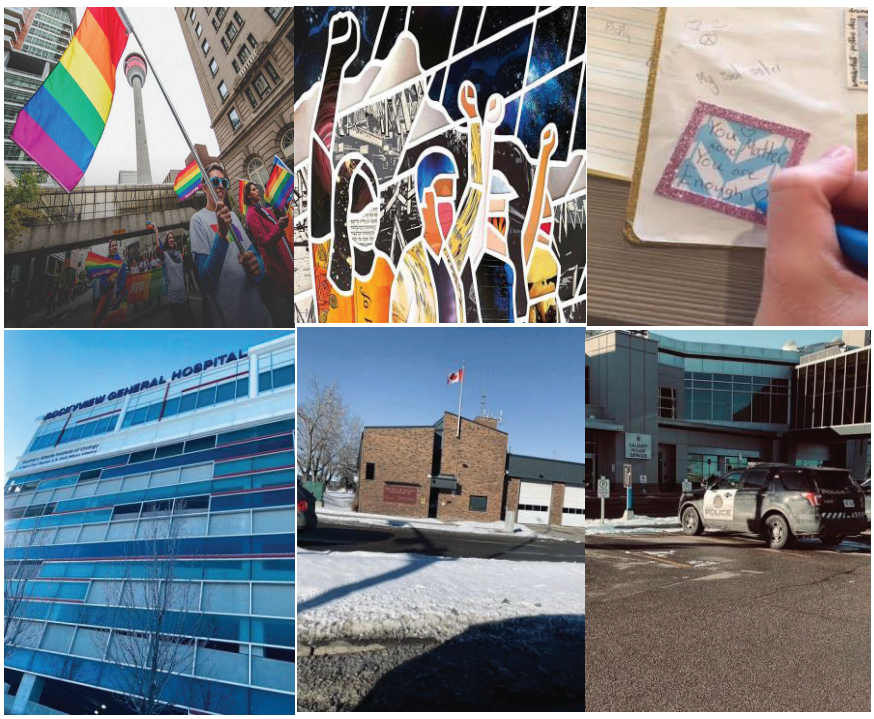
Family (images provided by participants)

ganizations. Another participant stated that it is a "good community and they all [are] very loving people, and they are very accepting" and another said that they "make me feel really happy and really good about myself." One student, the only visually identified male participant, stated that at the Young Canadians, he felt safe to be himself rather than at school stating: "I don't feel like I'm the only one and different when I'm with them. I feel like I more belong than anywhere else." All these data fragments demonstrate how our participants are proud to be part of a big family where they feel safe and welcome. We must point out that all our participants were girls from white families except for one boy and one girl from an Asian family.

The absence of boys amongst the participant group was noticeable as the majority stated that there were not many boys in the program as boys "don't want to dance. They are more focused on sports, like hockey and just skating in general." Participants perceived limitation to boys participating in the program was due to a lack of suitable dance programming such as hip-hop or due to body shaming as boys may not "want to look bad in front of their friends" and, "no boys really think about dancing." When asked about culture within their current company

Figure 3

Safe Spaces (images provided by participants)



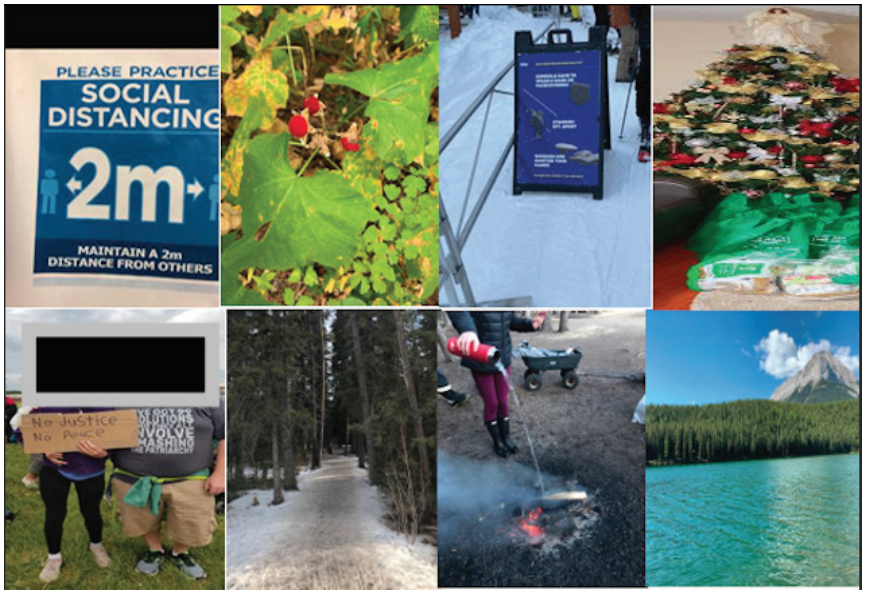
of dancers, one student replied that dancers come from different places like "all over Calgary," "Okotoks and Airdrie," which are bedroom communities outside of Calgary, another participant stated that at the Young Canadians, "no one really cares about who you love or what your skin tone is or how tall you are or how short you are." The limited perspective on diverse communities and safe spaces was also revealed through images participants shared which were focused on the LGTBQ+ flag, the Black Lives Matter movement (both taken from the internet by participants) for example in contrast with a police car and hospital where safety is questionable for racialized communities (Cole, 2020). As participants had limited notions of diversity, their awareness of what it means to be safe also raises an interesting point with respect to understandings of social justice in the images as we wonder if the social justice images represent performative allyship or a means to increase their familial cultural capital (Howard, 2013).

A Good Human

Resoundingly, participants stated that being a good human involves being "kind, caring, inclusive, driven;" "helping others;" "including everybody;" "be kind to everybody and not like to be mean or discriminate against other people based on what they look like on the outside;" "always going with a positive attitude;" and "working really hard and sweating at the end of dance class." When

Figure 4

Good Human Actions (images provided by participants)



asked what this looks like in practice, many also agreed that this would involve helping others, smiling, being nice and generous to others, complimenting others, asking lots of questions in dance class, comforting others, and "help your surroundings." Images depicted in Figure 4 demonstrate what it means to be a good human in everyday life, including following directions, caring for the environment, and supporting others. These images represent kindness, helping other students, and demonstrations of how they follow the rules in different contexts with COVID-19 or when going to the forest to protect the environment in which they live. There is also the image of one student, the only visible minority, to show how they help people in their global community by collecting donations for Christmas.

When asked what stopped individuals from becoming a good human, there were a variety of answers, including "societal boundaries," "mental illness," "money and greed," "peer pressure," "personal struggles," "bad influences," "parents are not the best people," "seeing negative things," and being too comfortable with peers as "we have been together for so long sometimes we forget that we need to include others" which presents a critical point with respect to inclusion and diversity and the contradictions we noticed within this study. As the group is insular and exclusive, ideas of diversity are as mentioned superficial and only seen within their spheres of context and through social media. It is interesting also to notice that their views of not being a good human are individualized, putting the blame on single people (bad apple argument) instead of looking at the society and the systems at large and how their group is a well-behaved homogenous group chosen to be part of the Young Canadians. Here is where goal number two from Photovoice was not fully realized. Our participants lacked the ability to move their thinking away from the individual towards the border discourse and ways in which systems and discourses such as the Stampede reproduce narratives that benefit the dominant group.

Strategies of Reproduction

From the interviews and photos gathered, being taught what it means to be a good human via the curriculum appears to be done implicitly. Participants did not express that their instructors explicitly taught them what a good human is, but instructors modelled through their actions and expectations what being a good human means. The audition process also ensures the Young Canadians program has a particular set of skills amiable to receive the same discourses. Instructors' role within the Young Canadians according to participants is to keep everyone prepared and ready to go, and they are also available to support students struggling with the choreography and will take extra time to work with students. However, when instructors explicitly did talk about being a good human, it was at the beginning of the year to ensure new members understand the expectations and after "something bad happens in the studio. They'll talk about it with the whole company, like in

separate classes. And they will like just put up the ground rules again. Like being nice to everybody, not pushing people out." These explicit moments also came up during classes at the Young Canadians about bullying and mental health through teachable moments; however, in their regular program at the Young Canadians, these moments were few as one participant reflected: "I don't think that there was a very, there wasn't one time where one of the teachers said, like, being a good human is this blah, blah, blah, right? They put what it is to be a Young Canadian." The implicitness of talking about being a good human came across as a "vibe," instructors "don't directly tell you, but they kind of insist," and that being a good human is "contagious." If everyone follows the rules, instructors do not need to discuss or talk about what it means to be a good human during the program. It is implicitly reproduced through actions beginning with recruitment at the audition to following the rules of how one should behave when dancing.

Discussion

The milieu at the Young Canadians is perceived to be a safe space for students. Overwhelmingly, participants stated that the Young Canadians is a safe, welcoming place, and participants feel like family. What inclusion means for participants is to respect the community by following the rules, being kind, caring and driven, helping others when they need it, and not gossiping. As well, the singular focus of the community helps with the bonding of the students who all agree that they need to perform to their full potential. All students mentioned enjoying their time with the Young Canadians, and several of them said that they felt safe and welcomed in the group. Interestingly, the only boy participant felt safer at the Young Canadians than he did at school. However, the female participants also did not think that boys naturally gravitated to forms of dance other than hip-hop. This is a crucial contradiction as, despite narratives of being welcoming, participants also shared that because they are so communal, they tend to forget that others may not feel like they fit. The lingering narrative of gender bias amongst students and their lack of exposure to diversity amongst their peers are symptoms of an elite education which reinforces social stratification between elite youth who can access programs such as the Young Canadians and *others* (Koh & Kenway, 2016; Watters, 2016).

Participants noted differences between their experiences at the Young Canadians and their schools and other extracurricular experiences. Most of the participants stated that they felt more comfortable and could relate to their peers at the Young Canadians more so than in other spaces. Primarily this was due to a collective focus on a unifying activity, whereas at school, there were multiple happenings and 'cliques' of students that divided student groups. At the Young Canadians, participants felt at ease with their instructors and appreciated the extra support, including counsellors and sessions on mental health and bullying. Stu-

dents thought of instructors in the program as role models of not only how to best perform but also the ways in which instructors went about their practice. Students keenly regarded when an instructor would take time to support a student with their choreography if a student was falling behind or when instructors would innately tidy up the dance space. This modelling by instructors lends itself to developing the character traits of becoming a good human stated in the Youth Development Framework, including integrity, creating a welcoming environment, respect and responsibility, and a commitment to the community.

It doesn't appear that being a good human is explicitly taught or talked about in the program other than through the modelling enacted by the instructors or through establishing ground rules at the beginning of a season or after an adverse event. Students learn what it means to be a good human from the Youth Development Framework by being part of the group, which has an implicit way of being that specifies rules and language for them to get along and work together as a group of dancers. Our participants mentioned that they don't talk against people in their group and if they notice someone is not following the rules, they rely on instructors to step in rather than for them to speak up, or students will pick up after others, doing more to compensate for others doing less. There certainly was a lack of critical thinking and additional time with them, we could have discussed issues a little bit further (to do goal number two of the Photovoice methodology) however participants presented with more of a desire to follow and not critique the Young Canadians, which speaks to the performative social justice images in Figure 3 as well as the fear of speaking against the group.

Character education, in this case, aligns with the literature in that what it means to be a good human is implicitly taught by the instructors through their modelling and enacting of the Youth Development Framework (Bronk, 2008; Demirei, & Eksi, 2018). This limits the opportunities an arts-based curriculum can move into, such as troubling the idea that boys who dance only like hip-hop or boys who do not like dance prefer sports. These moral and ethical dilemmas could be addressed through dance to disrupt gender-conforming narratives, extend students' critical and creative thinking, and address the valuing diversity and inclusion point from the Youth Development Framework. Conversations surrounding the implications of choice of costume or choreography would also develop character through unpacking moral dilemmas and lead to students developing empathy, humility, and hope. Being a good human includes the traits in the framework and the ones previously mentioned, including respecting historical legacies. The recent Grandstand Show in 2021 at the Calgary Stampede had a costume choice which depicted the RCMP presented an opportunity for the Young Canadians to be inclusive and become critical thinkers through an awareness of the RCMP's legacy in the Indian Residential System in Canada and ongoing racism directed towards Indigenous Peoples and People of Colour. While unmarked graves are being unearthed, the Young Canadians presented a narrative which not only evokes

'Western Hospitality' but ignores the history of violence acted upon racialized individuals (Williams, 2021).

Participants demonstrated how their learnings of being a good human transcend into their communities. Some participants identified as advocates for equity and social justice, whereas others followed the rules of their communities to care for others. This took on individual perspectives based on their family values, including being active, cleaning up their environments, and modelling for other students what it means to be a good human by including others and being kind. One participant, a visible 'minority,' was highly devoted to supporting others and her family's country of origin through fundraising, gathering, and donating basic needs supplies, and responding to global environmental events. This was also a crucial difference between participants in that the differences in culture led to differences in enacting being a good human (Smith & Smith, 2007). As most participants were white, this limits not only exposure to a variety of cultures but also perspectives on what it means to be a good human. Different cultures and religions offer a broader perspective on what good means, thus contributing to a more holistic and global perspective, extending beyond colonial boundaries.

Disrupting the 'Usual Suspects'

'Western Hospitality' for the Calgary Stampede is built from the same understanding of privilege. Seeking entrance into the family of the Young Canadians, youth and families enter an elite and privileged space as evidenced beginning from the ways the program is accessed as well as who is allowed to become a Young Canadian. The rugged individualism Calgary Stampede is proud of also invites access to privilege and elitism by becoming members of the homogenous group which induces the comradery and sense of belonging our participants shared. By accessing a privileged space based on the success of entry into the Young Canadians, privilege is perceived as earned, not gifted, as this achievement is a culmination of cultural capital and habitus feeding each other within the field that speaks the same language. This acceptance into the Young Canadian family induces a misrecognition of earned privilege and elitism. Misrecognition arises from families and youth who are successful at becoming a Young Canadian did so because of perseverance and grit, traits valued by 'Western Hospitality,' as well as their ability to read 'Western Hospitality' as a path to privilege and elitism. However, misrecognition emerges without awareness of how inaccessible and homogeneous the program is. Upward social mobility reflects the pioneering spirit the West was built on by settlers and continues due to a neo-liberal climate (Thurlow, 2020). Through 'earning' their privileged space, families not only increase their cultural capital but also reinforce the pathway to privilege and continue to engage with the 'usual suspects' (Maxwell & Aggleton, 2013). The narrowed pathway to a program that uses its own curriculum to implicitly reproduce notions of 'West-

ern Hospitality' keeps the Young Canadians entrenched with a lack of diversity of gender, race, and socioeconomic status.[1]

Misrecognition for Bourdieu (2013) offers a paradox in that the group moves between awareness of the work it takes to 'earn' one's position in society while at the same time, this work may exclude others. The Young Canadians thus provide families with the map to access the program and through the family's skill and ability to read the map based on their accrued cultural capital in the field, their habitus becomes one that readily identifies with the narrative the Young Canadians propagates. Participants who were not successful at the first audition stated that they needed to learn how to read the narrative to fit into the group (field of power). This enables the 'usual suspects' to continue to reproduce within the Young Canadians as "reproducing the appropriate habitus" also evokes a "collective denial" on behalf of the group on the ways in which privilege moves into elitism within a homogeneous environment (p. 196). Through the participant images, the misrecognition was unveiled as participants saw safety through a privileged position as well as through a perhaps unintentional costume choice made by staff at the Young Canadians. With limited diverse voices and experiences within the Young Canadians, an elite frame is also seen in participant responses where reasons for not being a good human were grounded in a lack of rugged individualism which continues to establish elitism through privilege as "prosperity and social mobility are matters of entrepreneurial self-determination"—crucial traits of 'Western Hospitality' (Thurlow, 2020, p. 129).

Conclusion

Bourdieu (2013) notes that there is a moment between awareness and denial that can be used to disrupt the 'usual suspects' hold on the dominate discourse. In this moment there can be resistance, where families are not seduced by the desire for privilege but can change the narrative of 'Western Hospitality' to be one that is reflective of diversity. Despite Canada being a multicultural society, those representing the faces of the Young Canadians remain a dominant white homogenous group. In addition, discourses shared during the Grandstand Show are not responsive to strategies of continued oppression or the lingering impacts of colonisation. Despite movements beyond performative allyship, for example, the Calgary Stampede Foundation and the Calgary Stampede remain entrenched in nostalgic views of the Western frontier spirit which continues to use established frontier language that remains exclusive to a specific group and maintains hold on power. The dominant narrative of a singular historical identity revealed how a lack of diversity pushes up against notions of being a good human, invoking bell hooks (2003) call that there is a desperate need to "hear about how inclusion of diversity changes the nature of intimacy, of how we see the world" (p. 105). In this paper, we tried to disrupt by using what Bourdieu refers to as 'the field of opin-

ions' which allows us to deconstruct discourses to see who has power and how it is reproduced. Students in the youth programs are chosen to be representative of what 'Western Hospitality' is: being kind and safe in their own community and following the rules established by the dominant group. We hope that we disturbed the doxa (a set of beliefs not often discussed) for a more inclusive discourse on what it means to live in a Western world now and in the future. Will this disruption in how youth programming perpetuates narratives of oppression be responded to? Meanwhile, the elite nature of the Young Canadians program continues to increase the cultural capital of those who are members of the program and limits the diversity of who can become a Young Canadian.

Acknowledgment

This study was funded by the Calgary Stampede Foundation through the Partnership Research Schools Initiative at the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary. A research report was presented to the Calgary Stampede Foundation. The authors have no conflicts of interest to report. We would like to thank our participants in this study and the people at the Calgary Stampede Foundation for their support and engagement in this project.

Note

[1] Remains of children were found at the site of the Kamloops Residential School. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/tk-eml%C3%BAps-te-secw%C3%A9pemc-215-children-former-kamloops-indian-residential-school-1.6043778

References

Adese, J. (2012). Colluding with the enemy?: Nationalism and deptictions of "Aboriginality" in Canadian Olympic moments. *American Indian Quarterly, 36*(4), 479–502. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5250/amerindiquar.36.4.0479#metadata_info_tab_contentss

Agulanna, C. (2011). Ezigbo Mmadu: An exploration of the Igbo concept of the good person. *The Journal of Pan African Studies, 4*(5), 139-162.

Alberta Education. (2020). *Ministerial Order #028/2020: Student learning*. https://open.alberta.ca/publications/ministerial-order-on-student-learning-2020

Arpaly, N. (2014). Duty, desire, and the good person: Towards a non-Aristotelian account of virtue. *Philosophical Perspectives, 28*(1), 59–74.

Bichel, A. G. (2016). *Communal commitment: An ethnographic case study of the Calgary Stampede Showband* (Order No. 10032460). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1774020301).

Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization* (pp. xvi–xvi). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511845307

Bourdieu, P. (2003). *Language & symbolic power* (G. Raymond & M. Adamson Trans.). Harvard University Press.

Bourgon, L. (2015). Herd mentality. *Maisonneuve*. https://maisonneuve.org/article/2015/06/30/herd-mentality/

Brenner, N. (2012). What is critical urban theory? In *Cities for people, not for profit* (pp. 23-35). Routledge.

Bronk, K. C. (2008). Early adolescents' conceptions of the good life and the good person. *Adolescence, 43*(172), 713–732.

Calgary Stampede. (2021, August). Main page. https://www.calgarystampede.com/

Calgary Stampede. (2021, August). About us. https://corporate.calgarystampede.com/about/organization-overview/

Calgary Stampede Foundation. (2021, August). Early years. https://www.calgarystampede.com/heritage/history/the-early-years

Calgary Stampede Foundation. (2021, August). Main page. https://corporate.calgarystampede.com/foundation

Calgary Stampede Foundation. (2021, August). Programs. https://corporate.calgarystampede.com/foundation/programs

Calgary Stampede Foundation. (2021, August). Young Canadians. https://corporate.calgarystampede.com/foundation/programs/young-canadians

Calgary Stampede Foundation. (n.d.). Youth development framework: Intentional and purposeful designers of learning. Calgary Stampede Foundation.

Carr, P. R. (2016). Whiteness and white privilege: Problematizing race and racism in a "colour blind" world, and in education. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy, 7*(1), 51–73.

City of Calgary. (2021, August). Data about Calgary. https://www.calgary.ca/csps/cns/research-and-strategy/calgary-data.html

Coghlan, A., & Filo, K. (2016), Bringing personal character strengths into the production of leisure experience. *Journal of Leisure Sciences, 38*(2), 100-117.

Cole, D. (2020). *The skin we're in: A year of Black resistance and power*. Penguin Random House.

de Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life* (S. Rendall Translation). University of California Press.

Demirci, I., & & Eksi, H. (2018). Keep calm and be happy: A mixed methods study from character strengths to well-being. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, *18*, 279-330.

Ennis, G. M., & Tonkin, J. (2017). 'It's like exercise for your soul': How participation in youth arts activities contributes to young people's wellbeing. *Journal of Youth Studies, 21*(3), 340-359. doi:10.1080/13676261.2017.1380302

Feldberg, A. (2019). Pride Day at Calgary Stampede. *CTV News*. https://calgary.ctvnews.ca/pride-day-at-calgary-stampede-1.4497104

Fischer, C. S. (1975). The effect of urban life on traditional values. *Social Forces*, *53*(3), 420-432.

Flannagan. (1990). *Urban sociology: Images and structure*. Allyn & Bacon.

Foran, M. (2008). The Stampede in historical context. In, M. Foran (Ed.), *Icon, brand, myth: The Calgary Stampede* (1–20). AU Press.

Foran, M. (2008). Renewing the Stampede for the 21st Century: A conversation with Vern Kimball, Calgary Stampede chief executive officer. M. Foran (Ed.), *Icon, brand, myth: The Calgary Stampede* (325-334). AU Press.

Fowler, T. A., Bukutu, C., & Coker-Farrell, E. (2021). Anti-Black racism is not a 'consensual schoolyard fight.' *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/anti-black-racism-is-not-a-consensual-schoolyard-fight-160134

Frankenberg. (1993). *White women, race matters: The social construction of whiteness*. University of Minnesota Press.

Freire, P. (2013). *Education for critical consciousness*. Bloomsbury.

Giroux. H. (2012). *Disposable youth: Racialized memories, and the culture of cruelty*. Routledge.

Government of Canada. (2018). Tri-agency equity, diversity and inclusion action plan. Government of Canada. https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/EDI/EDI-ActionPlan-EN.pdf

Government of Canada. (2021). Best Practices in equity, diversity and inclusion in research. Government of Canada. https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/edi-eng.aspx

Grenfell, M., & James, D. (2004). Change *in* the field—chang*ing* the field: Bourdieu and the methodological practice of educational research. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 25*(4), 507 – 523. DOI: 10.1080/014256904200026989

Hobson, L. B. (2021). Dazzling, non-stop entertainment on 2021 Bell Grandstand Show stage. ***Calgary Herald***. https://calgaryherald.com/entertainment/theatre/dazzling-non-stop-entertainment-on-2021-bell-grandstand-show-stage

Joudrey, J. L. (2014 [unpublished dissertation]). *Hidden authority, public display: Representations of First Nations Peoples at the Calgary Stampede, 1912-1970*. https://curve.carleton.ca/cd9071a6-55e9-4501-ba66-9dff7fdcdee2

Joudrey, S. L. (2015). What a man: Portrayals of masculinity and race in Calgary Stampede ephemera. *Cultural Studies—Critical Methodologies, 16*(1), 28–39. DOI: 10.1177/1532708615615608

Kelm, M. E. (2009). Manly contests: Rodeo masculinities at the Calgary Stampede. *The Canadian Historical Review, 90*(4), 711–751.

Klein Lawyers (2020). Class action filed against RCMP lawsuit alleges widespread systemic racism. Retrieved, September 15, 2022, https://www.callkleinlawyers.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/RCMP-Racism-Class-Action-Press-release-July-13-2020.pdf

Korol, T. (2015). Calgary Stampede rides ahead into more diverse future. *The Globe and Mail*. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/alberta/calgary-stampede-rides-ahead-into-more-diverse-future/article25382025/

Layton, R., & Wallace, G. (2006). Is culture a commodity? In C. Scarre & G. Scarre (Eds.), *The ethics of archaeology: Philosophical perspectives on archaeological practice* (pp. 46-68). Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511817656.004

Liebenberg, L. (2018). Thinking critically about photovoice: Achieving empowerment and social change. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *17*(1), 1609406918757631.

Maxwell, C., & Aggleton, P. (2013). *Privilege, agency and affect: Understanding the production and effects of action*. Palgrave Macmillan UK.

McDermott, T. (2020). 'A symbol of hope and optimism': 2021 Calgary Stampede poster unveiled. *CTV News.* https://calgary.ctvnews.ca/a-symbol-of-hope-and-optimism-2021-calgary-stampede-poster-unveiled-1.5193024

McNay, L. (1999). Gender, habitus, and the field: Pierre Bourdieu and the limits of reflexivity. *Theory, Culture & Society*, *16*(1), 95-117.

Morin, B. (2020). As the RCMP deny systemic racism, here's the real history. *The Star.* https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/2020/06/11/rcmp-deputy-commissioners-words-on-racism-fly-in-face-of-150-years-of-history-and-pain-for-indigenous-peoples.html

Murray, S. (2016, March 2). History moment: Calgary Stampede remembers some of our greatest female contributors for International Women's Day. Calgary Stampede. https://www.calgarystampede.com/blog/2016/03/02/history-moment-calgary-stampede-remembers-some-of-our-greatest-female-contributors-for-international-womens-day/

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). (2019, May 15). *Critical evidence: How the arts benefit student achievement*. Retrieved January 14, 2021, from https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/legislation-policy/naapd/critical-evidence-how-the-arts-benefit-student-achievement#:~:text=Summary

Palmater, P. (2016). Shining the light on the dark places: Addressing police racism and sexualized violence against Indigenous women and girls in the National Inquiry. *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law, 28*(2), 253–284. https://doi.org/10.3138/cjwl.28.2.253

Pennycook, A., & Makoni, S. (2019). *Innovations and challenges in applied linguistics from the Global South*. Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429489396

Pinxten, W., & Lievens, J. (2014). The importance of economic, social and cultural capital in understanding health inequalities: using a Bourdieu-based approach in research on physical and mental health perceptions. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, *36*(7), 1095-1110.

Petrovic, J.E., & Yazan, B. (2021). *The Commodification of language: Conceptual concerns and empirical manifestations*. Routledge.

Rosenthal, C., & Schäfer, S. (2016). The Calgary Stampede through a cultural studies perspective: A teaching project. *Cultural Studies, Critical Methodologies, 16*(1), 49–57. DOI: 10.1177/1532708615615604

Smith, K., & Smith, S. (2007). What defines the good person? Cross cultural comparisons of experts' models with lay prototypes. *Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology, 38*(3), 333-360.

Spiegel, S. J. (2021). Fossil fuel violence and visual practices on Indigenous land: Watching, witnessing and resisting settler-colonial injustices. *Energy Research & Social Science*, *79*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2021.102189

Stark, E. (2015). 'It is utterly beyond me what on earth Stampede thinks they're selling,' Ad for Calgary event lacks diversity: critics. *National Post*. https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/it-is-utterly-beyond-me-what-on-earth-stampede-thinks-theyre-selling-ad-for-calgary-event-lacks-diversity-critics

Telling, K. (2020). The complexity of educational elitism: moving beyond misrecognition. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 41*(7), 927–941. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2020.1789847

Thurlow, C. (2020). Dissecting the language of elitism: The 'joyful' violence of premium. *Language in Society, 50*(1), 125–152. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404519001015

Wang, C. C. (1999). Photovoice: A participatory action research strategy applied to women's health. *Journal of Women's Health, 8*(2), 185-192.

Wang, & Burris, M. A. (1999). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education & Behavior, 24*(3), 369–387. https://doi.org/10.1177/109019819702400309

Wang, & Redwood-Jones, Y. A. (2001). Photovoice ethics: Perspectives from flint photovoice. *Health Education & Behavior, 28*(5), 560–572. https://doi.org/10.1177/

109019810102800504
Williams. (2021). *Stampede: Misogyny, white supremacy, and settler colonialism*. Fernwood Publishing.
Yeoh, B. S. A. (2006). Mobility and the city. *Theory, Culture & Society. 23*(2-3), 150-152. doi:10.1177/026327640602300224

Engaging Undergraduate Science Students Through Hip-Hop: Battle Rap as Revolutionary Science Instruction

Jamie Parker

Abstract

Through an exploration of hip-hop as a viable method for science instruction, and battle rap as a tool of hip-hop pedagogy, this study explored the use of battle rap in undergraduate cell biology, anatomy, and physiology courses. This research attempted to demonstrate the benefits of hip-hop in undergraduate instruction in science—as a mechanism for increasing science content knowledge, sharing students' emotional state/well-being, and improving students' overall engagement in the discipline.

Keywords: Battle Rap, STEM, Science Education, Post-Secondary STEM Education, Hip-hop

Introduction

A 2012 report by the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) predicted that the U.S. workforce will suffer a deficit of one million college graduates in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) over the next decade. The report called for addressing the shortfall by increasing the retention of college students in STEM. While many have cited this call, many academic leaders have not responded aggressively to workforce needs

Jamie Parker is a health science professional with more than 20 years experience including a 5-year tenure at Montefoire Hospital in the Bronx, New York, and 16 years conducting quantitative and qualitative research on human, plant, animal, and micorbial subjects. Email address: jtp718@gmail.com

by implementing measures that increase retention. Some of this inaction is likely due to the lack of knowledge about proven retention strategies.

Persistence of more top students would address the projected STEM workforce deficit, while building a deeper, broader talent pool (PCAST, 2012). Less than half of the three million students who enter U.S. colleges yearly intending to major in a STEM field persist in STEM until graduation (PCAST, 2012). Black and Brown post-secondary students declare STEM as a major at the same rate as their white counterparts ((Xie, Fang, & Shauman, 2015). The exit rate is especially high for the so-called "underrepresented majority"—women, racial, and ethnic minorities who are underrepresented in STEM majors but collectively make up 68% of college students in the United States (Seymour & Hewitt, 1997). For example, African American students who intend to major in STEM switch to a non-STEM field before graduation twice as often as White students (National Academy of Science, 2011). Students can be retained in the STEM field, one way of doing that is by acknowledging students' different ways of receiving information.

Students learn in different ways (Garfield,1995). There are currently many challenges concerning how students learn old concepts in a new day of receiving content. Battle pedagogy provides opportunities among educators within the science setting to allow their students to learn science concepts through arts and music. Battle pedagogy as a learning tool hopes to improve the way students and teachers both present and receive information with the hope that alternative forms of sound waves can induce enhanced connectivity to the brain. An initial study inquiring how battle rappers engage an audience through science content was done to serve three main purposes: first, to scratch beneath the surface of battle pedagogy as a teaching method and determine where the potential for it lies within the classroom setting; second, what future this new teaching method holds for the science profession; and third, to determine if battle pedagogy as a practice can keep up with students' learning needs.

Teachers typically rely on lectures and power points to teach students. It is believed that this method is no longer effective. Many students are dropping out of school due to the loss of interest (Davis & Dupper, 2004). As Davis and Dupper stated, "the most overlooked school factors is the quality of the relationship between teachers and students, especially at-risk students and the powerful impact of teacher attitudes and beliefs on student success" (p. 179). One of the causes of this division is the lack of effective teaching activities that will grasp students' attention and motivate them to continue learning (Middleton & Spanias, 1999). New developments in science, along with the complexity of science as a subject, should encourage academics to make the learning process as fun and clear as possible (DeBoer, 2000).

The purpose of this research was to discover the benefits of incorporating arts and music (battle rap) into the science classroom, and to determine its impact on postsecondary students' ability to learn while remaining engaged. This study

attempted to address the cardinal issue on the minds of education leaders and the STEM community, which is, what can encourage students to become more engaged in the classroom, how could that process be facilitated, and how does it differ from the current education system?

Conceptual Framework

This study is rooted in a sociocultural framework that explores the concepts of social capital and being an intellectual warrior as they relate to the experiences of youth within a STEM classroom. I draw insight from Bourdieu (2011), who highlighted capital and its varied forms as important for articulating ways humans exist on a global scale. Specifically, I focus on the forms of capital that are acquired in social settings like authentic science spaces where individuals develop a conscious or unconscious personal investment in an activity or process through participating and engaging in the same experiences as peers in science-related fields. According to Adjapong (2017) Hip-hop is a form of cultural capital that many Black and Brown youth possess. When Hip-hop is brought into STEM classrooms and used as a viable form of knowledge acquisition in science, Hip-Hop can be used to expand youth cultural capital to include science. Battle rap is a form of Hip-Hop. Students participating in science battle raps in this study gain "cultural capital," which in its embodied state, is both inherited and acquired as one engages with either new or familiar experiences. I argue that through participating in dialogue with others, science students will gain a new form of cultural capital that they did not have access to at their school or in any other space. I suggest that students gain forms of cultural capital in the authentic science space ultimately by navigating and working in this new space. They can then use these new forms of capital to successfully navigate future science spaces more comfortably if they choose to. In other words, by participating in science battle raps and gaining various forms of cultural capital, students are able to view themselves as scientists and learn how to successfully navigate science spaces. Over time, students have the opportunity to acquire new forms of science content knowledge through navigating authentic science spaces. In addition, the ease with which they engage in, and gain capital within, new science spaces (such as classrooms, science labs, or other science jobs) is increased as a result of their initial engagement with science battle raps.

Kincheloe (2006) suggests that changes need to be made against the status quo within the education space and brave men and women must take up the fight. These individuals who work toward creating a new learning environment should be considered intellectual warriors. Monchiski (2011) agrees and defines an intellectual warrior as an individual who despite potentially receiving backlash from those who do not agree with another for receiving an education and being viewed as a sellout, decide to pursue an education anyway because it may improve

their socio economic status. Staying in school can be considered difficult, for these same students to now incorporate something as common place in society as hip-hop Bascunan (2016), and try to appear "normal," can open them up to criticism. The science students who participated in this study are intellectual warriors because despite not participating in a science battle rap before, they embarked in this space and rhymed to each other allowing for peer learning to occur. Tighe (1971) described peer learning as:

> Creative dialogue has at its root the tenet that students are possessed with a great potential to create, that in order for learning students to create they must also exchange, and that the present lecture system used in most undergraduate courses stifles creativity and exchange. (p. 21)

This statement by Tighe encourages peer learning based on how much students can benefit from creative dialogue with one another.

Research Questions

1. How can battle rap improve engagement within STEM courses?
2. What ways can battle rap assist in learning STEM content?
3. Are there benefits of incorporating battle rap in academic spaces outside of learning the material for that course?

Methods

Setting

Over the course of 1 year (2018-2019), I studied students at a 4-year post-secondary institution in New York City. The demographics of the undergraduate students at the institution were 59% White, 14% Latinx, 10% Asian, 4% Black or African American, and 17% Other. Students in four different 14-week biology courses were studied: 2 Cell Biology courses in the Fall of 2018, 1 Anatomy and 1 Physiology course in the Fall of 2019.

Cell Biology (3 credits) presents central standards of cell structure and function essential to a comprehension of cell connections in the development, support, and generation of multicellular life forms. Distortions of cell structure and function that add to human infection are examined widely. Anatomy Lab (2 credits) is a lab-based course utilizing models, microscopes, and dissections in order to think about the structure of the significant organ frameworks of the human body. Physiology Lab (2 credits) is a lab-based course showing principles of the human nervous, cardiovascular, respiratory, and urinary systems. Overview of human life structures and histology. A tutorial on instrumentation and methodology utilized in medication.

These courses (see Table 1) were selected for study because they are prerequisite courses to become a science researcher, health professional, or medical doctor. Disch (2012) showed that society's health is based on these professionals' ability to share measures effectively that can lead to individuals in society living longer, healthier lives. Giving students the opportunity to express themselves in class among their peers through battle rap is an opportunity for them to not only practice their communication skills but keep them engaged, while also showing mastery of the content.

Student Participants

Students ranged from sophomores to seniors and their ages ranged from 19 to 23. Some students who earned their bachelor's degrees also took some of the courses as prerequisites for a second degree, and their ages ranged from 24 to 33. The students who took the courses majored in Biology, Nursing, or Health. This was also the first time the students created STEM rhymes and battle rapped in a postsecondary course.

Table 3 presents the coded students' names, majors, and years in school who were purposively selected to contribute information to this study.

Students' Procedures

Students were asked to write a rhyme in a language that was reflective of the

Table 1
Biology Courses Studied

Semester	*Course*	*End-of-Semester Presentation*	*Who Could Attend*	*Form*	*Form of Arts Incorporated*	*Number of Students*
Fall	Cell Biology	Both Cell Biology classes presented in an auditorium outside of class time	Faculty, friends, students		Art and Battle Rap	18 5 males 13 females
Fall	Cell Biology	Both Cell Biology classes presented in an auditorium outside of class time	Faculty, friends, students		Art and Battle Rap	17 6 males 11 females
Spring	Anatomy	Performed for class only	Faculty friends, students		Battle Rap	16 4 males 12 females
Spring	Physiology	Performed for class only	Faculty friends, students		Battle Rap	13 1 male 12 females

material they were learning. The Fall semester students had the option of either creating music or constructing a physical or electronic art piece. The Fall semester involved a joint performance where both classes presented their music and artwork in front of one another in an auditorium outside of class time. The Spring semester students were only able to work on a music project and present within class time; a larger performance was not possible because a bigger space was not available. The Fall semester students choose between a music and art piece because there was less material to learn in the course. More time was needed to create the physical and electronic art pieces as many of the students never created art that would be displayed before. The Spring semester students were taking a difficult course and did not have as much time to learn how to build certain art-related items. The Fall semester students also performed and presented their creations in front of over 100 individuals, and so extra time was needed to practice and prepare the material in class. The students invited their friends, classmates, and other faculty members to the performance presented in front of their classmates, friends, and faculty

Table 3
Student Participants

Student (Pseudonym)	*Major*	*Year*
Arma	Biology	Sophomore
Bilal	Biology (Pre-Nursing)	Sophomore
Cassaberry	Biology	Senior
Dally	Biology	Sophomore
Eaton	Pre-Nursing	Post-Bac Program
France	Biology	Sophomore
Grogl	Biology	Sophomore
Hora	Biology	Sophomore
Iggy	Biology	Sophomore
Jolly	Biology	Sophomore
Koran	Biology	Sophomore
Lincoln	Biology	Sophomore
Meoclock	Health	Sophomore
Nore	Biology	Sophomore
Opal	Biology	Sophomore
Santa	Biology	Sophomore
Quince	Biology	Senior
Regal	Biology	Sophomore
Tally	Biology	Sophomore
Umi	Biology	Sophomore
Vance	Biology	Sophomore
Warton	Biology	Senior
Xavier	Biology	Sophomore
Yoli	Biology	Sophomore

members. Each performance took place within 2 weeks of the last day of class at the University.

Each student competed against another student in either a 1 vs. 1 or 2 vs. 2 formats. Students were informed about making music in relation to the course from the first day of class. They were asked to prepare two drafts of the song—the first one due 5 weeks after the beginning of the course, the second one due 3 weeks later. The timeframe was created so students could develop content knowledge about the field before they began creating music about the course and have time to edit another draft before they performed the music they created. Half of the students were asked to email the words they intended to perform after 5 weeks after the first day so they could be checked for science content and flow. The other half of the students were asked to not only email the written content, but to create a video of them performing the song. Students were asked to send in a video in the hope it would make get them more comfortable communicating in different ways. Boys were allowed to partner with girls, and same-gender groups of boy and boy and girl and girl were permitted. Students were allowed to choose any musical genre they liked: rap, country, techno, or R&B. They could also incorporate a beat or instruments if they felt moved to do so.

Student Data Collection

Of the 64 students who participated in this study, 42 participated in the battle rap portion, and 19 participated in the physical art and electronic art portion. Participants were asked to submit their battle rap in writing; if they participated in the art portion, they were asked to submit a picture of their art piece. Participants were asked to write a paragraph reflecting on their experience incorporating music and art into the classroom, or they were given the opportunity to respond to questions I wrote that they could answer about the experience. According to Korthagen (2001), reflection is the instrument by which experiences are translated into dynamic knowledge. Along with receiving reflections, some students were randomly selected to be interviewed in person or in a focus group for this case study. The in-person interview took place 1 week after their performance in class, after classes ended. Two focus group interviews were conducted. One group interview took place in the last class of the Physiology course; another group interview took place after both Cell Biology classes performed at the end of the Fall semester.

Data Analysis

Student reflections, interview transcripts, focus groups, lyrics, researcher's notes, and any feedback provided by participants were reviewed after being transcribed. They were analyzed to gain an understanding of how students felt about incorporating battle rap and art into a STEM course. The data was also

analyzed to understand how the course differed from traditional teaching methods and to determine if students felt battle pedagogy was beneficial to learning STEM content.

Findings

I first begin by stating the themes found within the students battle rap. Next, I state the themes found within the students' reflections. Afterwards, I select and break down students' quotes that were relevant to the overarching themes of this study. Then, I discuss the students' end-of-semester presentation of the battle rap and arts portion. I specifically discuss a question I posed to the students asking them whether they preferred to take a test, write a 10-page paper, or perform a battle rap.

Student Battle Raps and Reflections on Battle Rap

The teaching style for the Cell Biology, Physiology, and Anatomy courses was changed from the traditional lecture and lab teaching style to study whether battle pedagogy could be used as a learning technique. Students had to take the form of battle rappers and teach their peers a topic in science with the intent of keeping the classroom engaged. Forty-two students participated in this portion of the study. They created music related to science content to teach their peers. Afterwards, students performed their rap. Some students had similar themes within their rhymes. The popular themes throughout the students' songs were related to family, love, fear, passion, friendship, culture, altruism, stress relief and fun.

Although the students had different tastes in music genres, some students had similar themes within their rhymes. Students really liked the opportunity to be creative and work with someone else. Some felt they were competing for a grade which made some work harder. Others felt stressed out about the process of creating a rhyme to be performed. I should have done a better job sharing that they were not in competition with each other, but rather with the world. Students and professionals move to the United States every year with similar content knowledge to those here. What can separate one student from others is how they use and apply the information they learn.

It is important to help students understand their strengths, weaknesses, and life areas that consume their mind the most. For instance, giving some students the opportunity to write allowed them and others an opportunity to see which thoughts seeped out first. One student I called Regal chose to write about a traumatic injury and, during member checking, she shared that her injury affected her Rowing career at the University. Following is an excerpt:

> 3 years since that fateful day and I've been seeing my bones more like sticks
> 3 metatarsals that have brought me lots of fear and lots of pain
> but taught me how to live even though living ain't quite the same

> Feeling like a one when you used to be on tent
> rusting my podiatrist was my second mistake back then

Regal appeared to be depressed since her injury. She was mad at herself, her body, and even her doctor. Although she wanted to become a doctor, could this make her not want to become a doctor anymore because of her anger—or perhaps not be a good doctor? Helping her to unpack what she went through was advantageous. Had it not been for this exercise, I would have never known what she was going through. In short, understanding what students have faced allows me to be a better teacher. Another student, Quince, incorporated her father into a rhyme:

> Starting off on the outside, our protection
> My daddy always told me I've got thick skin
> when I was young, I'd fall off my bike, kinda scary
> Time to talk about the integumentary

Quince shared that her father was an engineer and encouraged her to enter the sciences. Hearing these stories made me closer to my students, and the music brought my students closer to the material. They appreciated being able to add their own spin to the content knowledge they were receiving.

One way to add content to long-term memory is by attaching it to an emotion. The combination of adding emotion to content, as well as converting that emotional content into a song, may enhance students' learning ability. When utilizing battle pedagogy, students observed how music can be used as a mnemonic and a new learning tool. For Quince, this project was very similar to one she had done before in her sixth grade science class. She once wrote a song about acids and bases to the tune of "Tik Tok" by Ke$ha, so she was familiar with incorporating academic facts into an artistic model. Most interestingly, Quince said that writing a song or poem about certain topics helped her remember the content much more easily than plainly studying it. In fact, she still remembered the song she wrote in the sixth grade and probably would not have recalled the content had it not been in music.

For this project, crafting the riddles proved difficult since we tried to maintain a rhyme throughout but also keep the identity of the systems hidden. For the most part, the riddles became easier to write once we had written a few because we were already in the mindset of what we wanted to present. In all, this project, although stressful with the presentation portion, not only displayed how science can be incorporated into other forms of learning but also showed how students can utilize other modes of learning to learn better. Other students felt the music could help their communication skills in the academic world and other areas of their lives, as Santa shared:

> Also we included base-base mutations which can be characterized as missense or nonsense mutations which we used to our advantage by saying our opponents were "talking nonsense." In addition to using science to attack, we also included some pop culture references to act as modern rappers do to gain their audiences

> attention. For example, when talking about Okazaki fragments, I say that they are chopped up, locked up like Tekashi. This is a reference to the recent artist who was sent to jail which was surrounded by plenty of media buzz. Overall this project was very unique to me, but improved my way of thinking as I now see that the information you possess is not your primary asset, but rather the manner in which you exchange this information with others will determine your influence.

Santa figured out a way to keep people's attention while also educating them during this critical thinking exercise of conjuring up rhymes to present to the class. Some students felt the music portion was nerve-wracking because they feared public speaking, but they felt having a partner with them helped ease that stress.

While others found the battle rap enjoyable, Iggy found this technique to be scary. According to Student I**,** battle rapping in science class as a teaching style was:

> Definitely something that I have never done before and although the thought of branching out of my comfort zone is very scary I have been trying to do more things that make me uncomfortable so that I can experience more things and grow as a person. I have struggled with panic disorder for many years and a lot of my panic attacks have caused me to avoid things that I would normally love to do. As part of treatment, I am supposed to be doing a lot of things that would normally cause panic or cause problems for me, so it is especially good for me to challenge myself to do things that I am not all that comfortable with.

Although Iggy was uncomfortable with the idea of battle rapping in science, this teaching style allowed her to step out of her comfort zone, experience something different, and boost her motivation to learn science.

Some students found battle pedagogy to be therapeutic. Cassaberry explained that the project was therapeutic in a way she did not expect. Although the performance gave her heavy anxiety, she had fun practicing and making the material, which was a cathartic process for her. As a result, Cassaberry changed her studying methods and became aware that science did not always have to be so serious but can be fun. Dally also found this teaching style to be therapeutic:

> Music has an incredible capacity to help people express themselves, move them emotionally, and give them an outlet for stress and anxiety. I already have my music outlets which I already turn to for just about any emotional state. For someone who doesn't have that connection already, I would think this project would be very therapeutic. I must say that for me though, it did give me a creative outlet which I do not find myself using often.

Koran and Lincoln both agreed that creating music in science class was very therapeutic for them as well. According to Koran, battle pedagogy was surprisingly therapeutic for him: "Science courses are usually so intense and demanding, creating a song was a good way to do something fun and exciting in the midst of

back-to-back exams. It was also nice to take a break from being so stressed all the time and just relax and have fun, while also learning at the same time." Lincoln also concluded that the assignment to create a song was:

> …therapeutic because music allows you to express yourself while connecting with others. I have heard about music being a form of therapy since music can improve individuals' speech and memory. Music even helps people to develop positive self-images, release stress, and provides emotional healing, and although it was challenging, it was also an interesting change from the norm.

Many students expressed that incorporating battle pedagogy into science class allowed them to understand the value in what they were learning and enhanced the learning process. Arma stated in his reflection that through his experience of creating battle pedagogy in his science class, he was able to explore the business side of science and discovered a love for science and business. Student Arma also expressed that he would like to take some business classes, although he did not have time to incorporate them into his schedule. He added:

> We receive little training as medical school students on how to start a practice which is very important in starting a new business. I think it is important that we recognize that early on and take the necessary steps to prepare, innovate and succeed. It's a little sad to not see life skills like running a business discussed in any other science class I've taken. There is life beyond labs, and I think this class has certainly helped me gain a better understanding of how to prepare for that as well as how to look at many of life's obstacles from different perspectives.

According to Arma, including battle pedagogy in science class helped shape his view for the future and opened some avenues he did not know were possible. Arma found the experiment to be very successful and was able to gain life lessons and experiences.

Bilal expressed his experience in his reflection as well. By using battle pedagogy, Bilal was able to learn that he was "an effective presenter of information and can engage people in material. I learned that everyone is different and should access and learn material in different ways." Bilal also expressed that battle pedagogy in the science setting "exposed me to more science being applied to the world. The class was a change of pace to other science classes I've taken."

Dally also stated that he had a more personal connection on the topic he wrote about. Many students viewed battling against each other as a competition, but Eaton expressed that she did not view this method of teaching as a competition; instead, she viewed it as a way to support her classmates: "I never have the mentality that I'm competing against someone. Instead I went in ready to support my classmate." Hora shared:

> I really enjoyed presenting the song to the class. My partner and I did a mix of "YMCA" by the Village People and "I'll Make a Man Out of You" from Mulan, and it was so much fun! We wanted to do something kind of funny and something

> to take people's minds off stressful day to day activities and obligations. I think we did just that, complete with themed costumes and a fight scene. I also loved how everyone was so supportive which is not always common in the sciences. I thought incorporating the arts in a biology class was a creative way to remember key points in the material. I do not think it was very helpful for detailed explanations of the information, but getting the gist of the material was met through creativity.
>
> I felt the incorporation of business and research into the class was helpful because it is not something we usually get to think about in our everyday classes. I think scientist need to be aware of the possibilities of starting businesses and also how to express their ideas and research in an effective way. I think that the connections and networking we had in the class was very valuable. In the first week, when Prof. Parker said we would be getting to know each other, I was a bit skeptical, but I think we all bonded as a class. I learned that I don't have to be so serious all the time with science and that I can just sit back and enjoy the process. I think this class helped me to connect to others better, to collaborate on group projects, and to think outside of the box. I enjoyed this class!

Hora appreciated the different learning techniques I introduced into the course, including the song creation process, networking, and ways to enjoy science. Meoclock described her encounter with incorporating the arts in a biology class as being a great idea. *"*Music has great benefits in improving memory skills, connecting different components into a bigger picture, and can enhance communication skills. Even though music and science are separate fields. "It was great to see how collaborative the science community is." Meoclock was able to experience the interrelation and interconnection of music and science. Using the arts to problematize science gave a fresh, new perspective on Meoclock educational experience. Additionally, Meoclock was able to gain better access communication. This teaching style helped Meoclock gain insight into who she really was a good team player. Her leadership skills had increased, and she was open-minded and considered everyone's perspectives and opinions. Meoclock was now aware of the importance of hearing other people's perspectives, which is valuable for expanding knowledge and enhancing the creation of innovative ideas.

The creation of innovative ideas is important when developing cures for ailments. Bacteria and viruses can mutate altering how they affect humans and other living creatures. If contagious diseases are not stopped early, it can cause many to get ill like the Corona Virus is doing. The Corona Virus is a contagious disease that is mutating in carriers across the world (Petrone & Grubaugh, 2020). Approaching a deadly mutating disease will take knowledge and creativity.

The word I found most often in the students' reflections was the word *creativity*. Many students found the process of writing a rap to be challenging especially since it had to relate to science, and many had not encountered a learning tool like this. One of my goals was to allow students to have fun coming

up with coming with new ways of thinking about a problem. With the Corona Virus currently wreaking havoc in the U.S. and the world, it will take creativity, knowledge and collaboration to stop the spread of the virus. Creativity, knowledge and collaboration and knowledge are some of the things battle pedagogy teaches students are important for growth and survival. Not only in group projects, or class, but the world, and its problems. This teaching style required students to step out of their comfort zone and explore different avenues of creativity, Cassaberry expressed her experience of creating a battle rap for the first time:

> The process of writing science music was actually very fun. I thought that it was a creative way to learn the material. It got a little tricky when I had to make the lyrics match the rhythm and syllable structure of the original music in order to flow nicely. Rhyming science words like "amylase" and "digestion" was a lot easier than I thought. I liked having to think critically about rhyme schemes and how to ensure that the science lyrics would match the syllable sequence/rhythm provided by the original song lyrics.

According to Cassaberry, presenting her music gave her the ability to express herself better in science courses and allowed her brain to process the material in a fun and creative way. Cassaberry also stated that "I might not create a song for everybody system or science topic I encounter, I think I've learned that creating tiny musical rhythms could help me study. I often find that I can remember song lyrics very quickly, so I could probably benefit from adding a musical component to my studying tricks."

Cassaberry feels music can help her recall info, whereas Dally wants to learn enough about each science topic, to put the material into a song. For Dally "writing songs really required you to know the overall topic thoroughly before starting to write, unlike writing a paper where you can reference a book or power point." The process of creating a song was easy for Dally, he mentioned the writing process was very different from anything he was accustomed to, but felt it wasn't that difficult. For some students incorporating battle pedagogy into the classroom has proven to be very challenging.

Some students found it challenging to condense scientific topics into a rap. Raps are usually three minutes (Aarström, 2008), but some science topics take longer than that to explain. For example, Koran expressed that creating a rap required rewording explanations in a way that fit into music. For most students, the process of creating the rap was difficult because of finding words that could rhyme with science terms. Eaton stated in her reflection that it was "tough. Finding words that rhyme is one hell of a thinking process. You basically have to pick your own brain and run through a mental dictionary." Battle pedagogy requires students to think critically and examine their knowledge, in order to consider what they may need to complete a task.

Other students found creating battle pedagogy to be much more difficult than expected. For others like Student Quince, having a partner to work with helped

in order to bounce ideas off each other and suggest new ideas, ultimately making the final result better. Quince also explained that the process was time-consuming, and he had to make sure there were enough syllables in each line to match the beat of the music. Overall, Quince found the process of participating in battle pedagogy fun and exciting because he had never done it before.

Dally also found the assignment fun. He wanted to add a fun element to his song because the team he was versing with also had the same music theme. "It was enjoyable to see how they took the same music and adapted it to their own tempo and style and also for a completely different topic," Dally stated. France also found the process of writing science music difficult but extremely enjoyable. France and her partner divided the original *Fresh Prince of Bel Air* lyrics in half and went through the original lyrics and syllables of each line. Then, they started piecing together the different types of information about the digestive system. "The most difficult part was making the ends of the first two lines of a verse rhyme and the second two lines of a verse rhyme while having each sentence make sense and flow well." Student F found the writing process to be interesting and unique, despite the difficulty in crafting the song.

By contrast, Eaton and Grogl found the writing process very nerve-wracking. For Eaton, performing the rap she wrote in front of her classmates made her nervous. She explained that for University commencement, she sang with the University Choir both *The National Anthem* and the schools Alma Mater in front of a few thousand people, but she was not nervous and could soak in the moment. However, performing a song she wrote for class made her pretty nervous but before she knew it, the song was over, and she enjoyed the performance. Grogl explained that the thought of her performing in front of her classmates was nerve-wracking as well. It took her a few minutes to adjust to being in front of an audience. Writing music was new to Grogl and she found the assignment hard to accomplish because the song had to be about science. Perhaps most difficult for her was trying to cover all the material and ensuring the song had a good flow.

Student Art Project and Reflections

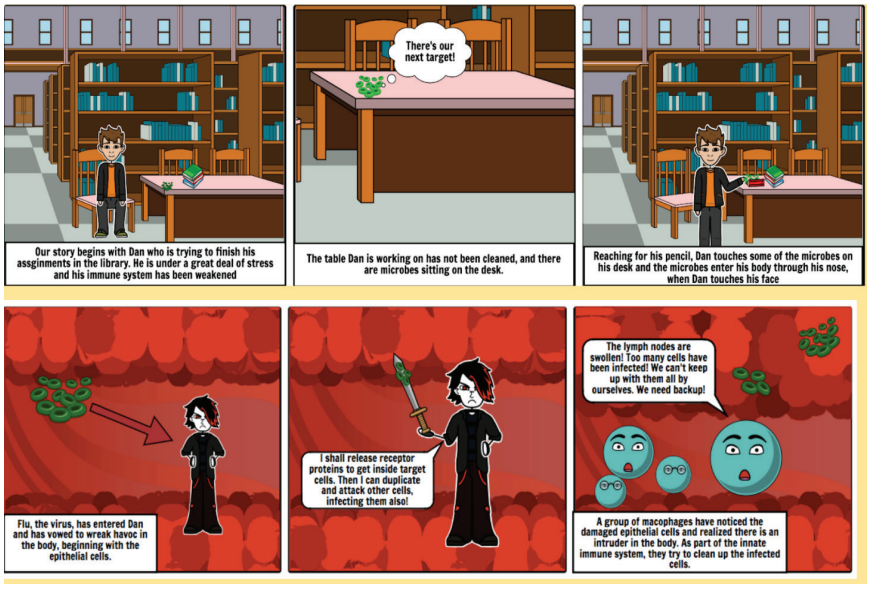
Science can be viewed as an intimidating subject due to the amount of information that must be memorized, the complexity of the material and its tediousness (Appleton, 1995). The subject requires remembering much information. Some students appreciate when they can garner content information along with enhancing other skills that can benefit them in life. Students who chose to incorporate art into their learning experience displayed their work in front of both Cell Biology classes. They invited friends and family to the gathering. Pizza, cookies, and beverages were provided. All the students displayed their art on a table for others to see and could hear others' feedback about their work. Creating art related to science helped enhance skills that may help them in their future careers.

Nore and Opal learned about the process of teamwork and how to relay information about science to others in a new way. They created a comic book discussing the main properties of the immune system. A page from the comic book is depicted below (see Figure 1). They took the flu virus and discussed how both the innate and adaptive immune systems of the body work together to get rid of a virus. The flu is very common, yet many may not know the exact process of how the body attempts to get rid of it. Understanding the process of the immune system is very complicated, but Nore explained that he had a better understanding of the roles of each element the immune system has in the body.

Nore also stated that students should not limit themselves to only textbooks: "Learning can be done through many other means including music, and even comic books. There is no correct way of learning: it should not be confined to just books. This was a creative and enjoyable way to deliver and teach about an important part of the human body and I enjoyed doing this project." Nore went on to share:

> I really enjoyed the event and feel that I took a valuable experience along with me. In the event alone, I discovered many talents that I didn't know people had. I even discovered new things about those I was friends with. As for myself, I have always enjoyed doing art and digital media. Being able to use this passion in a college Biology class was great. I saw some amazing artwork and was impressed by all the creativity it showed. Personally, I am happy with how our project turned

Figure 1
Comic Book



> out and I appreciated the fact that others also liked our comic. I also enjoyed doing the research presentations. Usually, presentations in a Bio class focuses mainly on a specific chapter of Biology. However, we were able to pick a real-life scenario and present our findings on that. I believe that taught us not only how to analyze the real world in a scientific lens, but also helped improve our presentation skills. What I think was most beneficial was having the time in class to discuss our research as we went about completing it. Having opinions from others was very beneficial. I believe I have definitely improved not only in the process of research itself, but also developed some key presentation skills. This class has definitely helped me in preparing for the future.

Opal shared sentiments similar to Nore's thoughts. Opal felt that getting sick is a large part of everyone's life, but not many people actually know how their immune system works to fight off viruses or infections. Opal expressed his enjoyment in learning about the immune system and the immunological response to bacteria, viruses, and infections.

At the beginning of the course, Opal set a goal to learn more about the immune system and gain more in-depth understanding of how humans can fight off pathogens through their complex systems. He understood that the immune system is a difficult concept to comprehend and wanted to provide a fun method that allowed him to take his knowledge of the immune system and explain it in a fun way through art. Opal's interest in the immune system process came from his experience in middle school where he remembered his teacher showing:

> clips from a movie about how each of the cells work, and it made me enjoy learning about the topic much more than I normally would have. This led me to want to create something similar, but with my own twist and interpretation of the sequence of events that would take place in the immune system, if our immune cells were characters. I feel that many children could have more interest in science if they were to see how it can be pleasurable and creative, and comic books are one way that people can use science in a more artistic manner. I have always enjoyed doing art projects and wanted to try use technology to create an art project that could be colorful, interesting, and educational at the same time. I think it is very important to gain an understanding of something that is a large part of our lives, and a comic book is an easy and fun way to learn something new.

Lincoln's work is depicted in Figure 2. He chose to create an art piece for the project by depicting the Potassium-Sodium Pump through pictures. He explained his art piece in detail:

> The letter N and the letter K represent sodium and potassium respectively in the picture. The six bagua is the pump. Other shapes represent other biological materials in the cells. The idea behind this drawing comes from the classic symbol of bagua in Chinese culture. The figure represents a perfect balance. I combine this idea with the dynamic equilibrium concentration between the inner cell and outer cell to show the importance of maintaining a relative balance on the cell biological level in human bodies.

Lincoln continued to explain the reason behind his idea of combining art with science. He had become frustrated by not being an individual who excels at creating something unique. "It was difficult deciding what to do and how to start the project." He wanted to do something easy and thought this portrayal of science seemed like a good way to show off his years of painting and sketching. While trying to complete the project, Lincoln discovered that he lacked imagination and creativity to compose a unique work of his own. This project allowed him to discover his shortcomings within his thought process, and now he wants to understand more ways to develop his creative side. A valuable lesson he learned was to work consistently on new projects, as an old "process might appear dull and repeated…we should always work on something we are genuinely interested in."

Battle Rap Performance (Fall)

The Fall semester Cell Biology students came together to present their battle raps and artwork to about 100 individuals. Friends of the students and faculty members came to observe the festivities. Figure 3 presents a flyer created to advertise the event.

The students seemed happy and surprised that this type of event was occurring. Some students dressed up, invited their friends, and surprised themselves with how well they performed. The audience cheered as they watched the performances and examined the students' artwork. By the end of the night, I gathered the Cell Biology students together and recorded their responses on how they felt about performing in front of others. Some students screamed out "intimidated" and "rap is harder than it looks." Santa exclaimed:

Figure 2
Lincoln's Artwork

> This is good because most teachers don't encourage talking in class, or discussions in groups, it's like, mostly lectures, so this was an interesting take and I think it made us come out of our shell and feel more comfortable in front of an audience, so I really appreciate that.

Hora added:

> Everyone was supportive of each other, which I thought was really important because even though we were doing something that was out of our comfort zone or maybe even a little silly people were still there supporting you. Sometimes in the scientific community that's not really a thing.

Umi chimed in and said, "I loved seeing everyone's creativity, it was kinda cool, we were given the assignment of music and art everyone just came up with something really original and different, so that was very nice." Following that statement, Vance added: "I liked it, I thought it was a nice to add a music component because creatively we don't get to express it much in the science courses." The student also added, "Everyone was very supportive, and it was great for everyone to engage in something and be supportive at the same time."

Next, I asked the art individuals how they felt about presenting their work. Tally shared: "It was a little stressful because mine took a while, but it was nice

Figure 3
Flyer for Battle Rap

because it was different from what we typically do as biology majors." Warton shared, "I really liked the art component of this. Like everyone else said, it is really different from other science courses. I want to be a dentist so that kind of combines art and science, so it was awesome to actually combine the two."
Based on the students' responses, they appreciated the different elements this course allowed them to tap into. They liked seeing others' creativity, interacting with others, and receiving support from others. I learned a lot working with the Fall Semester students and tried to carry that experience over into the Spring Semester.

Battle Rap Performances (Spring)

During the Spring semester, Anatomy and Physiology students performed battle raps in their classrooms during class time. All the students did extremely well and appeared to enjoy their time in front of others despite being nervous. Their faces showed confidence, as if saying: If I can get through this performance, I can get through anything. They may have felt this way given the unique nature battle pedagogy which allowed them to incorporate who they truly are into something they loved—an experience both scary and exciting at the same time. The school newspaper learned I was putting on another performance with my students and attended one of them. The news writer wrote about the event which took place in the Anatomy class, discussing the positive emotions in the air from both students and faculty. When she asked Student L about incorporating battle rap into the class, he replied: "It was nerve-wracking but worthwhile. Making a song that made sense made us actually focus on something and figure out what systems and parts connect."

The news writer also asked Xavier what she thought: "Never before have I had a music component for a college course, let alone a science class, so it was unique and refreshing." These students felt revitalized and more focused on science after utilizing battle pedagogy in the classroom. Although many students in the Anatomy class enjoyed the process, one student became ill during the semester and left the course. Thus, I had to fill in for the student's battle rap portion and actually come up with a rhyme. I partnered with one of my students and I can say the entire process was not easy. Coming up with rhymes about science was frustrating because I know I can exemplify sharp creativity if I am tested the right way but being asked to rhyme was so novel and not as easy as I anticipated. It was nice working with my student because I had not interacted with her much in class, so the time we spent coming up with the rhyme allowed me to build a bond with her that I may not have done without working on this project together.

Regarding the Physiology course, I asked students during a group interview how they about incorporating battle pedagogy into the class and Yoli replied:

> I liked it, I studied through the Power Points, I'm a visual learner, so doing a song

> for me doesn't help me study the material as much, it makes me understand it, it's kind of like different way to think about the material, but when it comes to an exam, that wouldn't work for me, but, I think it is something that is creative and makes you kind of think outside the box regarding science and stuff. I'm competitive so I liked doing it. I liked working with partners which is not something I have not done before.

I loved the level of detail Yoli put into this answering this question. For her to be able to distinguish between what can help her learn the material and conceptualize the material differently was interesting to hear. She felt battle pedagogy was great for her once she mastered the material and liked incorporating others during the learning process as well. Based on the responses from all four classes, battle pedagogy can be a unique way to encourage interactions among students, give them a space to compete against one another, and allow them to conceptualize science material differently. After understanding how my students felt about incorporating battle pedagogy, I wanted to understand why they chose to be science majors in the first place.

Reasons Why Students Chose to Be Science Majors

Students offered numerous reasons for choosing a science major. One was because of their interest in pursuing a career in the medical field or to keep the tradition in the family. For example, Student E discussed in her reflections that her passion for science came from her grandmother: "My grandmother was a nurse and a major source of inspiration and the reason I want to be in the medical field. Her stories about how she became a nurse, and things that happened on the job were sometimes frightening but also endearing because of how many people she was able to help." Eaton's passion for science came from her need to help others and she was inspired by her grandmother's stories.

France also explained that she chose science as her major because she valued the medical field and has a passion for caring and helping others. She expressed that she was undecided about her major, but when she started attending pre-health events on campus and working on this science battle pedagogy project, she decided nursing was the right path. Science in general is "incredibly fascinating because it's always advancing and improving in order to find the most effective way to treat individuals," according to France.

These students chose to major in science because of family encouragement, the experience of this course, or their own passion for the medical field. In addition, although students had options for their future majors, they did not always have choices in how they would be tested on that major's material.

Take a Test, Write a 10-Page Paper, or Perform a Song

I gave student these choices, and of the 29 replies, 30% preferred taking tests, 10% wanted to write papers, and 60% chose incorporating the battle pedagogy method into the science class. For many students, the answer was clear and simple. Many preferred creating an art piece over taking exams. Although the idea of using arts/music in the science setting is fairly new, this concept has proven effective, and many students prefer this as a teaching style. Student C expressed how her participation in using music in her science class was unforgettable:

> I would prefer making a musical rhyme. I can honestly say that I don't think I'll forget the time that I "rapped" (correction: poorly rapped) about the digestive system to the *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* Theme Song with an equally hilarious partner. My family and friends who have seen video footage of my performance definitely will never let me live it down. It was a fun process and fun time. Much less stressful and time consuming than having to write a boring ten-page paper or take an exam.

Eaton expressed the same opinion as Cassaberry: "I rather create a musical rhyme than to take a test. I enjoyed my own work, and especially loved what my classmates presented. It kept my interest the entire time. Papers and tests are boring and mind numbing. You're not activating the creative part of your brain."

Many students shared the same opinion along with Cassaberry and Eaton. France indicated that musical rhyme was better than taking a test and writing a paper because he could combine science into the arts while learning much about the digestive system. According to France, "If more assignments like the art project is given to students, there would be an increase in passion for school and students will be willing to pursue a career in the sciences, which is believed to be one of the hardest majors." Iggy also preferred to write music about science than to take a test. He stated that he enjoyed writing music because it was different: "Every science course I've taken focuses on the memorization and regurgitation of facts; I appreciate the change in format."

Warton actually preferred either taking a test or making song:

> I think I would prefer either tests or making a musical rhyme, I like taking tests because they allow me to see how well I learned and retained specific material, and therefore tells me how much harder I need to work to be the student and future employee that I want to be, but I would also like to create a musical rhyme because it allows me to tap into my creative side that lies dormant in the science classroom and takes some of the stress and intermittent "boringness" away from the subject.

This student appreciated being examined, but also enjoyed creating a rhyme that allowed her the opportunity to build on her knowledge in a less stressful way. While many students preferred the change in the teaching method of science, a few actually preferred taking exams or writing papers rather than making a song.

Grogl communicated this as she found it extremely hard to write a paper because of her difficulty to self-express: "I know what I want to say, but I cannot find the words to get the point across. With tests, it is a lot easier to study material and then arrive at one concrete answer and put that down on the paper. I also do not consider myself to be creative so writing songs/rhymes is really hard for me."

Although Grogl opted for taking a test over writing a paper, Student K and Student D chose writing a 10-page paper. In Koran's opinion:

> Writing an essay is a way to determine somebody's true understanding of concepts. Taking a test would be preferable to making a musical rhyme, but tests often make the mistake of evaluating somebody's ability to briefly remember and regurgitate facts. A paper requires research, understanding of a concept, and translating your findings into your own words; this seems like the most sustainable method of learning, because it prompts you to write about the material in a way that makes sense to you. Musical rhyme tests your ability to simplify concepts and demands creativity, but ultimately gives no indication that anybody understands what they're singing about.

While Koran preferred writing a paper, he felt tests and musical rhymes each carried a specific importance to the learning process which should not be overlooked. He also shared that he did not believe students could gain a better understanding of the material from writing a musical rhyme. Dally, who also preferred the 10-page paper or an exam, disagreed with Koran to some extent by saying: "Musical rhyme was very helpful in learning the material and I enjoyed the experience." Dally felt he learned the material and appreciated the process. One reason he preferred papers or exams was he did not believe in his imagination: "Ultimately I feel like I would be more confident in my abilities to prepare for a paper or an exam than to write music. Personally, I just don't trust my own musical ability or creativity." His preference is tied into his lack of confidence about stepping out of his comfort zone and experiencing something new.

Eaton, on the other hand, preferred taking a test but revealed that the art project helped him realize how science can be super fun and less serious than people take it to be. "I think it would also be cool to turn my future work into songs so I can memorize it better."

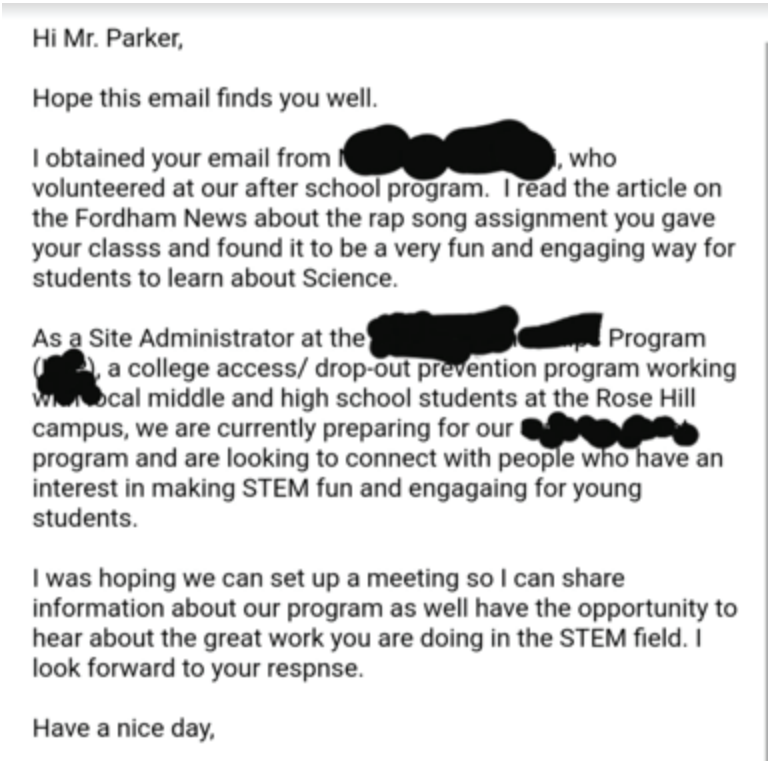
Shortly after the Spring semester ended, I received an email from a facility where Xavier volunteered. Xavier showed the news article that had been written about our battle rap performance and featured her picture and quote to her supervisors. She volunteered at an after school learning center for adolescents. This facility believed the battle pedagogy concept could help them retain students and involve them more in the STEM field. I look forward to exploring these measures and others. The note, slightly edited, appears in Figure 4. Below are two email responses to the battle raps held during the Spring and Fall semester I discuss the Spring email first and then the email I received from a faculty member in the Fall.

A professor sent me an email sharing his thoughts about the battle pedagogy

event he observed in the Fall semester. He appreciated the turnout and, during member checking, shared, "It is a beautiful thing to watch your students come alive as they find poetic and musical lenses to view their own research." He also clarified what he meant when he mentioned that battle pedagogy allows science students to break stereotypes (see Figure 5). In short, he shared, "Science students are typically stigmatized as nerds and to see their emotional resonance with the subject was unique."

Another professor sent me an email sharing his thoughts about the battle pedagogy event he observed in the Fall semester. He appreciated the turnout and, during member checking, shared, "It is a beautiful thing to watch your students come alive as they find poetic and musical lenses to view their own research." He also clarified what he meant when he mentioned that battle pedagogy allows science students to break stereotypes (see Figure 5). In short, he shared, "Science students are typically stigmatized as nerds and to see their emotional resonance with the subject was unique."

Figure 4
Email Response to a Performance



Hi Mr. Parker,

Hope this email finds you well.

I obtained your email from [redacted], who volunteered at our after school program. I read the article on the Fordham News about the rap song assignment you gave your classs and found it to be a very fun and engaging way for students to learn about Science.

As a Site Administrator at the [redacted] Program ([redacted]), a college access/ drop-out prevention program working with local middle and high school students at the Rose Hill campus, we are currently preparing for our [redacted] program and are looking to connect with people who have an interest in making STEM fun and engagaing for young students.

I was hoping we can set up a meeting so I can share information about our program as well have the opportunity to hear about the great work you are doing in the STEM field. I look forward to your respnse.

Have a nice day,

Discussion

I conducted a qualitative research study to answer three research questions on the idea of incorporating battle rap into the science classroom. The research findings from the experiment conducted in Cell Biology, Anatomy and Physiology post-secondary courses analyzing 24 students suggested that implementing battle pedagogy as a learning tool allows students to increase their ability to memorize material from these courses, an improvement in their ability to be creative and the opportunity to develop better communication skills. In addition, battle rap can be used instead of or as a complement to traditional lectures and can be a form of active learning.

One of my goals with this research was to improve communication. I wanted them to learn how to move a crowd without a gun. To show them people can be moved with words, and interactions do not have to end in violence. If more students were able to use battle pedagogy to practice communicating with one another in the class, students may learn how to communicate better with their classmates. Hopefully this increase in communication in school, leads to more efficient ways to communicate with others outside of school. Battle pedagogy derives from two individuals participating in a debate, except they are rhyming to each other. Debate programs have been found to improve students' communication, soft

Figure 5
Professor's Reaction to Performance

Hello All

I went to this Rap Battle last night and left so excited about the creativity of the presenters and the enthusiasm of the audience, which consisted of at least 100[redacted] science students.
The l[redacted] people hadn't yet arrived when I left, but I got to see the [redacted] students perform and they were just wonderful I loved what they did even though I didn't understand
all the scientific concept they were presenting. But the musical and lyrical skill displayed and the enthusiasm of the crowd got through even to a failed science student like me, who decided to become an historian when i got crushed in Freshman Calculus

Professor Parker created something quite wonderful at [redacted]- an event which crushed stereotypes about science students and brought joy to a lot of people

skills, and thinking about complex issues (Chikeleze, Johnson, & Gibson 2018). Because of the similarity between battle pedagogy and debate, students will not only gain communication skills but also have a venue to express their joy and pain in ways that resonate with their culture. As a result, we may begin to have a society that does not resort to physical or verbal violence when misunderstandings arise. Violence among youth and adults is unfortunately increasing (Heller, 2014). If we can teach individuals new ways to communicate their problems, we can see a possible decrease in violence as they de-escalate the problems and elevate their dialogues. Battle pedagogy can not only reduce violence but also save lives.

In fact, many of my students will go on to be medical doctors, earn PhDs, or have other careers in the health field. These professions require good communication skills (Riemer, 2007). Medical doctors have a duty to understand their patients' symptoms to avoid misdiagnosis (Salmon, Peters, & Stanley, 1999). One with a doctorate should properly relay research findings to the world or else risk misinforming the world. In some jobs, individuals have little interaction, and any miscommunication can cause harm to individuals (Abbas, Raja, Darr & Bouckenooghe, 2014). If we begin to educate students in new modes of communication, they can effectively communicate their thoughts to their patients, other researchers, and even their future students.

As I look back over this work, I recognize that when my students crafted their first battle pedagogy assignment, they did not write rhymes, they wrote prescriptions—prescriptions to heal themselves, prescriptions to heal a broken education system that leaves people in debt and, in some cases, worse off than when they first started (Wade,1998). This study supports the idea of using a new concept in science education, *battle pedagogy.* It has the potential to increase engagement in STEM courses, which may encourage students to remain in STEM, or join it in the first place if they enjoyed their experience within STEM. Given the deficit in STEM majors (Heilbronner, 2011), we must be creative in attracting more individuals to the field and making sure that how educate not only improves content knowledge but also interactions with others about that knowledge. It is my firm belief that battle pedagogy should be incorporated into the education system at every level.

Composing and delivering effective methods of engagement involve first understanding the purpose of what students should be learning. Next, engaging with the students in a they may be able to relate which is essentially a culturally relevant manner. Finally, allowing the students to incorporate and interpret their feelings along with the material they are learning. These were the methods used within the course, and the students enjoyed learning in this manner. Suggesting this is an effective method of engaging with students.

Battle rap allows students the opportunity to express themselves without being judged. It allows the students to share personal information with both

the teacher and their peers which they feel should be given to their audience. When students take on the role of the battle rapper and essentially become the teacher, this process allows other students to hear how their peers interpret science content. Understanding how a peer analyzes a topic can be helpful (Goldschmid & Goldschmid, 1976), as some professors may not be able to relate to some students due to differences in age and culture.

Student reflections, answers to questions, battle raps, and interviews were displayed in the previous section. The information revealed the impact of incorporating battle pedagogy in a post-secondary student's learning experience within a classroom. The students' information was randomly selected, and each was analyzed for common themes. Much of the students' music, and reflections discussed love. Whether the love was through their passion for completing school, issues interacting with one another based on love, or the love of their family. Many students talked about their family as a motivation for pursuing a science career or called science their passion. Many noted that their previous learning experiences contributed to their view of science. Other students expressed that the battle pedagogy technique boosted their engagement with science or actually felt therapeutic. Some students explained that incorporating music into a science class opened avenues for new hobbies, enhanced their talents, allowed them to embrace their culture, promoted creativity, and increased their motivation to study science. For most students, this was also a novel way to interact with their peers, boost their confidence, learn better research methods, change old studying methods, experience a form of therapy, and build networking abilities.

One interesting finding from this study was that the students with the highest grades in my course seemed to create the best songs. To ensure that I did not bias the results, I allowed others to judge the battle. The judges were not aware of the students grades prior to choosing the three individuals who had the highest marks in the class. I originally was not thinking about a correlation between winning the competition and grades. In hindsight, I believed this project would have captured students who were not doing well academically so they could excel on the music side of the grading, but that was not the case. What contributed to my thought process was watching different television shows and reading blogs that discussed a correlation between dropping out of school, failing grades and fame in the music industry (BET, 2015). These media sources subconsciously made me believe finding someone with good musical ability and higher than normal grades were rare. According to my study, I have now learned quite the opposite. The smartest person in the class, can also be a great rapper or musician. Being a good student does not guarantee someone will be a good rapper, hopefully future musicians realize that doing poorly in school and being a great musician are not always synonymous. Passion for a course can simply be passion for a course, and some students exert more effort on certain tasks than others do.

Most important was that students had an opportunity to practice seeing how others communicated and shared their ideas in an engaging way. According to their reflections, they had fun, made friends, and learned new ways to recall science information and practice their communication skills. The students felt this project was therapeutic; initially, they felt awkward during the process but developed a sense of accomplishment once they had performed. Family and friends showered them with love upon hearing their creations. Allowing them to see that an activity that starts off as difficult will not always stay that way can be one of their most valuable experiences in school.

Conclusion

I envision universities and colleges across the United States, and even the world, coming together and competing in a musical format based on science. I want this musical portion of science to reach a level where students are recruited from high school and receive scholarships to represent universities in battle pedagogy competitions. I look forward to this genre being recognized by the NCAA and, at some point, even televised, just as Spelling Bees are (Eran, 2008). I want this new wave of thinking to open the door for encouraging spectators not only at these academic events but also daily in classrooms.

During some tests, students should be allowed to have their friends and parents in the stands to cheer them on. Spectators should not only be allowed for moral support during sporting events; encouragement could also be used during written assignments, multiple-choice tests, and even class presentations. Encouragement from others should be possible for all, not just those participating in physical activities on school grounds. For example, pets should be allowed, signs should be displayed, soothing music can be played as snacks and beverages are distributed during certain exams. These scenarios can reduce students' anxiety and make them feel at ease. Although some individuals may consider these distractions, others cannot imagine participating in certain activities without such supports. Exposing students to new ways of learning can help them understand new environments that may be optimal for receiving information.

Battle pedagogy incorporates a constructivist way of learning, currently pioneered by intellectual warriors. Devlin (2013) brilliantly broke down the difference between typical forms of education and a constructivist's approach to learning based on an article written by Wisniewiski (Devlin, Feldhaus, & Bentrem, 2013). Wisniewski (2010) observed two major paradigms in today's schools: behaviorist and constructivist. Advocates for the behaviorist paradigm believe that the purpose of educators is to transfer knowledge to another in the form of direct instruction and memorization, and then to judge effectiveness with a traditional assessment. Efficiency is key and the transfer of knowledge is time-sensitive and normally done through lectures. In contrast, advocates of

the constructivist paradigm believe in a very different approach. Constructivists believe that knowledge is built on existing knowledge. They also believe in demonstrating real-world connections to increase engagement and authenticity. The core belief of this form of education is that students play an active role in constructing new knowledge. The learning is student-centered, and the teacher assumes the role of facilitator.

The students in my courses used the knowledge they garnered over the courses as well as their own lives and came up with rhymes that allowed them to become closer to the material and recall it better. Dr. Halsey, a professor within the STEAM field, supported a constructivist approach to learning, stating that the importance of concepts can help students understand vocabulary terms better (Dulberry, 2015):

> It's more important that students understand the concepts before they understand the specific science terms and vocabulary. I think [traditionally taught] vocabulary kinda trips people up and most people say that is typically the first thing you learn when you're learning something new is the vocabulary. But, if students [are trying to] use words that have [root] words and prefixes they haven't even heard of, and they dont do well doing it, they're definitely not gonna wanna find out what [those words] mean and how they apply. So in the classroom I would certainly suggest that teachers reinforce the concepts; what's really happening, why are we doing this, and why are we doing it in this manner? What's the purpose? (p. 102)

Understanding concepts can assist in student learning (Pang & Marton, 2005). What can also assist students in learning is having teachers, who are not afraid to try new ways of teaching, but also students who are not afraid to try new ways of learning (Peacock & Ho, 2003). Learning should not only be placed on the shoulders of teachers, but students must put effort into acquiring the information their teachers present. If a teacher's approach does not work for a student, perhaps the student can try new ways of absorbing the information being conveyed. Incorporating unorthodox techniques is not always positively received by others, nor can everyone handle criticism when trying something new. However, some individuals push forward and break down barriers. Those individuals are intellectual warriors.

The students in these courses exhibited characteristics of intellectual warriors when they willingly participated in incorporating elements of hip-hop and battle rap into their biology courses. While many individuals view science students as nerds, allowing them to have a voice outside of the classroom may encourage others to participate in the sciences and help retain students in the field. Individuals who participate in spaces outside of confining spaces open themselves to ridicule and possible expulsion from their group. Scientists do not typically engage in aspects of hip-hop and battle rap but given that many students have expressed a disinterest in typical lectures (Lehner, 2007), students who are intellectual warriors do not hesitate to try something new if it can help with learning engagement.

Feeling supported, engaged, and happy should be at the forefront of the minds of those who run any schools—elementary, secondary, or post-secondary. This study indicated how battle pedagogy is a viable tool that allowed students more comfort in a class, new ways to learn, and successful engagement in the sciences. It also indicated how other organizations can use this tool to support student engagement and retention in STEM. As important as these factors are, we must also protect the students who participate within these spaces.

After conducting this work, I realized the importance of students having guidelines on appropriate language during a battle rap on campus. Areas like ethnicity, race and religion are allowed in typical battle raps (Mavima, 2015), however students should have the option to participate in a battle with restrictions on speech, or an option where they understand anything can be discussed. Some students may not mind a verbal attack on some areas about themselves but may be bothered by attacks on others. All restrictions during a battle should be discussed before a battle begins, so all parties are clear on what is, and is not acceptable to ensure an enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Limitations of the Study

This was the first study incorporating battle pedagogy in a science classroom. This in itself was a limitation in my ability to find secondary research on the topic. Indeed, my own enthusiasm may have caused me to have a favorable view of the use of battle rap. Limitations of the study itself include several factors.

While students attended college in the Bronx, they would not be classified as "urban," either racially or socio-economically. This by no means indicates that urban-ness or socio-economic deprivation is a constitution of urban-ness. There were also very few males in the course, although the science industry is mostly composed of males. This study was not representative of the gender that tends to occupy the industry, nor was it representative of the full demographic of American college students. However, it does lend itself to existing research on the increasing numbers of women entering STEM courses and women who are pursuing STEM careers (Zeldind, Britner & Pajares, 2007). This study should only be considered valid for this environment.

Not all of the battle rappers were vocal during the recording of their interviews but were more talkative off camera. This limited the amount of verbatim insight I could have gained from the battle rappers. However, through my extensive personal interactions with the battle rappers, which some were captured through audio recordings, significant insight into their thought process was obtained.

References

Abbas M., Raja U., Darr W., & Bouckenooghe D. (2014). Combined effects of perceived politics and psychological capital on job satisfaction, turnover intentions,

and performance. *Journal of Management*, *40*(7), pp. 1813–1830. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206312455243

Appleton, K. (1995). Student teachers' confidence to teach science: is more science knowledge necessary to improve self-confidence?. *International Journal of Science Education*, *17*(3), 357-369.

Bascunan, R. (Writer). Wheeler, D., Dunn, S., McFadyen, S. (Directors). (2016). The foundation. *Hip Hop evolution.* George N., Executive Producer. Retrieved from http://www.netflix.com

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In Richardson, J., *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–58). Greenwood.

Chikeleze, M., Johnson, I. & Gibson, T. (2018). Let's argue: Using debate to teach critical thinking and communication skills to future leaders. *Journal of Leadership Education*. *17*. 123-137. https://doi.org/10.12806/V17/I2/A4

Davis, K. S., & Dupper, D. R. (2004). Student-teacher relationships: An overlooked factor in school dropout. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 9*(1-2), 179–193. https://doi.org/10.1300/J137v09n01_12

DeBoer, G. (2000). Scientific literacy: Another look at its historical and contemporary meanings and its relationship to science education reform. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 37*, 582-601. Retrieved from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/1098-2736(200008)37:6<582::AID-TEA5>3.0.CO;2-L

Devlin, T. J., Feldhaus, C. R., & Bentrem, K. M. (2013). The evolving classroom: A study of traditional and technology-based instruction in a STEM classroom. *Journal of Technology Education*, *25*(1), 34-54.

Disch, J. (2012). Teamwork and collaboration. In G. Sherwood & K. Barnsteiner (Eds.), *Quality and safety in nursing: A competency approach to improving outcomes* (1st edition). John Wiley & Sons.

Eran, W. (2008). The challenge of spelling in English. *English Teaching Forum, 46*(3), 2-11, 21. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1096304

Garfield, J. (1995). How students learn statistics. *International Statistical Review / Revue Internationale De Statistique, 63*(1), 25-34. https://doi.org/10.2307/1403775

Heilbronner, N. (2011). Stepping onto the STEM pathway: factors affecting talented students' declaration of STEM majors in college. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 34*(6), 876–899. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0162353211425100

Kincheloe, J. L, Hayes, K., Rose, K & Anderson, P. M. (Eds) (2006). *The Prager handbook of urban education*. Greenwood

Matyszcyk, C. (2011, April 2). Apple's new iPad 2 ad: Technology is not enough. *CNET.* https://www.cnet.com/news/apples-new-ipad-2-ad-technology-is-not-enough/

Mavima, S. (2015). Bigger by the dozens: The prevalence of Afro-based traditions in battle rap. *The Journal of Hip Hop Studies, 3*(1), 86.

Petrone, M., & Grubaugh, N. (2020, March 6). Coronavirus mutations: Much ado about nothing. *CNN.* https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/07/health/coronavirus-mutations-analysis/index.html

Salmon, P., Peters, S., & Stanley, I. (1999). *Patients' perceptions of medical explanations for somatistion disorders: qualitative analysis*. Retrieved from https://www.bmi.com/content/318/7180/371.full

Wade, R. (1998). The Asian debt-and-development crisis of 1997: Causes and consequences. *World Development, 26*(8), 1535-1553.

Wisniewski, M. A. (2010). Leadership and the millennials: Transferring today's technological teens into tomorrow's leaders. *Journal of Leadership Education*, *9*(1), 53–68.

Xie, Y., Fang, M., & Shauman, K. (2015). STEM education. *Annual Review of Sociology, 41*, 331-357

Yaduvanshi, S., & Singh, S. (2015). Constructivist approaches for teaching and learning of science. *International Journal in Management and Social Science, 3,* 164-176.

The Self-Reflexive Religious Subject: A Habermas Analysis of German Islamic Religion Textbooks

Kemal Inal

Abstract

This study analyzes the extent to which religious subjects in the texts of Islamic religion textbooks taught in German schools at the primary and secondary levels internalize and employ the attitude of self-reflexivity as a manifestation of modern consciousness in relation to the problems they are facing. We used Habermas' philosophical framework in textual analyses to determine the self-reflexive attitude and analyzed whether the religious subject internalizes the attitude of self-reflexivity as an indicator of gaining modern consciousness by overcoming cognitive dissonances, which, according to Habermas, requires an epistemic break from conventional society and ways of thinking. Our study revealed that religious subjects exhibit a limited and conditional attitude of self-reflexivity within the framework of the selected texts. The dogmatic character of the Islamic faith, functioning as a boundary, and the belief that a solution to the dispute can be found by showing loyalty to a sacred source as a conventional resolution authority, limit being a self-reflexive subject at some points as a condition and thus prevent religious consciousness from modernizing and undergoing an epistemic/cognitive transformation.

Key Words: Habermas, Reflection, Reflexivity, Self-reflexive Religious Subject, Reason, Secular, Post-secular, Islamic Religion Textbooks

Introduction and Problem

With modernization, individuals entered the activity of understanding and transforming themselves within the framework of their problems. In this process,

Kemal Inal is an affiliated researcher with Helmut Schmidt University, Hamburg, Germany. His research and teaching involves utilizing critical pedagogy to study educational policy and cultural issues in Turkey. Email address: inalk@hsu-hh.de

we have witnessed individuals, while trying to get to know themselves with their critical personalities based on reason, going beyond their own limited universes, and thinking in ways that break the power of tradition, in other words, developing a self-reflexive attitude. The subject who does this has turned all kinds of beliefs, thoughts, and approaches into objects of examination and has begun to look at themselves from the outside, from a wider universe.

However, for the religious subject living under secular social conditions, self-reflexivity is a big question mark in practical terms: How can the religious subject be self-reflexive? Although self-reflexivity as a skill (Fancourt, 2010; Kimberley, 2021; Fortuin and Koppen, 2016) or attitude (Wint, 2011; Davidson and Stedman, 2018) has been addressed and analyzed in practical contexts in various fields of social sciences in recent years, there is very little noteworthy work on the subject in the field of religion (e.g., D'Andrea, 2018).

But new developments in modern conditions (e.g., migration to Western metropolises, integration, tensions in secular life, etc.) that require the self-reflexivity of the religious subject highlight religious reflexivity as a problem, "a continuous mode of human action required by the encounter with new situations" (Martí, 2015, p. 10). However, to what extent and how religion or the religious subject takes or should take a self-reflexive attitude in secular conditions is an important problem. On the other hand, how the process of the religious person becoming a self-reflexive subject appears in the context of religious education is not well known since very few studies have been conducted on the subject.

Focusing on Germany, where Muslim children with a migration background are officially taught Islam in the school curriculum, this study analyzes whether the Muslim subject takes a self-reflexive attitude towards his/her own problems. The teaching of Islam with its cultural implications to Muslim children in Germany raises the dimension of the acquisition of modern consciousness by children. In short, to what extent does the presentation and representation of Muslim children as subjects in textbooks fulfill the consciousness of modernity at the cognitive level? To answer this question, self-reflexivity, which Habermas presents as an aspect of the modern individual and modernization, was analyzed as an individual attitude in the texts.

When religious values, knowledge, and rules are used to solve problems in secular life, they inevitably create a self-reflexive attitude in the individual through the process of translation as a cognitive mechanism. Absolute loyalty and devotion, applied while thinking and acting within the sacred world, can dissolve and erase the individual within religion. However, in modern life, the fields of objectivity support the individual to turn to himself, to reflect on himself, to adopt a self-critical attitude, and ultimately to recognize, explain, and interpret himself. Therefore, reflecting on oneself, examining the reasons for this reflection, and being critical are some of the basic acts of the modern individual's becoming a subject.

In the secular (non-religious) spheres of everyday life, the individual encounters numerous problems that lead to the construction of his/her own subjectivity, and while having to solve these problems, (s)he may be faced with various dilemmas, contradictions, in short, she may feel obliged to find solutions between different options and choices.

The subject of this article is the determination of the self-reflexive qualities of fictional religious subjects in didactic texts in the context of Habermasian philosophy. The main problem of the article is to what extent the Muslim subject in German Islamic religious textbooks fulfills Habermas' model of self-reflexivity.

Literature Review on Reflection and Self-Reflexivity in Education

In this section, we will first provide different conceptual definitions of reflexivity and self-reflexivity, and then we will reveal what kinds of approaches have been developed in the literature on these two concepts. The literature review shows that some approaches to the subject are too theoretical and abstract, while others are too narrow, limited, and operational. Habermas' approach offers an original opening by complementing the shortcomings of other approaches, especially in philosophical and sociological fields.

Reflexivity and self-reflexivity have been among the concepts discussed in detail in the literature of philosophy and social sciences in recent years. For example, according to Foucault, while pursuing knowledge, human beings both become the knowing subject and the object of their own research (Foucault, 1994). Bourdieu, on the other hand, argued that it is only possible for social scientists to get rid of prejudices and do objective science by reflexively recognizing these prejudices (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Giddens, Beck, and Lash, on the other hand, spoke of "reflexive modernity" to explain that modern society is becoming increasingly reflexive; according to this argument, society is becoming more self-aware and therefore reflexive (Giddens, 1991; Beck, Giddens, and Lash, 1994). Archer, on the other hand, focused more on the reflexivity of laypeople. According to him, reflexivity is a mediation mechanism between structural property (the social context of the individual) and action (the ultimate interests of the individual) (Archer, 2007). Reflexivity is increasingly replacing habitual behavior in late modernity as routine forms are insufficient to cope with the complex itineraries of modern life (Archer, 2012).

In the anthropological literature, where the issue is predominantly addressed with methodological concerns, (self-)reflexivity has been examined as a methodological problem related to the analytical awareness (relationship with the object) that the researcher develops about the research object during fieldwork. In other words, it is the anthropologist's realization of the dimensions of his own subjectivity (such as responsibility) as a researcher and presenting himself to the readers as a part, data, and component of his research, that is, thinking about himself together with the research object (see for example Geertz, 1973).

Over time, these abstract, highly methodological, and theoretical implications gave way to concrete research practices, and (self-)reflexivity was increasingly conceptualized as operational for practical reasons. Thus, (self-)reflexivity has been transformed into an analytical tool for how it can be used as a mechanism for solving a social/individual problem in various fields of social sciences. For example, Alejandro (2021), in his study of how reflexivity can be applied in practice, developed the method of "reflexive discourse analysis" to examine how his discursive engagement with society can be reflexively evaluated and transformed, and how this can be made consistent with his deliberate socio-political goals.

Although a close relationship is generally established between "reflection" and "reflexivity" in the literature, there are differences. Accordingly, reflection is "the ability to evaluate events, to look at issues consciously and to decide whether the amount and type of evidence required for a decision are available" (Dewey, 1997. pp. 66-67), but it does not focus on conscious and deliberate internal conversations that lead to action (Feucht, Brownlee, & Schraw, 2017, p. 234). Reflection is a cognitive process because it requires the subject to think logically and perform various mental operations to achieve the necessary results. Reflection is more oriented towards "reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action" (Schön, 1983). Reflection is an important human activity in which people reconceptualize, think about, and evaluate their experiences for learning purposes (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985). Winter (1989) considers reflection as thinking about one's own and others' experiences in the process of understanding oneself.

In a practical context, reflexivity forces the individual to think to bring about transformational change in educational practices, expectations, and beliefs. Reflexivity includes critical thinking (Feucht, Brownlee, & Schraw, 2017:238), informed decision-making (Schön, 1983, 1987), dialogic teaching (Braten, Muis, & Reznitskaya, 2017), questioning assumptions taken for granted (Finlay, 1998), and strategies for questioning attitudes, thoughts, values, assumptions, prejudices, and habitual behaviors. In other words, reflexivity is the assumption that the individual is a self-conscious and self-questioning being and therefore has the ability to formulate and reflect on the means and ends of his actions (Lash, 1993, p. 202). Archer, on the other hand, considered reflexivity as the inner dialogue that leads to action as a practice (Archer, 2012). In the modern world, based on various crises and developments, reflexivity has gradually moved from being an epistemological and methodological problematic to being a cognitive possibility, educational potential, and attitude development mechanism in solving various individual and social problems. According to some authors, reflexivity can be a complementary social mechanism for dealing with crises (Cordero, Mascareno, & Chernilo, 2017).

In the social sciences literature, reflexivity has often been treated as a form of practical behavior, and this new concept has been called "reflexive practice". Reflexive practice is the ability to reflect on one's actions to take a critical stance or attitude towards one's own and one's peers' practices through a continuous process

of adaptation and learning (Schön, 1983). According to Bolton, reflexive practice involves paying critical attention to the practical values and theories that shape our everyday actions (Bolton, 2010). According to the basic logic of reflexive practice, experience or practice does not necessarily lead to learning; it also requires deliberate reflection on experience (Loughran, 2002).

Reflexivity has been analyzed from various theoretical and practical perspectives in different fields, especially in education: A pragmatist, problem-solving alternative to general theory (Holmwood, 2014), self-reflexive theorizing for liberation struggles in the context of critical theory (Freyenhagen, 2018), praxis informing healthier urban development and governance (Grant and Thompson, 2018), reflexive writing as a creative and dynamic process for improving the quality of critical research and professional practice (Bolton & Delderfield, 2014), a strategy for examining the individual foundations of organizational learning (Stefano, Pisano, Gino, & Staats, 2016), a methodological tool in management research (Johnson and Duberley, 2003), a key characteristic in the education of health professionals (Mann, Gordon, and MacLeod, 2009), a theoretical basis for explaining how transformations occur in adult learning (Mezirow, 1990), an approach to teaching that opens the field of organization studies to alternative views and is more sensitive to the complexity of the processes occurring in organizations in the context of a rapidly changing world (Duarte & Fitzgerald, 2006), etc.

Reflexivity in education has been the subject of many pedagogical studies as a didactic practice that makes teaching effective. For example, reflexivity in education has been addressed in the context of teaching diversity to teacher educators (Brownlee et al., 2022). Again, it was seen as a powerful tool to facilitate meaningful and sustainable change within the classroom for teachers (Feucht, Brownlee, & Schraw, 2017). In a broader context, for Tsangaridou and O'Sullivan (1997), reflection in education is the act of thinking about, analyzing, evaluating, and changing the meanings, intentions, beliefs, decisions, actions, and products of education; the purpose of doing so is to structure, adjust, produce, refine, reconfigure, and change the knowledge and actions that inform practice. Rolheiser et al. (2000, pp. 31-32) argue that reflection is a fundamental element of meaningful learning and cognitive development, through which students develop metacognition, i.e. the ability to self-evaluate. Duarte and Fitzgerald suggest encouraging hypothetical small group discussions on real-life scenarios involving difficult ethical dilemmas as a way of training students to translate reflexivity into action. Reflexivity as an emancipatory activity that can lead to positive social change, in the form of a teaching approach, has the potential to promote the practical contextualization of social transformations among students (Duarte and Fitgerald, 2006, pp. 20-21).

Reflection, as a continuous cognitive practice involving cognitive transformation, is therefore a strategy for learning from experiences in society about oneself, in which one questions, criticizes, and reconsiders the existing dominant, unquestioned, and uncritical perspectives, assumptions, ideological illusions, prejudices,

false inferences, social/cultural biases, inequalities, and various problems. Because self-reflexivity, as a "teaching method," enables students to acquire different cognitive, didactic, and pedagogical skills. Reflexivity, then, enables students to experience relativism and the pluralism of different perspectives (Besozzi, 1999, p. 321), thus paving the way for a more critical analysis of established, dominant, and taken-for-granted perspectives and practices. However, for a reflexive teaching approach to be successful, reflexivity must be linked to action. According to Cunliffe and Jun, reflexivity should be embedded in life experiences and recognize that we ourselves construct our social world (Cunliffe & Jun, 2002).

Reflexivity in the Islamic context has attracted increasing attention in recent years and has been addressed in various studies. Sentürk (2005), for example, argues that Hadith wisdom has consistently utilized self-reflexivity and that various literary styles and literatures have emerged because of this use. Tambar (2012), again questioning the social, emotional, and material mediation of the expression of reflexive discursive politics in the contemporary Muslim world (among Alevis from Turkey), thematized a particular understanding of reflexive discourse in which existing institutional architectures motivate the production of reflexive subjects by disciplining emotional potentials, moral sensibilities, and modes of historical consciousness to the detriment of the other. Reflexivity and selfreflexivity have also been studied in religious education. For example, it was investigated how primary school students in religion classes develop attitudes and values such as respect and tolerance through self-reflection and self-assessment (Fancourt, 2010). Again, in a course on the sociology of religion, it was examined what kind of self-understandings students developed in the field study reports they produced to be trained in terms of reflexivity (Flamagan, 2001). Reflexivity and self-reflexivity have also been addressed in various studies in the context of Islamic studies, institutions, and subjects. For example, reflexivity in this context has been examined as a process of reflexive modernization developed by an Islamic sect through its work at two institutes in London (Magout, 2020).

What is missing in all these approaches in the literature is the placement of the concept in a broad context, its place in modernization, and its relationship with religion. Habermas' approach is accepted and used as a theoretical model in this study because it fills these gaps.

Haberman on Self-Reflexivity

Modern faith can only stabilize its inclusive attitude within a discourse universe bounded by secular knowledge and shared with other religions through self-criticism. This decentralized background consciousness, acknowledging the relativity of one's own perspective, doesn't relativize the articles of faith themselves but is nevertheless characteristic of the modern form of religious belief (Habermas, 2002, pp. 1501-51). Habermas views a post-secular society as neces-

sary for the democratic compatibility and functionality of religion within modernity. In the context of a post-secular society, religious communities' discourse is reflexively integrated with public discourse and democratic practice. Habermas aims to reconcile the Enlightenment tradition with modern religion, democracy, and reflexive faith in his perspective on post-secular society (Ungureanu & Monti, 2017, p. 521).

However, for this reconciliation to occur, according to Habermas, religious citizens need to be reflexive and overcome the 'cognitive dissonances' arising from the challenge posed to their sense of self by three social phenomena. The three social facts that religious individuals need to reflexively affirm are: (1) the existence and legitimacy of other beliefs, (2) the epistemic position of modern science as an institutional monopoly on knowledge, and (3) the normative principles of the liberal democratic order (egalitarian law and universalist morality) (Finlayson, 2018, p. 13). This demand essentially calls for the modernization of religious consciousness. In other words, the model and idea of a post-secular society are nothing but a Habermasian call for modernization. Habermas argues that this process began with the Reformation.

According to Habermas, following the post-Lutheran Reformation, rationalization led to a cognitive shift, which, in turn, resulted in the reflexive model of faith. In this process, faith was limited by secular knowledge, a universe of discourse of religion shared with other religions emerged, and a decentered background consciousness of the relativity of one's perspective came out. In this context, Habermas argues that the sharp, often fatal divisions, differences, and tensions that emerged in Europe from the late Middle Ages onwards between secular and ecclesiastical forces, leading to deep conflict between faith and knowledge, acted as a spur towards the decentering of perspectives as an impulse towards critical reflection (Habermas, 2001, p. 103). This process also led to a distancing from prejudices and biases as an impulse to overcome particularisms to institutionalize tolerance and disputes (Habermas, 2001, p. 103). For him, the distinctive feature of "Western culture" is the historical transformation of religious consciousness, which enables the religious members of this culture to come to terms with the normative requirements of the secular state and to "self-reflect" on their truth claims (Habermas, 2016. p. 136). Jakobsen says that we can now, after all, expect members of 'Western' Judeo-Christian faith communities to fulfill the normative expectations associated with democratic citizenship. In his view, Habermas is right that there are significant differences in the integration of secular-liberal norms into the doctrines and practices of different religious communities. However, a proper distinction between 'Western' and 'non-Western' leaves the question of Islam and other religions unanswered (Jakobsen, 2019, p. 106). In this respect, some critics (e.g., Mavelli, 2012) have found Habermas' reflections on the differences between Western and non-Western religions Eurocentric and Islamophobic. Habermas argues that many Muslim societies are still in this painful learning process (Jakobsen, 2019, p. 106).

According to Habermas, religious doctrine in modern societies must adapt itself to the inevitable competition with other forms of belief and truth claims. Consequently, religious doctrines can no longer remain closed and self-sufficient in a universe guided by its own absolute truth. Every religious doctrine today faces the pluralism of different forms of religious truths, as well as secular skepticism and the scientific way of knowing, which owes its social authority to an admitted fallibility and a learning process based on long-term revision. Every religious faith must, therefore, relate to the claims of science and secularized, quasi-scientific common sense, as well as to the competing messages of other religions (Habermas, 2002, p. 150). The modernization of religious consciousness then requires a self-reflexivity of the religious subject and therefore of religion in the first place. According to Rosati (2012, pp. 71-72), the reflexivity of religion means making religious differences visible and accepting the profound implications of these differences by individuals and groups, as well as developing 'principled tolerance' capable of recognizing the internal and external other based on liberal and religiously diverse sources.

The emergence of liberal democratic values such as recognition of the other, tolerance, and acceptance of normative order depends on the subject being in an egalitarian universality that does not place its own perspective at the center through an "epistemic rupture" while reflecting on itself (Habermas, 2004, p. 160). Habermas argues that to transcend localism/particularism and enter into egalitarian universality, a new conception of the self against the problems created by modernity must be successfully produced in the "life world" (Lebenswelt) in three dimensions: (a) increased freedom/tolerance for the reflexive use of traditions that constitute identity, (b) autonomy in interaction with the other and in relation to the norms of collective social life, and (c) the individual space that one should have in shaping one's own life (Habermas, 2001, p. 83).

According to Habermas, the establishment of discursive opinion and will-formation procedures is crucial for the democratic self-government of the subject in modern society (Habermas, 2001, p. 155). This enables subjects to engage in a reflective exchange of arguments. For this to be a democratic, disinterested human interest, the subject must realize his arguments in an open, free, and non-coercive communication environment (the ideal communication situation) (Murphy & Fleming, 2012, p. 7). In this context, critical self-reflection and critically reflective knowledge are the primary means for the emancipatory transformation of the subject's relations with nature and others. Against the colonization of the subject by the system, Habermas calls on individuals to reflect on themselves and to transform/realize themselves, claiming that this can only happen in the world of life where intersubjective relations, interaction, and communication are established (Habermas, 2001, pp. 153-154).

Thus, as a theorist of modernity, Habermas (Murphy & Fleming, 2012, p. 3) believes that the intrinsic relationship between the loss of communal (social) ties

and pluralism in modernity leads to a profound transformation of the norms of our common existence. However, rather than relegating existential issues to the private realm, he argues that the weakening of universally binding substantive norms, pre-political values, and lifestyles has led to a "post-traditional identity" that enables and requires conscious and reflexive engagement with substantive norms, collective identities, and established traditions through ethico-political discourses (Kaltsas, 2019, p. 16).

Thus, for the religious subject's faith to play a democratic representative role in a postsecular society, its immutable norms, collective identities, and established traditions must be articulated into ethico-political discourses that have a decisive place in the constitutional regime and rational order established on a rational basis (by accepting the best or better argument) through intersubjective consensus. The production of ethical-political discourses depends on the religious or secular subject leaving pre-political conditions (tradition, custom, ethnicity, national identity, fixed beliefs, etc.) behind and discussing, reaching mutual agreement, and learning from each other (reciprocal learning) (Habermas, 2001, p. 129). This requires the subject both to reflect on himself and to engage in a process of socialization based on a relationship with the other, i.e., on joint learning. In this context, Habermas saw the "learning process of a self-reflective subject" (Habermas, 1975, p. 15; Monti, 2014. pp. 90-91; Cooke, 2011) as critical for the realization of the epistemic break necessary for the modernization of religious consciousness, which he wanted to play a new representative role in terms of democratic inclusive integration in the public sphere (Habermas, 2005) in post-secular society.

This approach, termed "modern self-understanding" by Habermas, is characterized by an egalitarian universality that does not position its own perspective at the center (Habermas, 2004, p. 160). Habermas envisions this process, which necessitates both self-reflection and mutual perspective exchange, as an act of rational argumentation—thinking or acting based on the guidance of the best or better argument. This process emerges through a communication process not centered on the individual but on intersubjectivity.

However, there is a certain resistance from religions to this concept. Undoubtedly, their epistemic dominance based on irrationality plays a significant role in this resistance. As Rhodin (2017) points out, the irrationality of rituals, while ensuring solidarity among believers, hinders reflexivity. Modern forms of communication, although reflexive, struggle to bring their members together.

Contrary to this notion, Habermas argues that an irrational power can be rational, though he does not provide a sustained argument to support his claims. He contends that this irrational force can offer the same socially cohesive qualities that foster solidarity. According to him, the metaphysical can transform into the postmetaphysical through communicative action (Habermas, 1998; Rhodin, 2017, p. 4). This aligns with Kant's "rational faith" thesis. Like Kant, Habermas advocates for a postmetaphysical thought that integrates faith into the rational sphere,

making it as reconcilable, familiar, and supportive as possible with secular values. This necessitates religious believers developing a new attitude towards secularism. They must become reflexive subjects not bound by a fixed and unchanging pre-political dominant episteme, but by an argumentative and discursive rational environment open to change. This attitude depends on engaging in discourse with others, learning from it, and even adjusting one's own epistemological position.

As Chambers points out, secular and religious subjects, as citizens, should approach each other in a spirit of accommodation and learning (Chambers, 2007, p. 212). For this, religious consciousness must be reflexive, and secularist consciousness must transcend its own limits. Therefore, according to Habermas, the construction of a postsecular society—peaceful coexistence of religious and secular citizens in a democratic constitutional state—requires an epistemic break or change on both sides. Orthodox religious traditions should be reflexive, with religious citizens finding ways to reconcile their beliefs with respect for the religious freedom of others, the independent validity of scientific knowledge, and the secular character of the constitutional state. Secular citizens, on the other hand, should develop postmetaphysical thinking that recognizes religions are not necessarily irrational relics of pre-modern times (Habermas, 1998) and advocates for respecting diversity (Morrow, 2012, p. 65).

To summarize, rationally guided self-reflexive actions imply cognitive change and discussion with others, requiring one to leave their fixed epistemic space. Reflexivity, then, necessitates being open to the revision of one's own propositions (Montero, 2014, p. 201). For Habermas, reflexivity is one of the most important characteristics of the type of interaction that takes place within procedures shared because of a common language. Thus, all religious certainties, like others, are more exposed to the need to look at one's own belief from the outside, that is, to objectify it and relate it to other points of view (Montero, 2014, p. 206). As Williams states, recognition of the other and self-understanding are dialectically necessary elements of reflexive consciousness (Williams, 1997). For this dialectical relationship to emerge, the subject's relationship with the other should not be based on certain absolutes (God, Geist, etc.); the limits of the subject's self-criticism, questioning, and understanding should only be on normative (moral principles).

Ulrich Beck argues that the process of modernization we are already experiencing has become reflexive, and the subject has become both subject and problematic (Beck, 2011, p. 22). According to him, the decrease in the proportion of life opportunities that are closed to the notion of decision-making and the increase in the proportion of biographies that are open to choose and must be personally constructed lead to the individualization of life positions and processes, which in turn makes biographies self-reflexive (p. 205).

Method

For our study, we initially conducted a preliminary analysis of all Islamic religion textbooks taught in primary, secondary, and high schools in Germany (31 textbooks in 8 states). We then selected five texts from these textbooks that are relevant to our research topic due to their typical characteristics. While there is no universally accepted method for analyzing textbooks (Pingel, 1999), we employed content analysis (Badzinski, Woods, & Nelson, 2021) as a form of textual analysis to uncover and explain the implicit messages in religious texts. However, instead of creating codes or categories for content analysis, we aimed to understand the text in terms of Habermasian self-reflexive concepts. For content analysis, we first subjected the texts to "case presentation" and then conducted text analysis.

Cases and Comments

Case 1 - "I Want To Be a Good Person"

The topic "I want to be a good person" (Shakir, 2020a, p. 5051) in this book, written for the fourth grade Grundschule, is included under the unit "being a good person." The text discusses what Bilal should do in the face of a problem. Bilal wants to play football with his friends, but they do not have a ball. Ahmad from the group suddenly kicks a boy, takes his ball, and throws it to Bilal. All the children except Bilal laugh at the situation, but Bilal does not find Ahmad's behavior right. So, what should Bilal have done in this situation? (p. 50). The students, who are the readers of this textbook, are asked to give advice to Bilal and then compare their advice with each other. They are also asked if they have ever been in a similar situation and how they behaved.

Prior to this bullying incident, students are asked to reflect on a statement from the prophet Muhammad at the beginning of the page. In this statement, Muhammad tells Muslims that they should help their brothers and sisters even if they are wrong or mistaken. But what if the brother is wrong? According to Muhammad, one should forbid the wrongdoer from doing wrong. To forbid is to support. Therefore, when the moral principle of how a Muslim individual should behave in an individual situation is given by Muhammad, the duty of the individual is to act in accordance with this principle. However, every practice requires an interpretation, and interpretation can lead the individual to relativize his/her situation, not to fit it into absolute patterns. Different ways of thinking are a necessity and a consequence of this.

Bilal remained silent when the boy's ball was forcibly taken away from him, and then he played with it. However, on the way home after playing with the ball, Bilal thinks about the situation: What should he have done or said when the ball was taken away from the boy by force? Here, a saying of Muhammad comes to his mind: "Whoever among you sees an evil deed, let him change it with his hand, and if he

cannot do that, let him change it with his words, and if he cannot do that, let him change it with the desire of his heart" (p. 51). The question posed in the textbook is: Did Bilal fulfill this statement of Muhammad? If so, in what way? The students are also asked how Bilal could have implemented Muhammad's saying better.

Therefore, although it can be said that the students here are independent, free, and autonomous in constructing their subjectivities based on this saying, Muhammad's moral framework is limiting in the absolute sense that it places the Muslim in a certain place, position, and duty. Muhammad's suggestions to tolerate, help, and do good are undoubtedly inspirational in terms of positive thinking, but they also determine the direction of discussion, interpretation, and analysis. Self-reflexivity can be hampered here as one can be determined in constructing one's own thoughts and recommendations. Reflection on others and not on oneself continues, so one may not question oneself.

However, Bilal activates his ego by thinking about this wrong behavior and tries to transform himself. In a way, he tries to be autonomous by thinking differently from his friends and establishes a dialectical relationship between himself and the other (the boy whose ball was taken away) at the subject level, forms his will, and tries to overcome his cognitive dissonance. This is the act of not centering oneself because by isolating oneself from the group and moving to another universe (by not thinking like one's friends), one overcomes one's own limits. In a way, he enters a dialogue within himself and discusses with the other; he questions himself about whether what he does (playing with the ball taken from the child by force) is wrong or not, which is not self-centered. In a way, he tries to develop egalitarian universalism by leaving/getting out of his own universe, that is, by decentralizing his own position. In other words, he replaces the wrong individual behavior with a universally accepted good behavior.

In educational terms, this is being critical in the face of a problem, but there is no mutual/complementary learning of good behavior among group members. On the other hand, although Bilal cannot develop discursive thought, he remembers the word of the prophet Muhammad and engages in reflexive argument exchange. Nevertheless, he does not objectify his belief through communicative reason. Although he engages in a process of translation (the translation of Muhammad's religious/sacred word into everyday language), this translation process does not involve an argumentation because his arguments are absent or ambiguous in the text; he only thinks of Muhammad's word as a norm of good behavior. But this shows that Bilal tries to act self-reflexively, even through Muhammad.

In the end, Bilal questions morally wrong, unjust, and bad behavior in this simple everyday problem, thinks differently from the consciousness, universe, and values of his friends, and considers what the good thing could be. In doing so, he reflects on himself through his own fault and re-evaluates the other (the boy who has the ball taken away) through religion-based moral codes. Although Muhammad has set this moral code or principle, Bilal and the other students are free

to interpret it in different ways. This calls students to argumentation, to think or apply various processes through communicative reason.

Case 2: "All-Seeing Allah"

The text titled "Meryem and Apple" (Coskun, Kurtbecer, Kesici, & Dagaslanı, 2019, pp. 40-41) in this book written for Grundschule grades 1 and 2 is included in the unit titled "Allah." The text describes an intriguing experience of a student named Meryem at school. In the lesson, the teacher distributes apples in a basket to the students one by one and instructs them to eat the apples in a way that no one can see them. Each student follows the teacher's instructions, except for Meryem, who refuses, stating that it's impossible for her to eat the apple without anyone seeing her because God sees everything people do always everywhere. The teacher acknowledges Meryem's perspective, aiming to emphasize that Allah is all-seeing ("Al-Basir," "der Sehende").

In this example, none of the students questioned why the apples were distributed in such a manner or why they had to eat them secretly. The students accepted the teacher's authority and faithfully followed his instructions, eagerly awaiting the results. Only Meryem defied the directive but justified her non-compliance by invoking a religious commandment, earning praise from her teacher. However, the belief that God sees everything may hinder individuals from engaging in certain activities that should remain private due to concerns about surveillance, such as voting secretly in elections or engaging in private matters.

The illustration of Meryem holding an apple indicates a lack of consideration for alternative perspectives, as she confines her thoughts within a religious framework. Additionally, the use of the apple, a symbol of expulsion from paradise, reinforces a negative mythic reference to the past.

Meryem's unwavering belief in God prevented her from participating in a process of argumentation, inhibiting the development of an autonomous self, and hindering the objectification of her beliefs. Consequently, Meryem, bound by her faith, failed to transcend her limitations, impeding self-critical thinking and self-reflection. While refusing to complete the assigned homework allowed Meryem to assert her autonomy and challenge authority, her inability to engage in self-reflection within the secular realm suggests that her faith did not translate into a broader context.

Case 3: "Meryem's Choice"

The text titled "Angel Records" (Coskun, Kurtbecer, Kesici, & Dagaslanı, 2018: 44) in this book for Grundschule Grade 3 is part of the "Creation" unit. The story narrates an incident where Meryem steals her friend's pencil sharpener in the classroom, later returning it when she believes angels are watching her. Although the act is a form of theft, the narrative avoids labeling it as a criminal offense. Meryem, feeling uneasy about her unethical behavior, decides to alleviate her discomfort.

Upon remembering her mother's words about angels watching and recording people's actions, Meryem confesses her misdeed to her mother. Her ethical behavior is rooted in religious fear and regret rather than a recognition of the act as a crime according to the law. Meryem's self-reflection is influenced by religious commands rather than universal legal norms. While it is positive for an individual to feel remorse and rectify mistakes, the story lacks a resolution through legal means, and it does not engage in a Habermasian "discourse ethics" or ideal speech situation through rational argumentation.

The narrative raises the question of whether one can atone for wrongdoing. While compensation is possible, the absence of legal consequences suggests that religious remorse is the sole resolution. The text does not address how someone who does not believe in angels, and therefore lacks religious remorse, would handle a similar situation. The author offers a solution to the problem through the mention of angels without resorting to legal measures. However, according to Habermas, normative consciousness requires actions to be recorded based on rational contracts and evaluated accordingly. Meryem's reflection and questioning of her actions are confined within traditional reasoning, not modern consciousness, and the narrative does not assert that theft is universally ethically wrong.

Case 4: "As the Curtain Rises and Falls"

The text titled "Curtains Up" (Çelik, Çelik, Ispirli, Öztürk, Üçüncü, 2017, pp. 70-71) in the Grundschule Grade 4 book is included in the unit titled "I-You-We-All." In this dialogue-based text, two characters representing youth and old age seek answers on how to live harmoniously. The fictional text, resembling a theatre play, presents two masks (cheerful and sad faces) at the top of the page, symbolizing theatre at a universal level when Meryem and Ahmad open the curtain. The exploration of the meaning of old age and youth revolves around religion, addressing both the present and the future.

The young boy, portraying strength and bravery, initiates the conversation by stating that he is ready to do anything. The voice representing old age, an old sage, acknowledges the youth's assertion, emphasizing that there is a time for everything. The young person seeks wise advice from the elder on life, leading to a discussion on the significance of youth and the need for preparation for the future. The old sage likens youth to spring and summer, urging the young to sow in their youth to reap in the harvest of autumn and winter.

The young person expresses respect for older individuals but insists that today's youth should not be underestimated. The old sage believes such a perspective will lead to failure, expressing pity for the young person's lack of understanding of the current situation. The sage imparts three recommendations for the youth's preparation for the future: (1) obtaining a good profession and earnings for the future, (2) being hardworking, honest, and respectful, and (3) embracing

generosity while practicing frugality throughout life. The young person contemplates achieving these through insurance or banking, but the old sage emphasizes that making mistakes is part of being human and suggests starting to win in both worlds from the present.

The dialogue continues, and the old sage, portrayed as a typical Muslim grandfather on page 71, advises the youth on the highest return, stating, "To err is a human thing." The sage encourages the young person to start winning in this world to succeed in both worlds. The young responds, "Then we'll have a lucky bag at the time of flowering," signifying understanding and acceptance of the advice. The young person's consciousness reflects on self, views on the elderly, life stance, and simplicity. Despite attempting to prove himself, the young ultimately leans towards emulation of the old sage, symbolizing a good Muslim. The young's self-reflection centers on preparation for the next world, portraying the modern/secular world as a preparatory stage for self-realization.

In analyzing this socialization act through the exchange of wisdom between generations, it becomes evident that the young person aligns himself with past values rather than evolving or transcending his consciousness. While the guidance promotes absolute loyalty to religious values for actions in the objective world and divine universe, it hinders the development of argumentative, deliberative, and self-transcending attitudes. The pattern of socialization is effective, but the religious self-reflection tends to instrumentalize reason based on divine principles, lacking some essential Habermasian components for self-reflexive consciousness. In recognizing differences in others, individuals discover themselves through a dialectical process of questioning, criticizing, and renewing. However, in this case, the self-reflexive reasoning falls short of transcending the other, emphasizing resemblance rather than contradiction. The young person's consciousness aligns with the elderly, not engaging in communicative reason, argumentation, reflexive arguments, or intersubjectivity. Holmwood's concept of reflexivity connecting with problems and aiming towards a solution is not fully realized here.

Case 5: "Learning from Each Other by Talking"

The text titled "Talking to Each Other—Learning from Each Other" (Shakir, 2020b, p. 82) is part of the unit "People Feeling" in the 8th-grade religion textbook for "Sekundarstufe" (secondary education). The text raises questions about faith recognition, presenting young people's ideas in speech bubbles without developing a controversial dialogue among them. This approach implies that different beliefs are introduced without acknowledging any relationship, interaction, or potential conflicts, hindering egalitarian universalism and the objectification of one's own belief through communicative reason.

While introducing different beliefs, the text fails to depict a realistic picture where differences lead to contradictory processes, conflicts, and debates. The ab-

sence of such elements creates an idealized and problem-free world, not allowing for the establishment of communicative reason and argumentation. Although students are encouraged to explore differences and similarities between Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism, there is a lack of self-reflexive reflection on these differences. The only question related to this invites students to take a defensive stance in conversations contradicting their own religion, limiting access to self-reflexive components through epistemic detachment.

In the recognition of different beliefs, the text falls short of fostering a dialectical process of questioning, criticizing, and renewing oneself. The absence of contradictory processes and debates portrays an idealized, problem-free world, preventing the establishment of communicative reason and argumentation. While creating a peaceful and democratic world design is crucial, students also have the right to learn about the real challenges. Introducing a different religion should lead to a complete self-reflexive process, acknowledging and addressing the potential conflicts and debates that may arise.

From a Habermasian conceptual perspective, our analysis explores how (Muslim) individuals employ self-reflexivity as a form of modern consciousness and cognitive capacity in German Islamic religion textbooks to address the challenges they encounter. The study unveils that, despite being a theoretical and philosophical concept, self-reflexivity functions as a didactic tool in the pedagogical realm, aiming to cultivate students' cognitive skills. Education, in this context, emerges as a didactic institution where students comprehend the conditions of a secular/democratic society and resolve issues based on a modern consciousness rooted in philosophical concepts.

Habermas perceives education as a force that fosters critical reasoning essential for democracy (Fleming, 2012, p. 113), treating cognitive capacity as a pathway to learning (Habermas, 2002, p. 20). However, for this reasoning and cognitive capacity to manifest, he advocates for the translation of religious moral sensibilities into the discourse of secular reason (Habermas, 2016), necessitating mutual learning between religious and non-religious traditions (Habermas, 1998, 2016; Pabst, 2012, p. 1004). Consequently, Habermas calls for a "modernisation of religious consciousness" (Arishidze, 2017, p. 724). To align with political liberalism, religious consciousness must undergo a process of modernization in response to challenges such as religious pluralism, modern science, positive law, and profane morality.

According to Habermas, an essential requirement for the success of this modernization process in religion is the development of an epistemic attitude among religious citizens. Stoeckl (2017: 36) suggests that one way to achieve this is for the religious subject to move beyond the confines of its own discourse and engage in a self-reflexive relationship with other religions and worldviews.

However, the development of the religious subject's self-reflexive learning skills depends on the cognitive capacity meeting the parameters and requirements of a specific context. Habermas outlines this context in terms of the epistemic

break of modern consciousness from the thought parameters of conventional society, wherein the subject turns inward and adopts a critical attitude. However, our analysis indicates that this modern epistemic attitude is not fully realized in the textbooks examined.

In the first case, Bilal, while contemplating his problem, is constrained by the words of the prophet Muhammad and fails to transcend his limits. Consequently, he cannot transition from the religious (particular) context to the universal (ethical) context, impeding the experience of an epistemic break that would modernize his consciousness. A similar situation is observed with Meryem in the second case, where her belief in God prevents the development of an autonomous self. This belief hinders her from decentralizing her own identity, objectifying her belief, and adopting an epistemic stance through argumentation. In the third case, although Meryem questions herself about the stolen pencil sharpener, her inquiry remains within the narrow confines of traditional reasoning rather than modern consciousness. Theft is acknowledged by angels, but it is not explicitly denounced as bad or criminal in terms of universal ethics. In the fourth case, the young man's loyalty to the old man and emulation efforts causes him to remain entrenched in the value system of the past, hindering the development of his consciousness. In the fifth case, despite the apparent dialogue among young people, no self-reflexivity emerges from their intersubjective argumentation, and they fail to learn from each other. Each plays a different tune, but the lack of self-reflexivity hampers intellectual development.

Although the encountered problems relate to secular or profane conditions (e.g., neglecting homework, forcibly taking a child's ball, stealing someone else's eraser), the conditioning of conscience by religion in Islam ultimately restricts the potential for becoming a self-reflexive subject. In Germany, a secular and democratic country, Islamic religion textbooks offer a limited yet somewhat open opportunity for the didactic development of a highly philosophical concept such as self-reflexivity. This is significant as it aligns with democratic values for Muslim subjects, the protagonists in this case, encouraging them to approach problems through discussion, dialogue, and communication.

References

Alejandro, A. (2021). Reflexive discourse analysis: A methodology for the practice of reflexivity. *European Journal of International Relations, 27*(1), 150-157.

Archer, M. (2007). *Making our way through the world: Human reflexivity and social mobility*. Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M. (2012). *The reflexive imperative in late modernity*. Cambridge University Press.

Areshidze, G. (2017). Taking religion seriously? Habermas on religious translation and cooperative learning in post-secular society. *American Political Science Review, 111*, 724–737.

Badzinski, D. M., Woods, R. H., & Nelson, C. M. (2021). Content analysis. In *The Routledge handbook of research methods in the study of religion* (2nd edition). Routledge.

Beck, U. (2011). *Risk Toplumu. Baska Bir Modernlige Dogru*. Çev. K. Özdogan & B. Dogan. Ithaki.

Beck, U., Giddens, A., & Lash, S. (1994). *Reflexive modernization: Politics, tradition, and aesthetics in the modern social order*. Polity.

Besozzi, E. (1999). Social sciences, reflective practice, and educational context. *Pedagogy, Culture, and Society, 7*(2), 321-328.

Bolton, G. (2010). *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development* (3rd ed.). SAGE.

Bolton, G., & Delderfield, R. (2014). *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development* (4th ed.). SAGE.

Boud, D., Keogh, R., & Walker, D. (1985). Reflection: Turning experience into learning. Kogan Page.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. D. (2004). An invitation to reflexive sociology. University of Chicago Press.

Bråten, I., Muis, K. R., & Reznitskaya, A. (2017). Teachers' epistemic cognition in the context of dialogic practice: A question of calibration? *Educational Psychologist, 52*(4), 1-17.

Brownlee, J. L. et al. (2022). How epistemic reflexivity enables teacher educators' teaching for diversity: Exploring a pedagogical framework for critical thinking. *Business and Economics Research Journal, 48*, 684-703.

Chambers, S. (2007). How religion speaks to the agnostic: Habermas on the persistent value of religion. *Constellations, 14*(2), 210-233.

Cooke, M. (2011). Translating truth. *Philosophy and Social Criticism, 37*(4), 479–491.

Cordero, R., Mascareño, A., & Chernilo, D. (2017). On the reflexivity of crises: Lessons from critical theory and systems theory. *European Journal of Social Theory, 20*(4), 511-530.

Cunliffe, A. L., & Jun, J. S. (2002). *Reflexivity as intellectual and social practice*. Paper prepared for the annual meeting of the Public Administration Theory Network.

D'Andrea, A. (2018). *Reflexive religion: The new age in Brazil and beyond*. BRILL.

Davidson, D. J., & Stedman, R. C. (2018). Calling forth the change-makers: Reflexivity theory and climate change attitudes and behaviors. *Acta Sociologica, 61*(1), 79–94. DOI: 10.1177/0001699317693065.

Dewey, J. (1997/1910). *How we think*. Dover Publications.

Duarte, F., & Fitzgerald, A. (2006). Guiding principles for a reflexive approach to teaching organisation studies. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice, 3*(1), 15-23.

Fancourt, N. (2010). 'I'm less intolerant': Reflexive self-assessment in religious education. *British Journal of Religious Education, 32*(3), 291–305.

Feucht, F. C., Brownlee, J. L., & Schraw, G. (2017). Moving beyond reflection: Reflexivity and epistemic cognition in teaching and teacher education. *Educational Psychologist, 52*(4), 234-241.

Finlay, L. (1998). Reflexivity: An essential component for all research? *British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 61*(10), 453-456.

Finlayson, J. G. (2018). No proviso: Habermas on Rawls, religion, and public reason. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 1-22.

Flanagan, K. (2001). Reflexivity, ethics and the teaching of the sociology of religion. *Sociology, 35*(1), 1-19.

Fleming, T. (2012). Condemned to learn: Habermas, university and the learning society. In

M. Murphy & T. Fleming (eds), *Habermas, critical theory and education* (pp. 111-124). Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1994). *The order of things: An archaeology of human sciences*. Vintage Books.

Fortuin, K. P. J., & Koppen, K. van. (2016). Teaching and learning reflexive skills in inter- and transdisciplinary research: A framework and its application in environmental science education. *Environmental Education Research, 22*(5), 697-716, DOI: 10.1080/13504622.2015.1054264.

Freyenhagen, F. (2018). Critical theory: Self-reflexive theorizing and struggles for emancipation. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.195.

Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In C. Geertz (ed), *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays* (pp. 3-33). Basic Books.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Polity.

Grant, M., & Thompson, S. (2018). Reflective praxis: Accelerating knowledge generation through reflecting on our research and practice. *Cities and Health, 2*(2), 91-95.

Habermas, J. (1975). *Legitimation crisis*. Translated by T. McCarthy. Beacon Press.

Habermas, J. (1998). *Postmetaphysical thinking*. Translated by W. M. Hohengarten. Polity Press.

Habermas, J. (2001). *The postnational constellation. Political essays*. Translated by M. Pensky. Polity Press.

Habermas, J. (2002). Religion and rationality. Essays on reason, God, and modernity, Edited and with an introduction by E. Mendieta. Polity Press.

Habermas, J. (2004). *The theory of communicative action. Reason and the rationalization of society. Volume 1*. Translated by T. McCarthy. Polity Press.

Habermas, J. (2005). *The inclusion of the other. Studies in political theory*. Edited by C. Cronin & P. de Greiff. Polity Press.

Habermas, J. (2016). *Between naturalism and religion. Philosophical essays*. Translated by C. Cronin. Polity Press.

Holmwood, J. (2014). Reflexivity as situated problem-solving: A pragmatist alternative to general theory. *Sociologica, 1*, 1-26.

Jakobsen, J. (2019). Moderate inclusivism and the conversational translational proviso: Revising Habermas's ethics of citizenship. *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion, 11*(4), 87-112.

Johnson, P., & Duberley, S. (2003). Reflexivity in management research. *Journal of Management Studies, 40*, 1279-1303.

Kaltsas, S. (2019). Habermas, Taylor, and Connolly on secularism, pluralism, and the post-secular public sphere. *Religions, 10*(8), 1-19.

Kimberley, A. (2021). Reflexivity as a vital skill for future researchers and professionals. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 19*(1), 14-26.

Lash, S. (1993). Pierre Bourdieu: Cultural economy and social change. , In C. Calhoun, E. LiPuma, & M. Postone (eds.), *Bourdieu: Critical perspectives* (pp. 193-211). University of Chicago Press.

Loughran, J. J. (2002). Effective reflective practice in search of meaning in learning about teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(1), 33-43.

Magout, M. (2020). *A reflexive Islamic modernity: Academic knowledge and religious sub-*

jectivity in the global Ismaili community. Ergon-Verlag.
Mann, K., Gordon, J., & MacLeod, A. (2009). Reflection and reflective practice in health professions' education: A systematic review. *Advances in Health Sciences Education, 14*(4), 595-621.
Martí, G. (2015). Religious reflexivity: The effect of continual novelty and diversity on individual religiosity. *Sociology of Religion, 76*(1), 1-13. doi:10.1093/socrel/sru084.
Mavelli, L. (2012). *Europe's encounter with Islam. The secular and the postsecular*. Routledge.
Mezirow, J. (1990). A transformation theory of adult learning. In P. Kleiber (ed), *Annual Adult Education Research Conference (AERC) conference proceedings* (31st, Athens, Georgia, May 18-20, 1990) (pp. 141-147).
Montero, P. (2014). Jurgen Habermas: Religion, cultural diversity and publicity. *Advances in Anthropology, 4*, 199-208.
Monti, P. (2014). Postsecular awareness and the depth of pluralis. In F. Requejo & C. Ungureanu (eds), *Democracy, law and religious pluralism in Europe. Secularism and post-secularism* (pp. 86-105). Routledge.
Morrow, R. A. (2012). Habermas, eurocentrism and education. The indigenous knowledge debat. In M. Murphy & T. Fleming (eds), *Habermas, critical theory and education* (pp. 65-77). Routledge.
Murphy, M., & Fleming, T. (2012). Communication, deliberation, reason: An introduction to Habermas. In M. Murphy & T. Fleming (eds), *Habermas, critical theory and education* (pp. 3-16). Routledge.
Pabst, A. (2012). The secularism of post-secularity: Religion, realism, and the revival of grand theory in IR. *Review of International Studies, 38*, 995-1017.
Pingel, F. (1999). *UNESCO guidebook on textbook research and textbook revision*. Hannover.
Rhodin, L. (2017). Habermas and religious communication: The insufficiency of the translation proviso. *Religions, 2017*(8), 1-14.
Rolheiser, C., Bower, B., & Stevahn, L. (2000). *The portfolio organizer: Succeeding with portfolios in your classroom*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
Rosati, M., & Stoeckl, K. (eds.). (2012). *Multiple modernities and postsecular societies*. Routledge.
Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. Ashgate Publishing.
Schön, D. A. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner*. Jossey-Bass.
Stefano Di, G., Pisano, G. P., Gino, F., & Staats, B. R. (2016). *Making experience count: The role of reflection in individual learning*. Harvard Business School Working Paper 14-093.
Stoeckl, K. (2017). Political liberalism and religious claims: Four kind spots. *Philosophy and Social Criticism, 43*(1), 34-50.
Sentürk, R. (2005). Critical methods on hadith: Self-reflexivity. *Hadis Tetkikleri Dergisi, 3*(2), 37-56.
Tambar, K. (2012). Islamic reflexivity and the uncritical subject. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.), 18*, 652-672.
Tsangaridou, N., & O'Sullivan, M. (1997). The role of reflection in shaping physical education teachers' educational values and practices. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, 17*(1), 2-25.

Ungureanu, C., & Monti, P. (2017). Habermas on religion and democracy: Critical perspectives. *The European Legacy, 22*(5), 521-527.

Williams, R. R. (1997). *Hegel's ethics of recognition*. University of California Press.

Wint, E. (2011). Reflexivity in practice: Developing a new attitude as part of teaching and engaging in participatory research and development. *Journal of Progressive Human Services, 22*(1), 68-83. DOI: 10.1080/10428232.2010.523678.

Winter, R. (1989). *Learning from experience: Principles and action-research*. Falmer Press.

Analysed Textbooks

Coskun, A. B., Kurtbecer, R., Kesici, B., Dagaslanı, E. (2018). *IKRA 3. Mein Islambuch. Grundschule 3, 2.* PLURAL Publications GmbH.

Coskun, A. B., Kurtbecer, R., Kesici, B., & Dagaslanı, E. (2019). *IKRA 1/2. Mein Islambuch. Grundschule 1/2, 3*. PLURAL Publications GmbH.

Çelik, H. I., Çelik, O., Ispirli, Ö., Öztürk, E., & Üçüncü, O. (2017). *IKRA 4. Mein Islambuch. Grundschule 4*. PLURAL Publications GmbH.

Shakir, A. (2020a). *Islamstunde 4. Religionsbuch für die Volksschule*. Oldenburger Verlag.

Shakir, A. (2020b). *Islamstunde 8. Die Anderen respektieren. Religionsbuch für die Sekundarstufe I*. Oldenburger Verlag.

Tale of Two Women of Color in Academia

Elma Kaiser & Zakia Clay

Introduction

National conversations around diversity and inclusion have resulted in an upsurge of university efforts towards cultivating more equitable spaces. However, academic institutions being more attentive to diverse representation and inclusive learning environments has done little to reverse the systemic oppression as well as inequities that remain pervasive in higher education. The underrepresentation of women of color (WOC) in faculty positions underscore these disparities. The structural sexism and racism that continue to be present in academic institutions further perpetuates the historical positioning of persons of color, particularly WOC as less than or unworthy.

A growing body of research on gender and racial gaps in higher education has led to increased attention on the challenges WOC face in the academy. For instance, WOC are more likely to occupy non-tenure track faculty positions as compared to their white counterparts (Boss et al., 2019; Rideau, 2021). WOC in these contingent roles have reported marginalization, devaluing of their research and scholarship, along with the need to frequently legitimize their academic roles

Elma Kaiser and Zakia Clay are assistant professors of social work in the School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences at Fairleigh-Dickenson University, Hackensack, New Jersey. Kaiser's research interests include international social work, diversity, violence against street children, gender-based violence, displaced populations, culture and mental health, mental health of minority women and adolescents, and macro-level social work. Clay's practice experience includes community mental health, crisis services, and private practice. Email addresses: elma.kaiser@fdu.edu & zakiaclay@fdu.edu

in the classroom (Boss et al. 2019). Non-tenure track faculty also contend with lower pay wages, particularly WOC. For example, WOC earn the least per dollar when compared to white men (67 cents), men of color (72 cents), and white women (81 cents) who hold faculty positions (McChesney, 2018).

When examining WOC who successfully secure tenure-track positions, it becomes clear that the imbalance and lack of visibility continues. According to a report from the American Association of University Professors (2020), women are less likely to hold full-time, tenure track positions. Additionally, only 6% of full-time professors self-identify as Black or African American (Colby & Fowler, 2020). Not surprisingly, the lack of diversity in the workplace has left WOC in faculty positions feeling isolated from their colleagues (Boss et al., 2019; Durodoye et al., 2020). Additional studies have also highlighted the lack of mentorship (Hsieh & Nguyen, 2020) as well as imposed burdens of service duties often involving ethnically diverse students (Durodoye et al., 2020) as added challenges to successful tenure.

The continued absence of diverse perspectives in academia will leave lasting impressions for generations to come. Thus, the authors seek to share the narratives of WOC in faculty positions in northeast universities to contribute to the literature in the area and promote critical thinking about ways to disrupt the current system. The authors will also use an intersectionality framework to situate the influence of gendered racism on WOC navigating predominately white university spaces. Recommendations on ways to realize the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education will be offered.

Positionality of Authors

Elma

Elma identifies as an immigrant, cisgender, female of color. Elma worked in different academic institutions both at the undergrad and graduate levels. She taught courses mostly in the social sciences field. She has also held faculty appointments as an adjunct, and assistant professor.

Zakia

Zakia identifies as a black, cisgender, female of color. Zakia has worked at a variety of academic institutions. She has taught undergraduate and graduate studies for disciplines including but not limited to psychology, sociology, and social work. She has also held faculty appointments as an adjunct, lecturer, and assistant professor.

Intersectionality

Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) coined the term intersectionality to articulate the

ways in which marginalized identities such as race, class, and gender intersect and overlap with oppressive structures. The intersectionality framework is particularly useful when examining the experiences of WOC in higher education. Boss et al. 2019 note that the concept of intersectionality helps us consider the impact of individual and collective identities and the added complexities WOC encounters when navigating faculty appointments. In this instance, WOC's race and gender are interconnected characteristics that have been historically oppressed by institutions like academia.

Teaching in Classroom

The outcome of the 2016 presidential election came with strong reactions and amplified issues of racism, sexism, xenophobia, and the like. For faculty teaching courses during this time, they likely experienced how the classroom can become a microcosm of societal discord. The dynamics in these educational spaces become even more complex for faculty WOC. In reflecting on this further, Zakia recalled an experience teaching master level students about power and privilege and how the inequities disproportionately impact diverse communities:

> *When covering such topics, I've had white students question my knowledge about systemic oppression as well as comment that discussions about white privilege were not beneficial, but rather feel like an opportunity to "beat up on white people for historical wrongs" that they weren't even alive for.*

Elma shared a similar experience teaching undergraduate level students:

> *I taught a course on diversity for the first time in spring 2017. I personally found teaching this course somewhat challenging. I felt being a woman of color talking about white supremacy, in a white institution, was not well accepted by many students. It was right after the election when I was teaching the class and I had students wearing "Make America Great Again" hats. At times, I felt uncomfortable and stressed. I became sick during that semester from stress. However, at the same time it made me feel that it was an opportunity to teach the young minds about the reality. I believe my evaluation scores were affected because of the barriers that I faced. I believe it impacted my teaching.*

Vargas (1999) highlights that when students view their teacher as the "other" or outside the dominant group, the instructor tends to face more challenges in the classroom that often undermine the teaching-learning experience. Zakia explained:

> *I always invite alternative perspectives and thoughts into classroom discussion, however, when cover topics related to culture and diversity, white students tend be more critical of the information that I'm delivering and engage me in ways that I'm certain they wouldn't my white colleagues such as referring to me as "Girl" or "Girlfriend."*

There is robust evidence in the literature that endorse similar encounters in which the expertise of faculty WOC is called into question by students (Boss et al., 2019; Rideau, 2019). When students seemingly delegitimize faculty WOC, the instructor must then deal with navigating these conversations with students with an awareness that their response will be scrutinized and potentially misunderstood. Rideau (2019) notes that the dynamics and biases that ensue in the classroom for faculty WOC often result in lower teacher evaluations. A qualitative study by Vargas (2019) noted when student beliefs clashed with that of the diverse faculty member, students would often note on course evaluations that the instructor was too opinionated. Such experiences highlight the intricacies faculty WOC contend with as an educator in the academy.

Microaggression

Microaggressions are verbal, behavioral, and environmental insults that communicate derogatory messages that are targeted at an individual or group (Sue, 2010). When considering the unique intersections of race and gender for faculty WOC, they are often at higher risk which the literature commonly refers to as "double-jeopardy" (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003). Microaggressions, whether intentional or unintentional can seemingly appear to be trivial, but overtime can be detrimental and cumulative. Zakia summarized encounters with a white supervisor:

> *I found myself being hypervigilant about my appearance. If I styled my hair differently, I could expect a comment about my "unique" hair style. I once recall wearing sneakers because we were packing up our office to move to a new location and receiving a long up and down stare followed by "aren't we casual today" even though I was walking alongside a white male colleague in similar attire, he was not questioned about his footwear or the way he dressed that day.*

Studies examining microaggressions in education have found that some ramifications of these ongoing slights are an invalidating and hostile campus climate, lower work productivity as well as mental and physical health distress (Dodge, 2019; Sue et al., 2009; Williams et al., 2021). Despite these negative consequences, recipients of these microaggressions are hesitant to call out the behaviors in fear they will be labeled hypersensitive or paranoid (Sue et al., 2009).

Tenure Process

Attaining tenure is an important milestone for faculty members in academia. However, triumphing the process can be challenging for many, especially for women, and more so for WOC. Studies show that women are less likely to be tenured and promoted than men (Chen, Kim, & Liu, 2021; Gumpertz, Griffith, & Wilson, 2017). Furthermore, women also tend to leave an institution pre- tenure.

This section highlights the experience of Elma who did not successfully progress through the tenure process and ultimately decided to leave the institution. In her opinion, there were inconsistencies throughout the process and the battle was challenging. This section also highlights a few of the inconsistencies that Elma faced in the process.

From the beginning of the five-year tenure process, Elma was evaluated annually by a program committee of her peers, which is the first level of review, who unanimously voted for her reappointment four years in a row which was also endorsed by the Dean. They would offer feedback on ways to remain on track for tenure to which Elma remained responsive. Unanimous decisions and frequent encouragement led her to believe that she was being directed toward tenure. Later she realized that she was being misguided. In her fifth year, when she was up for tenure and promotion, their feedback abruptly changed.

Inconsistency 1

Throughout the review process, Elma took the program committee's feedback to indicate she was clearly progressing in a direction that affirmed the program's standards for excellence in teaching. Course evaluation scores are one of several avenues that the program committee considers when making their recommendations though there is never any stated minimum requirement for course evaluation scores. The program committee only requested Elma demonstrate how she was addressing student feedback, and to work on documenting an increase in scores over her probationary period. Elma did so—consistently—and even provided the program committee with additional evidence of teaching excellence, including peer observations and examples of her advances in pedagogical techniques.

Inconsistency 2

In the final year of the tenure process the senior administration gets to evaluate the faculty for tenure and promotion. Their feedback stated:

> The *program committee* notes that the faculty member's teaching evaluation scores have risen, and the Dean underscores this trend. I agree with the Dean that the faculty member's advances are more than the modest gains suggested by the *program committee*. However, her response rate in all courses is very low, making it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from these scores.

(It is worth mentioning that the low response rate was during COVID when everything went remote).

This evaluation was problematic for two reasons. First (and this idea comes from background in teaching social sciences research methods, a historically unpopular course), students are encouraged, but cannot be *compelled* to fill out the evaluations, which is a clear ethical issue for faculty attempting to gather

student evaluation data. Secondly, although it does not need to be reiterated the challenges of Spring 2020 (when COVID hit), it must be remembered that these circumstances were found to be extraordinary, necessitating the decision to be made allowing faculty the option not to incorporate evaluation scores into their files. Elma made the decision to include them because the voices of students were valuable to her as it reflected on her adaptations to the COVID-19 teaching environment. Elma recognized that the response rate was comparatively lower than in previous semesters; however, students who chose to fill out the evaluation also chose to give voice to their satisfaction with the faculty member's teaching. Furthermore, given the numerous other sources of documentation, it was unfair to deny the tenure and promotion based on low response rates for one semester. If the response rate was then being used as a priority factor for evaluating a faculty member, as it was stated in the senior admin's letter, there should have been clear communication of that to the faculty Union, to faculty members, and to review committee members so that a set of standards could be identified. The situation with the response rates was another example of inconsistency that Elma faced. Some "new" benchmark or objective that was not part of agreed-upon faculty plan, nor included in previous reviews.

Inconsistency 3

Although student feedback is vital for reflection of pedagogy, evidence-based research suggests that, unfortunately, student evaluation scores are often biased against women, faculty of an international origin, and faculty of color (Endo, 2020; Wallace, Lewis, Allen, 2019; Ho, Thomsen, Sidanius. 2009). An outside program committee, which is the third level of review, and comprised of university faculty that did not work alongside Elma reviewed her tenure files including the program committee's decision to deny tenure. The outside program committee stated:

> We did not find significant areas of concern or negative trends in the evaluation scores, especially given that faculty members are teaching courses focused on research methods and social welfare history. The *outside program committee* also recognizes that student evaluations are only one factor in the evaluation of teaching excellence and -is a very biased (especially against people of color and women) evaluation system at that faculty member has submitted multiple peer observations of teaching, which are very supportive of her teaching, with occasional minor constructive feedback. The outside program committee feels that the feedback provided in those letters is reasonable and does not cast a negative light on faculty member's ability in the classroom. Given the evidence provided in this reconsideration file, the outside program committee feels that there is a high likelihood of systemic bias in the student evaluations.

There are numerous studies and teaching articles written about the careful use of student evaluation data in the evaluation of tenure-track faculty as well as the biases against women and faculty of color (of which the faculty member is both)

(Wallace et al., 2019). In this case, the *outside program committee* stated that student evaluations are only "one" factor in the evaluation of teaching; therefore, it was unfortunate that it became the primary factor in the faculty member's tenure evaluation process.

All through her years at the institution, she was repeatedly told that the outside program committee is the toughest hurdle to cross. Once it can be crossed, everything is smooth sailing. Therefore, their decision gave her hope and renewed confidence. She felt valued and worthy. In the history of the institution, the outside program committee unanimous vote had never been overturned. In her case it was. The provost did not agree with the outside program committee's unanimous vote and their detailed letter, which comprehensively acknowledged her contribution and excellence in teaching. Everyone she knew at the university was dumbfounded. The reason behind Provost's decision was related to the response rate of the students which seemed absurd.

The President, who had the power to overturn the decision, did not act on her behalf. Basically, the administration made the ultimate decision whether a faculty member is good enough for the position even though appropriate consideration of the outside program committee (comprised of faculty members from other programs) decision would have been more logical. Elma was left viewing the tenure process as flawed and experienced how goal posts were shifted without warning.

Discussion

The experiences shared of the two faculty WOC illustrates the lack of consistency and pervasive discrimination that exists in higher education. The faculty members had to endure unnecessary stress in teaching, interacting with colleagues as well as during the tenure process. This impacted their performance and overall confidence in the academy. They not only had to cope with those adversities but also had to continuously prove their competencies so that they were accepted by their students, colleagues, and administrators. The literature shows that many other faculty WOC face similar challenges.

It is important that faculty, staff, students, and administrators in higher education are aware of the complex challenges that faculty of color face. Institutions would benefit from including diverse faculty in the development and implementation of initiatives around diversity and inclusion. Creating a campus of equity and inclusion goes beyond having a few diverse faces in faculty and administrative positions. Realizing goals related to campus diversity requires buy-in and a commitment to engaging in the work to understand the experiences of diverse members of the campus community while disrupting the current inequitable system. Additionally, members of the campus community, particularly faculty and staff, must be willing to engage in dialogue that may be difficult and,

at times, uncomfortable. Given the complexities and challenges that come with this work, we believe it is critical to begin with a focus on mentorship, training, and strengthening policies.

Mentorship

It is important that the junior faculty, students, and other employees have mentors who are aware of the struggles and acknowledge the adversities that WOC face in academia. Peer mentorship in every level is vital. There could be group mentorship as well. A group consisting of three or four students from various races and cultures could be mentees of faculty of color. This would allow them to share and gain knowledge from each other. Peer mentorship may also be beneficial. Mentors and mentees may set goals by mutual discussion and assess them on a regular basis. Culturally appropriate mentorship is very important.

Training

There should be regular and mandatory training on diversity and inclusion administered in the institutions by facilitators well versed in cultural competency and inclusive spaces. The training should be interactive, and discussion based to allow for opportunities for critical thinking and application. For example, the inclusion of reflection exercises may help participants consider their own bias and ways to approach situations differently. Institutions may also consider training key campus members who can advocate inclusion and equity training and initiatives throughout the campus. Training manuals, which may include overview on prejudice, stereotypes, diversity, discrimination, cultural sensitivity etc. can be an additional useful resource to be provided to faculty, students, and staff.

Policies

The need for consistent standards and policies, particularly related to the tenure process is essential. Every step should be clearly stated for consistency and equity. Elma mentioned her experience of inconsistency that she experienced in the process. Even though she followed the standards and recommendation, the benchmarks and expectations shifted without notice, which many might argue was unethical.

Faculty workload should also be explicitly stated in the faculty manual. In many instances WOC works above and beyond to keep up with other faculty members in the tenure process. The policies should be clear and simple. Ambiguous language that may be misinterpreted by faculty of varied backgrounds should be carefully avoided. Like rubrics for students' assessments, consideration for rubrics to guide the tenure process would contribute to consistency and minimize discrepancies as well as subjectivity.

References

Boss, G. J., Davis, T. J., Porter, C. J., & Moore, C. M. (2019). Second to none: Contingent women of Color faculty in the classroom. In *Diversity, equity, and inclusivity in contemporary higher education* (pp. 211-225). IGI Global.

Colby, G., & C., Fowler (2020). *Data snapshot: IPEDS data on full-time women faculty and faculty of color*. American Association of University Professors. https://www.aaup.org/sites/default/files/Dec-2020_Data_Snapshot_Women_and_Faculty_of_Color.pdf

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 139.

Chen, J., Kim, M., & Liu, Q. (2021). *Do female professors survive the 19th-century tenure system? Evidence from the economics Ph.D. class of 2008* (Rev. ed.). Semantic Scholar. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2880240

Dodge, A. M. (2019). Leveraging microaggressions in the classroom as teachable moments: Engaging in difficult conversations as a starting point for change. *Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry, 11*(2), 53-66.

Durodoye, R., Gumpertz, M., Wilson, A., Griffith, E., & Ahmad, S. (2020). Tenure and promotion outcomes at four large land grant universities: Examining the role of gender, race, and academic discipline. *Research in Higher Education*, *61*, 628-651.

Endo, R. (2020). Retaining and supporting faculty who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color: The promise of a multi-leveled mentoring-partnership model. *Multicultural Perspectives, 2*2(4), 169–177. https://doi-org.libaccess.fdu.edu/10.1080/15210960.2020.1845178

Ginther, D. K., & Kahn, S. (2012). *Education and academic career outcomes for women of color in science & engineering*. Conference for the Committee on Women in Science, Engineering, & Medicine, Washington, DC.

Gumpertz, M., Durodoye, R., Griffith, E., & Wilson, A. (2017). Retention and promotion of women and underrepresented minority faculty in science and engineering at four large land grant institutions. *PloS ONE, 12*(11), Article e0187285. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0187285

Ho, A. K., Thomsen, L., & Sidanius, J. (2009). Perceived academic competence and overall job evaluations: Students' evaluations of African American and European American professors. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 39*(2), 389–406. https://doi-org.libaccess.fdu.edu/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2008.00443.x

Hsieh, B., & Nguyen, H. T. (2020). Identity-informed mentoring to support acculturation of female faculty of color in higher education: An Asian American female mentoring relationship case study. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 13*(2), 169.

Jones, C., & Shorter-Gooden, K. (2003). *Shifting: The double lives of Black women in America*. HarperCollins.

McChesney, J. (2018). *Representation and pay of women of color in the higher education workforce*. Retrieved from https://www.cupahr.org/ wp-content/uploads/CUPA-HR-Brief-Women-Of-Color.pdf

Rideau, R. (2021). "We're just not acknowledged": An examination of the identity taxation of full-time non-tenure-track Women of Color faculty members. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, *14*(2), 161.

Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation.*

John Wiley

Sue, D. W., Lin, A. I., Torino, G. C., Capodilupo, C. M., & Rivera, D. P. (2009). Racial microaggressions and difficult dialogues on race in the classroom. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 15*(2), 183.

Williams, M. T., Skinta, M. D., & Martin-Willett, R. (2021). After Pierce and Sue: A revised racial microaggressions taxonomy. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 16*(5), 991-1007.

Wallace, S. L., Lewis, A. K., & Allen, M. D. (2019). The state of the literature on student evaluations of teaching and an exploratory analysis of written comments: Who benefits most? *College Teaching, 67*(1), 1–14. https://doi-org.libaccess.fdu.edu/10.1080/87567555.2018.1483317

Critical Pedagogy, De-MAGA-fication, and the Struggle for Democratic Life

Eric J. Weiner

> Liberal democracy is no longer on life-support in the United States, it is a corpse hidden behind the language of myth, misrepresentation, and social and historical amnesia. The process of Nazification has almost reached its endpoint and the planet hangs in the balance.
>
> —Henry Giroux, *The Nazification of American Society*

> It is not the fact of liberty but the way in which liberty is exercised that ultimately determines whether liberty itself survives.
>
> —Dorothy Thompson

Survivors of 20th century fascism in Europe have three essential warnings for those of us still living comfortably within the unfulfilled promises and contradictions of democracy and neoliberal capitalism (Burns 2022). First, the time to stop fascism is before it starts. Once fascism gets a grip on the social and political imagination; sinks its teeth into the formative educational, economic, political, and cultural institutions of a democratic society; controls the police and military; undermines trust in free and legitimate elections; labels news media outlets that challenge or refute their grasp of facts, truth and reality as untrustworthy or "fake;" packs the courts with sympathetic judges at all levels of the judiciary; bans books and polices curriculum and pedagogy in the public schools; scape-

Eric J. Weiner is a professor in the Depatment of Educational Foundations of the College of Education and Engaged Learning at Montclair State University, Montclair, New Jersey. He is a cultural critic and educational scholar whose work focuses on the sociological, cultural, and pedagogical relationships between ideological apparatuses and the individual. Email address: weinerer@montclair.edu

goats minorities; uses threats of violence to terrorize political opponents; and elects or appoints a charismatic leader, it will not voluntarily walk away from the teat of its power and control.

In the 20th century context of the Third Reich, it's instructive to remember that *Kristallnacht* (1939), the Night of Broken Glass, signaled not the beginning of fascism in Germany, but only its most publicly violent expression at the time. Before the organized, mass violence of *Kristallnacht* shattered the presumption that Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party were more bark than bite, their anti-Semitism more spectacle and political theater than a mortal threat, most German Jews lived in a state of anxious denial, naively believing that never in such an enlightened, democratic, and modern society could their anti-Semitic ravings and paranoia actually be backed up by real violence and murder. Tragically, the unforeseen terror of fascism crystallized on the night of November 9th in the broken glass of synagogues, the murder of Jews, the arrest and deportation of 30 thousand Jewish men to concentrations camps, and the vandalizing of Jewish schools, homes, and businesses. But almost two decades before *Kristallnacht*, the shadows of fascism had begun to darken and distort the political imagination of the German people.

Second, fascism is not to be found in the dustbin of history but germinates in what Theodore Adorno (2020) identified as the "reified consciousness" of everyday people, the disciplining political culture of vulgar nationalism, "hard and cold" methods of schooling, and the fetishization of technology. Brad Evans and Henry Giroux (2020), extending the relevance and reach of Hannah Arendt's (1973) work on totalitarianism and Adorno's (1951) on the social psychology of authoritarianism warn that "Fascism is never entirely interred in the past and… can crystallize in different forms." In our current historical conjunction, the crystallization of MAGA—the neoliberal fascist bloc of the GOP (Evans and Giroux, 2020)—signals the first real threat to constitutional democracy in the United States since the Civil War.

As has always been the case regarding the crystallization of nascent ideological formations, "words are the ideological sign *par excellence*" of germination in the political imagination (Voloshinov 1973). Within the sphere of "bad common sense" (Gramsci 1971; Crehan 2016), the term fascism is locked within a definition that refers for many pundits exclusively to the Nazi past at the expense of our understanding of the MAGA present. To fight against this, we must "work toward redeeming the term from its trivialization and restore it to a proper place in discussions of the moral and political limits of what is acceptable" (Paul Gilroy quoted in Giroux 2022a).

Third, capitalism and the accumulation of capital won't save you. As Adorno et. al. (1951) discovered in their study of the *Authoritarian Personality*, fascism is a social pathology that emerges in various forms within "free" and "enlightened" societies. Building on Adorno's work, Lewis (2020) correctly sees emergent forms of fascism germinating "in the crass impulses circulating throughout a neoliberal

culture industry that revels in self-promotion, the performance of libidinal release, stereotyping, sensationalism, hyperbolic outrage, fake news, mediatized consumerism, and thoughtless, one-dimensional branding" (p. 14). Two central fictions running through all of these crass impulses is, first, the fundamental belief that neoliberalism, more than any other economic system, mirrors a natural evolutionary state of human competition, desire and domination. Second, that democracy and neoliberalism are the same thing. The persistence of this ideological imbrication has helped create an epistemological vacuum in education in which the specific knowledge and skills required for democratic life are replaced or simply dismissed as unimportant.

People learn that government's central role is to support the interests of capital and its accumulation. Within the neoliberal educational imagination, freedom is conceived as freedom from government regulation, social responsibility and civic obligation. The individual and family are the central units of analysis while community and society are looked upon as impositions to individual freedom. Decadence is aspirational and self-interest drives progress, innovation and economic growth.

This type of economic system of private power, now vastly more global and culturally entrenched in the 21st century than it was in post-WWI Germany, does not prevent or protect democracies from the rise of fascism. Indeed, as Chomsky (2012) points out, "capitalist industrial society…with the effective rule of private power" ideologically coheres with the fundamental principles of the authoritarian "command economies" overseen by Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin. He writes, "Both were, and one of them remains, deeply authoritarian in fundamental commitment, and both were very sharply and dramatically opposed to another tradition, the Left Libertarian tradition, with roots in Enlightenment values" (pp. 55-56).

Under neoliberalism's "effective rule of private power," the individual is released from the obligations of citizenship and social responsibility into a habitus of negative freedom (Fromm 1941). Her central role, particularly if she is a member of the working poor and middle class, is to labor and consume. More pointedly, she labors to consume and consumes to survive: Consumption will set you free. Within the logic of neoliberalism, work releases people into a phantasmagoric field of endless commodified choices of goods and services. Within such a Darwinian system, tribes displace communities under the pressure of atomization and scarcity. We become strangers, our suspicions and fear of the "other" evolves into social pathologies of hatred, violence, and war. The manufactured scarcity of goods and public services exacerbate distrust, fuel alienation and seed anomic thinking. Neoliberalism's hegemony lies, in large part, in people defining freedom in these terms while placing their faith for security, safety, opportunity, education, and health in the hands of private power.

MAGA germinated in Donald Trump's successful 2016 campaign for POTUS and grew and solidified during his one term in office. The January 6th insurrection

at the Capitol in Washington, DC was not the culmination of MAGA's will to power, but rather its first organized attempt to violently overthrow a democratically elected President. Putting a fine point on its evolution from a marginal discourse to a home-grown, counter revolutionary fascist bloc of the GOP, Henry Giroux (2022) writes:

> The GOP, with its mix of neo-Nazis, conspiracy theorists, religious fanatics, politically corrupt grifters and politicians, January 6th insurrectionists, and right-wing extremists, are not simply trying to remove Joe Biden from office, ban books, turn public and higher education into right-wing propaganda machines, eliminate women's reproductive rights, and define historical, cultural and national memory through the lens of white replacement theory and a nostalgic longing for the age of Jim Crow…They are engaged in a project that should be rightfully defined as a counter-revolutionary fascist takeover grounded in the death dealing logics of white supremacy, mass violence, and a politics of disposability…

MAGA utilizes the same democratic and juridical institutions to rise to power that it is actively trying to discredit and dismantle. In this way, its script to power is similar to Nazism's rise in Germany and Fidesz's rise under Victor Orbán's leadership in Hungary. If allowed to formalize its political power, as history has shown repeatedly in relation to other fascist movements past and present, it will not relinquish its grip without violence. MAGA's precinct strategy (Lutz 2022), its relentless and ungrounded attacks on the legitimacy of local, state and federal elections, its rejection of verifiable truth coupled with the dissemination of "alternative facts," its assault on public education as an engine of socialist indoctrination and, most pointedly, its failed attempt to block the peaceful transfer of presidential power is to put into motion the means by which the 226 year reign of democracy in the United States either comes to an end or is so radically transformed that it is a democracy in name only.[1]

Similar to Putin and Orbán, who claim to hold free and fair elections in Russia and Hungary respectively, MAGA's rewriting of democracy aligns not with democratic principles and constitutional protections as they've been outlined in the Federalist Papers (Library of Congress), but with autocratic and fascist fantasies of unaccountable violence, social control, and power. It is interesting to note that even though the appeal to democracy remains an important rhetorical strategy of MAGA and other 21st century fascist leaders and political blocs, that too is changing. Within MAGA's political discourse, democracy has slowly been morphing into an obstructionist ideological formation that impedes its rise to power in the United States. No longer a sign of patriotism and American Exceptionalism, constitutional democracy is being reframed as a tool of oppression, socialism and repressive "woke" culture.

As the radical and marginal forces of fascism force their way into the center of political, educational and cultural life, the hegemony of democracy is weakening in America (Keyssar and Fung 2022). At the intersection of national identity

and civic knowledge, it's not only weakening at the institutional level, but, more significantly, is losing its ability to define what it means to be an American in the 21st century. MAGA's reactive and politically regressive discourse on democracy represents not just a rebuke to the significant political and educational gains of women, Labor, people of color, the (dis)abled, and LGBTQ+ communities over the past fifty years, but it also represents a fundamental shift in the political culture of conservatism.

MAGA unapologetically turns Ronald Reagan, the most touted and respected forbearer of modern neoliberal conservatism in the United States, on his head. With great fanfare, Reagan (1981) in his inaugural address, echoing the views of radical economist Milton Friedman (1951), announced "Government is not the solution to our problem, government is the problem." For MAGA, by contrast, democracy is not the solution to our problem, democracy is the problem. Government in turn is not the problem, the people running it are. In a complete reversal of Reagan, government is perceived as a necessary political lever of MAGA's power and neoliberal fascist agenda. Government, in partnership with private business and commercial media formations, can help solve what MAGA might call "the democracy question;" that is, the democratization of power across different groups and their demand to distribute resources equitably so that all people, regardless of race, class, and creed can enjoy equal opportunities for political participation as well as for economic and educational success.

From MAGA's perspective, liberal democracy is a radical discourse that threatens the political and cultural hegemony of white, Christian, ruling class, heterosexuals throughout the United States. MAGA sees established democratic institutions as stepping stones into legitimate governmental spheres of power just as it uses the language of democracy, when it serves its anti-democratic purposes, to support its propaganda. Strikingly similar to Neumann's (1963) cogent description of National Socialism's state of immanent performativity in his opus *Behemoth*, MAGA likewise

> has no political or social theory. It has no philosophy and no concern for the truth. In a given situation it will accept any theory that might prove useful; and it will abandon that theory as soon as the situation changes…[it] is both capitalistic and anti-capitalistic. It is authoritarian and anti-authoritarian. It will cooperate with any group in the army or bureaucracy that is amenable to [its] propaganda but it will not hesitate to flatter anti-authoritarian movements when it is more expedient. It will promise liberation to racial minorities and will sacrifice any minority if the government of the country is ready to cooperate with [the state]. [It] is for agrarian reform and against it, for private property and against it, for idealism and against it. Such versatility is unattainable in a democracy. (pp. 437-438)

The versatility and fluidity of National Socialism allowed it to outmaneuver its democratic opponents whose dysfunction and ideological ambiguity made the state impotent against the thaumaturgical spell of fascism.

In its nascent form, MAGA has yet to become the sophisticated machine of terror that National Socialism was even in the earliest days of its influence over Germany. But once in power, given its recent embrace of violence, lies, and anti-democratic rhetoric, it would be naïve to expect that MAGA will not follow the Nazi script as well as Orbán's path to power. We can anticipate that democratic institutions—the judiciary and legislature in particular—will be restructured and rewritten with the full support of the GOP to ensure that those in power remain there legally.

If MAGA is allowed to follow the fascist script, public education, the soft machine of private power, will be tasked with enculturating the young into the emergent systems of thought and behavior. By policing knowledge and truth in the schools, rationalized on the spurious claims that teachers and professors are indoctrinating young people to reject conservative values and embrace socialism—as Florida Governor, Ron DeSantis has already done (Ogles 2021)—the neoliberal fascist project depends on pedagogies of "manufactured ignorance" (Giroux 2021) and sterilized curricula that hides its biases and violent tendencies behind contradictory appeals to balance, neutrality, and patriotism. In a direct rejection of Jefferson's (1816) central argument for a mass public education system, MAGA makes agnosis (i.e., the cultural production of willful ignorance) a precondition of "freedom," not its foil (Proctor and Schiebinger 2008; Weiner 2021).

In 2022, it's instructive to remember that the terror of Nazism was unforeseen by the majority of intellectual and economic elites in the Weimar Republic in 1920-30s. It was hard for many of them to imagine, even the Jews who were its primary target—in spite of (or maybe because of) their cultural achievements, economic status, and social capital—that Nazism would be the scourge on humanity that it was. For non-Jews, it was also true that Nazism's appeal to German exceptionalism, ethnic purity, and its anti-immigrant stance was attractive to some German citizens even as they rejected, to varying degrees, its most violent rhetoric against Jews and "others" classified as inferior. These Nazi sympathies rose to the surface during reconstruction. In post-WWII Germany, according to Mueller (2017), "'ordinary' Germans—if ever there was such a category of people—actively resisted denazification. Resentment toward denazification was widespread among the German public" (p. 512).

To reiterate, I am not arguing that MAGA in 2023 in the United States is the same thing in form and/or function as 20th century Nazism or Fidesz in Hungary, but it remains to be seen what it is capable of in terms of violent actions against its enemies as well as its ability to overturn elections, control public school curriculum and teaching, and seize control of media. The violence of the January 6 insurrection at the Capitol suggests that MAGA has no qualms about using violence to achieve its political ends.

In light of this analysis of MAGA, we need to address the following questions: How can "we, the people" of the United States not just fight against the

counter-revolutionary forces of neoliberal fascism in a way that respects democratic values and laws, but initiate an effective pro-democratic, counter-offensive that peacefully reestablishes the hegemony of democracy? What role should education and public schooling play in this counter-offensive, pro-democracy action? To play with the title of Adorno's (2020) lecture on Hesse Radio on April 18, 1966, "Education after Auschwitz," what should education and schooling look, feel, and sound like *before* the nascent fascist formation of MAGA can fully establish itself in America? In other words, as MAGA's darkening shadow blurs and obscures the promise of democracy from within the courts and Legislature in the United States, what kind of educational apparatuses do we need to help stop it?

Critical Pedagogy and the Development of an Antifascist Educational Complex

A crisis of democracy in Germany during the Weimar Republic gave rise to National Socialism in Germany (Neumann 1963). The crisis was characterized by "sharpened social antagonisms, the breakdown of voluntary collaboration, the destruction of parliamentary institutions, the suspension of political liberties, the growth of a ruling bureaucracy, and the renaissance of the army as a decisive political factor" (Neumann, pp. 33-34, 1963). Nazism turned the democratic crisis in the Weimar into an emergency in which imperialist expansion overwhelmed a political culture paralyzed by its own internal dysfunction and contradictions. Over the course of a decade, the emergency rose to the measure of disaster. Not unique to the psyche of Germans, any population that is desperately atomized, economically beleaguered, ideologically lost, politically resentful, eager to follow, and unprepared to lead—a population with a desublimated authoritarian personality—can find itself enchanted with dictatorial power, seduced by its promises of comfort and security, and prostrated to its program of violence and irrational ethnic hatred.

In the Weimar, Neumann (1963) writes, "The Socialists could not create a democratic consciousness because it was trapped in contradictions" (p. 29). The Socialists were trapped between the rock of communism and the hard place of nationalism/capitalism. This contradiction made them impotent in the fight against National Socialism because they lacked a coherent ideological vision for the country. The Socialists were defeated as much by their own failure to act decisively and coherently against Nazism as they were by Nazism itself. The crisis of democracy in the United States suggests a contradiction of the same magnitude but in a different configuration.

The contradiction between capitalism and democracy, i.e., between private power and the public interest, prevents liberals from creating a democratic consciousness in the American political imagination. Between the rocks of socialism and communism and the hard space of capitalism, liberals are left appealing to

some abstract notion of democracy in its facile fight against the rise of MAGA. But absent a democratic consciousness, the appeal they make is nonsensical. Neither their constituencies nor their opposition know enough, beyond the mechanics of voting, about what democracy is and entails for their appeal to generate any real sense of emergency. The contradiction not only prevents them from creating democratic consciousness, but it undermines the legitimacy of their warning. If they were concerned about democracy, then they would have to be critical of neoliberalism, which they are not. This paralyzing contradiction helped give birth to MAGA, just as it hobbles liberal's efforts to stop it.

As a nascent neoliberal fascist political movement, MAGA is a symptom of the crisis, not its cause. Whether it continues to evolve into a political formation that has the power to turn the current crisis into a catastrophic disaster remains to be seen. But as Arendt (1954) and Giroux (2021) have recognized, a crisis of democracy suggests a crisis of education as well. A crisis of education in free societies and its relationship to failing democratic states and strengthening fascist regimes is both positive and negative.

In its positive orientation, a lack of critical knowledge and democratic instruction has helped produce a citizenry deskilled in the habits and demands of democratic life. With the exception of education for the economic elite and political class, critical and creative thinking have been replaced by a form of vocational training and commodified citizenship at all levels of schooling. The authority of public education to prepare young people to govern has been undermined by MAGA's relentless attacks on pluralistic curricula, the teaching of historical truth, and "woke" pedagogies.

In its negative role, the crisis of education manifests as a series of silences and ideological blind spots. In the absence of critical insight, the emergence of neoliberal fascism remains hidden within formations of manufactured ignorance driven by relentless propaganda about freedom, violence and choice. The veil of ignorance is created using techniques of manipulation and indoctrination similar to those used by the Nazis during their rise to power. By subjecting the American people to "unceasing tensions" through relentlessly repetitive propaganda on perpetual streaming for-profit media machines (Neumann p. 438, 1963), convergent forces are reshaping the politics of everyday life in the United States just as they allowed intersecting tributaries of fascist power and violence to flow relatively unforeseen throughout Germany in the early 1930s. From those rare corners of critique where the potential for terror was intuited, a general malaise and anomie created wide-spread political ambivalence across different sectors of civil society (Neumann 1963). Whether unforeseen, ignored or underestimated, a crisis of education helped support the rise of Nazism and the fall of democracy in the Weimar.

Because the emergencies ignited by fascism in Germany correlated with a crisis of education, after the defeat of Germany in the WWII, the Allied forces looked to the educational sphere as a fertile geography of reeducation, denazifica-

tion, and democratic enculturation. Although their reeducation and denazification initiatives had varying degrees of influence over the German people's embrace of democracy and rebuke of National Socialism, they suggest several ways MAGA might be defeated before it has a chance to transform the current crisis of democracy into a fascist disaster. As I read it, the central educational challenge rests on pro-democracy educators and other political workers success in establishing a coherent system of interlocking apparatuses of liberation that can support a revitalization of democratic consciousness.

Beyond a focus on schooling, the development of these interlocking apparatuses of liberation will require us to release what Maxine Greene (1985) calls our social imaginations from the constraints of positivistic and instrumental thinking; from the iron cage of rationality and efficiency (Weber 1994); from the hegemony of sutured knowledge and paradigms of educational thought (Kuhn 1970); and from, finally, the terror of freedom (Fromm 1941). Critical pedagogy, more than fifty-years in process, practice and development throughout the world, is, for reasons that I will discuss, the most forceful and complex political tool for developing anti-fascist interlocking apparatuses of liberation in our current times.

Critical pedagogy, like historical knowledge for Foucault (1977), is an educational praxis "not made for understanding; it is made for cutting." Against the grain of traditional and conservatizing forms of schooling and education, critical pedagogy "proposes that education is a form of political intervention in the world and is capable of creating the possibilities for social transformation…In the broadest terms, [it] is a moral and political practice premised on the assumption that learning is not about processing received knowledge but about actually transforming it as part of a more expansive struggle for individual rights and social justice" (Giroux and Paul 2022; see also Simon 1992). As such, it provides a framework for reeducating a diverse citizenry that has been seduced by the false promises of neoliberal fascism. Education, from the perspective of critical pedagogy, becomes critical to the extent that it can disrupt and transgress the normative power of culture and the formative culture of power to blind and desensitize people to modern rationalizations of violence and the educational forces of socialization that rewrite domination as a virtue of love and power (hooks 2013).

Under the broad umbrella of what I am calling first wave critical pedagogy, as it has been developed in theory and practice most notably by Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Stanley Aronowitz, bell hooks, Donaldo Macedo, Paulo Freire, Michael Apple, Myles Horton, Roger Simon, and Joe Kinchelo, we find a second wave of critical educational discourses that build upon the central tenants of critical pedagogy but deepen and focus its attention and intentions on different dimensions of the liberatory project.

Critical pedagogy is a constellational theory and praxis that addresses a range of issues from a vast geography of spaces and places that arise out of the inequitable distribution of power and resources within defined and imbricated historical

contexts. At the center of critical pedagogy's broadly defined educational/political project is a concern with the "how" of power, knowledge, language, identity, culture, capital, ideology, violence, democracy, domination, resistance, empowerment, community, schooling, public pedagogy, curriculum, creativity, critical thinking, and individual and collective freedom.

The second wave of critical pedagogy, building upon and extending these centralizing concerns, includes an array of work about a range of issues that are nevertheless grounded in the ethical principles and central concerns of first wave critical pedagogy. "What is most important to note," writes Lewis (2020), "is that the constellation, as a whole, illuminates a certain outline of antifascist education…No single educational form is adequate to the task of an antifascist education. Instead, they must be aligned…in order for the potentiality within each to swell up and become an alchemical agent" (pp. 27-28). Although using the notion of a constellation to describe Walter Benjamin's antifascist educational projects, Lewis's idea of a constellation works as a metaphor for critical pedagogy and its relationship to other critical educational theories and practices.

Critical pedagogy is not a single educational form nor is it at the top of some arbitrary hierarchy of critical theories and practices. It is also not being located chronologically as "first" in a series of contributions to educational and political thought. This is not what I intend by naming a first and second wave of critical pedagogy. Rather, critical pedagogy represents a constellation of intersecting ideas, practices and theories that began with the question of equity, power, and schooling, and like the universe itself, is expanding brilliantly from its center. The first wave of critical pedagogy owes an enormous debt to a vast amount of work in various disciplines over the course of the decades that preceded what I am calling the first wave. Yet, it is also true that this first wave of critical pedagogy scholar and practitioners developed, synthesized, and organized a coherent system of critical thought related to schooling and ideology in a way that was novel, controversial, and influential.

The constellation of critical pedagogy now includes a vast array of brilliant and complex work under the headings: anti-racist pedagogies, critical literacies, critical feminist pedagogies, post-colonial pedagogies, critical disability studies, critical race theory in education, radical democratic pedagogies, critical indigenous pedagogies, border pedagogies, critical media literacies, New Literacy Studies (NLS), critical pedagogies of cultural studies, aesthetic pedagogies, culturally responsive pedagogies, and certain strains of post-modern pedagogies. Drawing energy from interdisciplinary work in sociology, political science, philosophy, cultural studies, social psychology, linguistics, history, epistemology, and education, second wave intellectuals working within the constellation of critical pedagogy are creating dynamic tools and strategies of radical transformation for these unprecedented times. In the current historical conjuncture, this second wave of educators/intellectuals continues to develop, theorize, refine, practice, and extend

the reach of critical pedagogy. All of this work represents a vast and expanding constellation of critical pedagogy that the pro-democracy/antifascist movement must leverage in the struggle against the rise of neoliberal fascism. But they all need to recognize themselves in each other and each other in themselves. Once this occurs, the expanding and inclusive constellation of critical pedagogy becomes a radical educational movement for social change.

As a radical educational movement, the intersectional roles of all of these different modalities of critical pedagogy should be to develop and build, in cooperation with each other, formative cultural/educational apparatuses that can create and nurture democratic consciousness, support dissident intellectual educational work, and protect teachers, students and other pro-democracy workers who are struggling to reestablish and deepen democratic values in the United States and abroad.

Extending some of the central lessons of reeducation and denazification initiated in post WWII Germany, I will now discuss briefly how critical educational work within the constellation of critical pedagogy can help develop anti-fascist cultural/educational apparatuses. These cultural/educational apparatuses would have a positive thrust in terms of their pedagogical role in creating the conditions that will allow people to learn both in and out of schools about the essential obligations of democratic citizenship particularly as they intersect with the ideals of what I call critical pluralism. Critical pluralism recognizes the need for a radical theory of difference that rejects cultural relativism; that is, it is a way of respecting certain differences without abandoning an ethics of critique and accountability. It is neither a winner-take-all format for political engagement, interaction, and transformation, nor is it an anything goes framework for determining how we should live and work within communities of difference. Beyond the scope of this essay, suffice it to say that critical pluralism is a discriminating discourse that is ethically constrained by a complex philosophical system of rights, fairness, social responsibility, individual accountability, and political obligations.

These cultural/educational apparatuses also have a negative role to play in terms of their influence at the cultural level to discipline discourses of social and political violence, intimidation, and irrational discriminations such as those based on race, class, gender, religion and sexuality. From the negative comes a positive form of freedom. The paradox of freedom in a democracy is that it must be constrained for it to be effectively lived. It is imperative that these developing educational apparatuses are structured to help de-Maga the schools, particularly in terms of curriculum and pedagogy. The question of personnel is more complicated as the Allied forces learned in relation to their attempts to purge Nazis from positions of pedagogical authority (Tent 1982). But some kind of standard needs to be developed in terms of who, in ideological terms, is qualified to teach children under the ethical constraints of critical pluralism and democratic principles.

De-MAGA-fication efforts would also have to be focused on commercial and

social media and other cultural sites where fascist ideologues in partnership with neoliberal oligarchs are working to mis-educate people through persistent lies and propaganda. Adorno writes, "Fascist propaganda has only to reproduce the existent mentality for its own purposes—it need not introduce a change—and the compulsive repetition which is one of its foremost characteristics will be at one with the necessity for its continuous reproduction" (quoted in Lewis, p. 14). This is in part why Neumann (1963) identifies the soft spots of commodified democratic culture as a central staging ground for National Socialism. Similarly, the soft spots of democratic culture in our current times are being successfully exploited by MAGA to solidify its political rise to power.

One general lesson from the Allies' reeducation and denazification campaigns that correlates with the crisis of education and democracy in our current times is their sensitivity to German cultural literacies and the correlational importance of national identity in relation to unlearning the discourse of National Socialism. In order for their project to instill democratic values and habits of mind on one hand, while on the other trying to remain sensitive to German sovereignty, they had to install German people into leadership positions (Tent). It was imperative that German citizens play a central role in the development of a democratic state aligned with the educational and cultural apparatuses of what the French, British and American forces hoped would be the beginning of a new free-market democracy.[2]

In the United States today, pro-democracy/de-MAGA-fication efforts would be well served to recruit critical workers from the parishes where MAGA forces are strongest. With the financial, security, and philosophical support of critical educational intellectuals from pro-democracy strongholds throughout the United States, local teachers and business and religious leaders should be central figures in both the positive educational project of democracy and the negative project of de-MAGA-fication and cultural reorientation. These people speak the same language and understand, better than outsiders to the community, what might be driving their neighbors to support fascism and reject democracy. From town hall style debates and cultural education through films, theater and concerts, de-MAGA-fication and pro-democracy education needs to focus on the soft spots of ideological production in the localities where support for fascist ideology is strongest. There is precedent for such work like the anti-authoritarian/pro-democracy educational efforts that swept the country in the 1930s (Lepore 2020), another time in US history where democracy was on the ballot, but threatened by the seductions of Soviet-style communism more than National Socialism. Civil Rights marches and rallies in the south also provide examples of radical dissident movements for racial justice that took their critical pedagogy into the southern heart of whiteness.

What I am proposing is a long-term educational strategy, what Raymond Williams (1961) called a "long revolution," that will need the strong support of federal and state governmental authorities and the police, military, and culture

industry. Germans had the benefit of a strong central democratic ally in the Allies' military and educational commitment in time and money to antifascist policies and programs. Without a centralized and highly organized pro-democratic formation driving these anti-MAGA/pro-democracy initiatives, there is little chance that anything can be done in the short-term to stop MAGA's rise to power and to buttress education's essential relationship to democracy. It's worth remembering that without federal military support in the 1950s, schools in the southern United States would have refused to the follow the newly passed federal law to racially integrate the public schools. After the south lost the Civil War, they would have tried to maintain slavery if the north didn't send in troops to secure its military/political victories and enforce abolition. Once the north retreated as a gesture of compromise with the Southern Democrats, Jim Crow codified racial apartheid in many states throughout the United States. Equally devastating to black communities, the federal military's retreat from the south helped to hollow out the significant economic, political, and educational gains made by free black people throughout the south during Reconstruction.

All of these examples point to a central paradox of democratic education. Radical democracy is an ideology that requires at some point in its evolution a fundamental decentralization of formal governmental authority. Official governmental power must be democratized in a functioning democracy. From the philosophical perspective of classic liberalism, democracy references a form of governance of, by and for the people. Self-determination and individual liberties are constrained by an array of civic obligations which, in turn, are guided by a public philosophy of laws, rights and responsibilities. Absence the radical democratization of power, neoliberal democracy risks becoming a veil of authoritarian ideology in the form of private power that hides the centralization of its political and economic authority behind appeals to freedom and choice (Chomsky 2012). For democracy to be realized in terms of the creation of a radical democratic habitus, a form of centralized power must first be installed into formative political, cultural and educational institutions to both protect against the germination and rise of authoritarianism and to release a constellation of critical pedagogies into the schools and society.

Notes

[1] In 2011, Joseph Stromberg at the Smithsonian Magazine writes: "According to Harry Rubenstein, chair and curator of the Division of Political History at the American History Museum, the symbolic birth of our system of government didn't come until its noble ideals were actually put to the test. On September 19, 215 years ago, Washington published his farewell address, marking one the first peaceful transfers of power in American history and cementing the country's status as a stable, democratic state." See https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/the-real-birth-of-american-democracy 83232825/

[2] Beyond the scope of this essay, suffice it to say the Soviets wanted something very

different for the German state regarding its economic structures. Also beyond the scope of this essay, but important to mention, the Allied forces didn't acknowledge that their uncritical acceptance of capitalism's compatibility with democracy might have had something to do with democracy's failure during the Weimar.

References

Adorno, T. Frenkel-Brunswik, E., Levinson, D. J., & Sanford, R. N. (1951). *The authoritarian personality*. Harper.

Adorno, T. (2020). Education after Auschwitz. *Filosofiyaosvity. Philosophy of Education*.

Althusser, L. (1971). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses. In L. Althusser (Ed.), *Lenin and philosophy and other essays*. Monthly Review Press.

Arendt, H. (1954). *The crisis in education*. https://thi.ucsc.edu/wp content/uploads/2016/09/Arendt-Crisis_In_Education-1954.pdf

Arendt, H. (1973). *The origins of totalitarianism (New ed.)*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Baldwin, J. (1962). A talk to teachers. In *The Price of the Ticket*. St. Martins, 1985.

Burns, Ken, Novick, L., & Botstein, S. (2022). *The U.S. and the Holocaust: Documentary*. https://www.pbs.org/kenburns/us-and-the-holocaust/about-the-film

Chomsky, N. (2012). Democracy and education. *Counterpoints*, *422*, 55–70. http://www.jstor.org/stable/42981754

Crehan, K. (2016). Gramsci's common sense: Inequality and its narratives. Duke University Press.

Dichter, H. (2012). Rebuilding physical education in the Western occupation zones of Germany, 1945–1949. *History of Education*, *41*(6), 787–806. https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2012.745171

Evans, B., & Giroux, H.A. (2020). American fascism: Fourteen deadly principles of contemporary politics. *symploke 28*(1), 181-205. https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/773850

Federalist Papers, Library of Congress. https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers/full-text

Folkenflik, D. 2022, August 4). Hungary's autocratic leader tells U.S. conservatives to join his culture war. *NPR* (August 4, 2022). https://www.npr.org/2022/08/04/1115541985/why-hungarys authoritative-leader-is-drawing-conservative-crowds-in-the-u-s

Foucault, M. (1977). Nietzsche, genealogy, history. In D. F. Bouchard (ed.), *Language, counter-memory, practice: Selected essays and interviews.* Cornell University Press.

Friedman, M. (1951, February 17). Neo-liberalism and its prospects. In *Farmand* (pp. 89-93). https://miltonfriedman.hoover.org/internal/media/dispatcher/214957/full

Fromm, E. (1941). *Escape from freedom.* Rinehart.

Fuessl, K-H., & Wegner, G. P. (1996). Education under radical change: Education policy and the youth program of the United States in postwar Germany. *History of Education Quarterly. 36*(1), 1-18.

Gee, J. P. (1989). What is literacy? *Journal of Education , 17*1(1), 18-25.

Giroux, H., & William. P. (2022). Educators and critical pedagogy: an antidote to authoritarianism. *Canadian Dimension* (October 16). https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/educators-and-critical-pedagogy-an-antidote-to authoritarianism

Giroux, H. (2021). Education, politics, and the crisis of democracy in the age of pandemics. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, *21*(4), 5-10.

Giroux, H. (2021). Fighting back against the age of manufactured ignorance: Resistance is still possible. *Salon*, July 3. https://www.salon.com/2021/07/03/fighting-back-

against-the-age of-manufactured-ignorance-resistance-is-still-possible/

Giroux, H, A. (2022a) Resisting fascism and winning the education wars: How we can meet the challenge. *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review, 35*(Autumn), 111-126. https://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue/issue-35/resisting-fascism-and winning-education-wars-how-we-can-meet-challenge

Giroux, H. (2022b). The nazification of American society and the scourge of violence. *Counterpunch*. October 14. https://www.counterpunch.org/2022/10/14/the-nazification-of american-society-and-the-scourge-of-violence/

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison books*. International Publishers.

Greene, M. (1985). The role of education in a democracy. *Educational Horizons*, *63*, 3-9.

Guilherme, M. (2022c). Is there a role for critical pedagogy in language/culture studies? An interview with Henry A. Giroux. Retrieved on September 21, 2022: https://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~girouxh/RoleOfCritPedagogy.htm

hooks, b. (1997). *Teaching to transgress*. Palgrave.

hooks, b. (2013). *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope*. Routledge.

Jefferson, T.. Correspondence to Charles Yancey, January 6, 1816. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/resource/mtj1.048_0731_0734/?sp=4&st=text

Fung, A., & Keyssar, A. (2022). America's flawed democracy. *HKS Policy Cast*. Hosted by Ralph Rinalli (February 17. https://www.hks.harvard.edu/more/policycast

Kuhn, T. S. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions.* (2nd Edition). University of Chicago Press.

Lepore, J. (2020). Democracy in peril. *The New Yorker* (February 3). https://www.newyorker.com/podcast/political-scene/jill-lepore-on-democracy-in-peril-then-and now

Lewis, T. E. (2020). *Walter Benjamin's antifascist education: From riddles to radio*. State University of New York Press.

Lutz, E. (2022). Steve Bannon's election-takeover dream is starting to take shape. *Vanity Fair*, June 1. https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2022/06/steve-bannon-election-takeover precinct-strategy

Mueller, T. (2017). A legal odyssey: Denazification law, Nazi elite schools, and the construction of postwar memory. *History of Education*, *46*(4), 498–513. https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2017.1318307

Neumann, F.. (1963). *Behemoth: The structure and practice of national socialism*, *1933-1944.* Octagon Books.

Neumann, F. (1947). Reeducating the Germans: The dilemma of reconstruction. *Commentary*. June. https://www.commentary.org/articles/franz-neumann/re-educating-the germansthe-dilemma-of-reconstruction/

Office of the Historian. The Casablanca Conference, 1943. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/casablanca

Ogles, J. (2021). Gov. DeSantis OKs academic surveys to ensure campuses aren't "hotbeds for stale ideologies." *Florida Politics*. June 22. https://floridapolitics.com/archives/437374-govdesantis-oks-academic-surveys-to-ensure-campuses-arent-hotbeds-for-stale-ideologies/

Potsdam Agreement. (1945). Excerpts from the *Report on the Potsdam Conference* (Potsdam Agreement) (August 2). https://germanhistorydocs.ghi dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage_id=2978

Proctor & Schiebinger (Eds). (2008). *Agnotology: The making and unmaking of ignorance*. Stanford University Press.

Reagan, R. (1981). *Inaugural Address*, January 20. https://www.reaganfoundation.org/ronald-reagan/reagan-quotes-speeches/inaugural-address-2/

Redding, K. A. (2020). Reteaching/retouching Heimat: Expellees, home and belonging in German schools' post-war curricula. *History of Education*, *49*(6), 805–818. https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2020.1742799

Simon R. I. & Institut d'études pédagogiques de l'Ontario. (1992). *Teaching against the grain: texts for a pedagogy of possibility*. OISE Press: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Tent, J. (1982). *Mission on the Rhine: Reeducation and denazification in American-occupied Germany*. University of Chicago Press.

Voloshinov, V. N. (1973). *Marxism and the philosophy of language*. Seminar Press

Weber, M. (1994). *Weber: Political writings* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought). P. Lassman (ed). Ronald Speirs (trans). Cambridge University Press.

Weiner, E. J. (2003). Paths from Erich Fromm: Thinking authority pedagogically. *The Journal of Educational Thought (JET) / Revue De La Pensée Éducative, 37*(1), 59-75. Accessed December 9, 2020. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23767176

Weiner, E. J. (2021). Framing critical race theory: Ideology, schooling and the production of ignorance. *3QD* (June 21). https://3quarksdaily.com/3quarksdaily/2021/06/framing-critical race-theory-ideology-schooling-and-the-production-of-ignorance.html

Welch, D. (1993). Political 're-education' and the use of radio in Germany after 1945. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television*, *13*(1), 75. https://doi org.ezproxy.montclair.edu/10.1080/01439689300260501

Williams, R. (1961). *The long revolution.* Chatto and Windus.

Tradition as Transformation: The Role of Pashtun Hujra in Conflict Resolution, Peacebuilding, and Social Change

Aamir Jamal, Omer Jamal, & Khwaja Naveed

Introduction

Indigenous institutions and social processes have long been viewed as focal spaces for peacebuilding, conflict resolution, transformative learning, and social change among many cultures and communities across the world. However, due to a multitude of issues relating to colonization, the enforcement of neocolonial and neoliberal models of governance, and armed conflicts, the role and essence of indigenous institutions, structures, and processes have been underappreciated, underutilized, and largely relegated to merely symbolic structures. Most disciplines within international development and social sciences that focus on peace and conflict studies have cultivated a bureaucratic interpretation of peacebuilding, closely aligned with liberal and subsequently neoliberal approaches to statebuilding. This evolution has contributed to a robust international peacebuilding architecture. However, its integration with local and indigenous contexts has been comparatively underwhelming. Critics contend that liberal peace models have overly emphasized elite power dynamics and colonial legacies, relying on problem-solving methodologies and positivist epistemologies. Such models have been inadequate in addressing the complexities, agency, and hybridity inherent in human

Aamir Jamal is an associate professor in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Omer Jamal is a research assistant at the University of Groningen, Netherlands. Khwaja Naveed is a postdoctoral fellow at UAE University, United Arab Emirates. Email address: aamir.jamal@ucalgary.ca, omer.jamal@gmail.com, & khwajanaveed@uaeu.ac.ae

societies, including local and tribal institutions (Groom, 1991; Richmond, 2018) Furthermore, they often overlook how inequality can foster conflict. To enhance peacebuilding, there is a pressing need to prioritize cultural relevance and adopt decolonial strategies, moving beyond the constraints of neoliberal epistemological frameworks.

The twentieth century witnessed the development of an international framework of peace, centered around liberal interpretations of law, institutions, norms, economic systems, and intervention practices. Since the Cold War, Western/Eurocentric models of conflict-resolution and governance have been heavily applied as a universal approach, with the most prominent being the liberal peace model (also known as liberal peacebuilding) in the Global South. Mainly utilized in the post-Cold War period, and built upon the Western Enlightenment framework, liberal peacebuilding holds universal values as its ethos, arguing that one can view the world through a "universal and ahistorical matrix" (Tanabe, 2017, p. 449). Essentially, the liberal peace model ignores local actors, historical contexts, cultural processes, and indigenous institutions, opting instead for state-led processes that offer top-down solutions. This model has been broadly criticized for its minimal impact and even further proliferation of issues as its proposed solutions and attempted application have been almost entirely rejected by the locality (Yousaf & Poncian, 2018). As such, the introduction and attempted application of this model to many conflict-ridden areas and societies has failed and even worsened situations as it is largely viewed as a form of further western imperialism and colonization (Ahmad & Muhammad, 2019; Yousef & Poncian, 2018). Thus, there has emerged a growing consensus among academics and practitioners in distancing from such approaches and instead adopting culturally relevant, community-oriented models that consider the values, processes, institutions, and structures of the locality as its ethos (Gray et al., 2008; Spitzer & Twikirize, 2019).

One of the most notable instances where the liberal peace model and other Western/Eurocentric approaches to peacebuilding and conflict resolution have been ineffective involves the tribal Pashtuns of Pakistan and Afghanistan. In recent post-conflict efforts, the key Pashtun indigenous institution for social cohesion, change, governance, peacebuilding, and conflict-resolution—the Hujra—has been replaced by approaches that favour Western/Eurocentric values and models in which historical and contemporary contexts are ignored, cultural processes and strategies are discredited, and key local actors are disregarded in favour of "state-sanctioned legal and political definitional approaches" (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005, p. 600; Yousaf & Poncian, 2018). As such, the post-Cold War liberal peace model that has been attempted in application to the Pashtuns has almost wholly failed in bringing about peace and transformative social change to such areas and communities. Thus, the literature has identified a pressing need to re-introduce and empower indigenous institutions such as the Hujra as the central player in peacebuilding, conflict-resolution, and transformative social change among

Pashtuns (Alam, 2021; Ahmad & Muhammad, 2019; CAMP & Saferworld, 2012; Dawar, 2019; Yousaf & Furrukhzad, 2020; Yousaf & Poncian, 2018)

This article seeks to understand the historic role of the Hujra in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and transformative social change among the Pashtuns as well as identify its application in being used, once again, as the key model to achieve such results, both within Pashtun-dominant areas in Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as among the Pashtun diaspora abroad. First, the article will give a historical overview and analysis of the Pashtun tribe, followed by an explanation of the indigenous institution and social process that is Hujra. The historical and contemporary role of the Hujra among Pashtuns in Pakistan and Afghanistan will also be analyzed to determine its role in conflict-resolution, peacebuilding, and transformative social change efforts. Then, examples of indigenous institutions around the world similar to the Hujra will be analyzed to understand how such institutions and processes have been, and can be, used as the focal point for fostering and developing transformative social change among conflict-ridden, post-colonial societies and communities. Finally, the article will conclude with outlining the potential of utilizing the Hujra among the Pashtun diaspora abroad, especially regarding specific issues they face in relation to refugees, migration, settlement stressors, gender justice, mental health, and family well-being.

History of Pashtuns

The Pashtuns, also known as Pakhtun or Pushtuns, are a Pashto-speaking, Indo-Iranian ethnic group that mainly inhabit eastern Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan, along the Durand Line that separates the tribal group between the two countries (Jamal 2016; Minahan, 2014; Siddique, 2014). Comprising about 15% of the population, the Pashtuns are the second-largest ethnic group in Pakistan and are the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan at over 40% of the population, with a total global population of 50 million (Siddique, 2014; Yousaf, 2019). As such, the Pashtuns are "the world's largest tribally organised society" (Siddique, 2014, p.13). Historically, the Pashtun people who inhabit these largely tribal areas have been caught in never-ending conflicts for over 2500 years, with notable recorded wars being fought against Alexander the Great's conquests, the Persians, the Mongols, and the Moguls (Bearden, 2013). These conflicts have continued into the modern-day as contemporary conflicts including extended and devastating armed resistance to the colonial British in the 19th and 20th centuries, the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s, the Taliban's rise to power in the late 90s, the U.S. War on Terror post-9/11, and never-ending intercultural rivalries that divide Afghanistan and even factions of the Pashtun tribe itself.

Pashtunwali

In the face of non-stop armed conflicts and threats, the Pashtuns have created

and evolved coping-mechanisms and survival techniques in the set of social and moral codes that dictate the behaviour, norms, and expectations of individuals, society, and the entire tribe in general (Hawkins, 2009; Suleiman-Khel, 2013). *Pashtunwali*—literally meaning "the way of the Pashtuns"—represents the most encompassing code adhered to by Pashtuns and is largely cited as the *Magna Carta* of Pashtuns (Dawar, 2019; Hawkins, 2009; Shukla, 2015). This unwritten normative code sets clear and strict norms and expectations for all Pashtuns to follow, and essentially provides the Pashtun people with a "specific national identity and culture" (Suleiman-Khel, 2013, p. 20). In fact, Pashtunwali is comprised of many "unwritten codes that compensate for the lack, or inefficiency, of state institutions" (Siddique, 2014, p. 14). As such, Pashtunwali is centered around the "cultural notions of reconciliation, pride, honour, hospitality, and justice" (Drumbl 2007; Yousaf & Furrukhzad, 2020, p. 7). It is in this sense that the key codes and tenents of Pashtunwali are created: *Jirga* (council), *nang* (honour), *melmastia* (hospitality), *badal* (reciprocity), and *nanawatai* (asylum), among others (Dawar, 2019; Elahi, 2015 Hawkins, 2009; Mehmood, Haider, & Ali, 2017; Shukla, 2015; Siddique, 2014; Yousaf & Furrukhzad, 2020; Yousufzai & Gohar, 2005).

In popular fiction, Pashtunwali is often depicted as a strict and uncompromising code of conduct that is followed unquestionably by Pashtuns, and as a primitive and outdated way of life that conflicts with modern values (Aziz et al., 2021). When it comes to the portrayal of Pashtunwali, it is important to consider the impact of colonialism and the psychographic biases of non-Pashtun writers. Throughout history, colonial powers have often depicted Pashtuns as backwards and uncivilized, and their portrayal of Pashtunwali has often focused on its violent aspects, such as revenge and honor killings (Shah et al., 2012). This has had a lasting impact on how Pashtunwali is understood and viewed by non-Pashtun writers and readers. While Pashtunwali may appear to be a set of rigid, primitive, and unyielding rules to outsiders, it has played a significant role in maintaining social cohesion and resolving conflicts within Pashtun society and continues to have relevance in modern times (Yousaf & FurrukhZad, 2020).

Pashtunwali has been a powerful force in shaping the tribal affairs of the region throughout history. As Ahmad (1980) notes, the principles of Pashtunwali, including hospitality, revenge, and the importance of tribal identity, have had a profound impact on the social, political, and economic aspects of Pashtun society. The tribal system of governance and dispute resolution, based on the principles of Pashtunwali, has played a crucial role in the state of affairs of Pashtuns. However, as Iqtidar (2012) highlights, its impact has also been a source of tension and conflict, particularly in the context of the modern nation-state. The traditional tribal practices and principles, rooted in Pashtunwali, often clash with the formal legal and political systems of the modern state, leading to challenges in reconciling the two systems.

What is *Jirga* and *Hujra*?

At the heart of Pashtun culture and Pashtunwali, lies the most historic and critical institutions—the Jirga *and* Hujra. Essentially, Jirga refers to the council in which tribal elders, stakeholders, and community members convene to consult and settle on key matters, while the Hujra is the institutional setting where the consultation takes place. As such, the Hujra acts as the central gathering point for Pashtun men, in which they congregate, converse, and engage in conflict resolution, discourse regarding communal and societal issues, and hold dialogue across a wide variety of topics (Khan, Ghumman, & Hashmi, 2008). The Hujra is also a place where hospitality is extended to visitors, such as guests and travelers, who are provided with food, shelter, and protection. It is a central aspect of Pashtun culture and is often considered a symbol of Pashtunwali values such as hospitality, respect, and community solidarity (Ahmad & Muhammad, 2019). Therefore, the Hujra is not solely a social gathering, but rather a form of bonding and exposure as critical topics such as politics, family matters, education, health, social issues, and more flow in these deep conversations.

Hujra plays a vital role in Pashtun society by facilitating the exchange of knowledge and skills across generations, preserving the traditions of Pashtunwali (Ahmad & Muhammad, 2019). In addition to its role in imparting collective wisdom and skills, the Hujra also serves as a symbol of Pashtun identity and unity. It is a place where people from different backgrounds and tribes can come together to find common ground and work towards a shared goal. It is in this sense, too, that Jirga and Hujra are seen as the binding forces of Pashtunwali as they signify and ensure "values of peace, justice, and reconciliation among Pashtuns" (Chaudhry and Wazir 2012; Oberson 2002; Yousaf & Furrukhzad, 2020, p.7). Held in the highest regard among the Pashtuns, the Hujra effectively acts as a "permanent jury, always available to resolve conflicts between neighbors, and decisions [are] quick, cheap, unbiased, and honored by people because of their collaborative nature" (Khan, Ghumman, & Hashmi, 2008, p.197). Thus, the Hujra is widely recognized as the key institution for conflict-resolution, peacebuilding, promotion of unity and cooperation among the Pashtun people and transformative social change among Pashtuns.

Hujra: Peacebuilding and Transformative Social Change

While the Hujra has historically been the center gathering point for addressing and solving critical issues among Pashtuns, its key features are most prominent during times of war as an effective organizer for *lashkar* (armed forces) and in post-conflict as a center and process for rehabilitation, reconciliation, and reconstruction. The Hujra finds its strength, especially in times of conflict, through its focus on community-collaboration, diffusion of knowledge through elders, mutual trust, and consensus-building, making it a key institution and reliable process

in facilitating sustainable and effective social change. Many studies and examples have noted the tried and recorded effectiveness and potential of the Pashtun Jirga and Hujra in peacebuilding and conflict-resolution in Pakistan and Afghanistan after government, military, and (I)NGO interventions failed to achieve its desired results (Alam, 2021; Ahmad & Muhammad, 2019; CAMP & Saferworld, 2012; Dawar, 2019; Elahi, 2015; Yousafzai & Furrukhzad, 2020; Yousaf & Poncian, 2018). As the literature records, however, contemporary usage of the Hujra institution was only employed after liberal peacebuilding models failed in the region and caused backlash and greater conflict. To understand the modern-day application of the Hujra, its complexities, and its role in Pashtun society post-Cold War, one must first examine its role during the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan from 1979 – 1989, followed by its corruption post-Cold War, and then its recent resurgence in rehabilitation and rebuilding efforts in the Pashtun tribal areas of Pakistan.

During the Afghan resistance to the Soviets, the Hujra was an empowered and critical component of the success of the Afghan mujahideen (freedom fighters) (Siddique, 2014). The key process of the Hujra as a communal gathering center was used effectively to consult communities, plan resistance activities, and organize militia that ultimately drove out the Soviets. However, seeing that only the Pashtuns in Afghanistan could not drive out the Soviet invasion, the United States, Pakistan, and their Arab allies empowered religious clerics to create and establish a larger platform under the banner of an extremist version of Islam to muster a larger-scale and widespread response in the region and across the world (Jamal, 2015 Siddique, 2014). As such, while the Pashtuns were no stranger to conflict, the imposition of global superpowers resulted in intratribal militancy and the empowerment of religious clerics that lead to the weakening of the existing social fabric of the Pashtun society. This further led to a gradual erosion of the traditional tribal structures and the emergence of new power dynamics based on religious affiliations and allegiances, which continue to shape the social and political landscape of the region today. Thus, although the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan concluded in 1989, the region has since experienced far deadlier conflicts that persist in various forms, preventing the society from developing according to its own dynamics.

The Taliban regime, which came to power in the mid-1990s, sought to replace the traditional tribal governance systems with their own interpretation of Islamic law, and as a result, the Hujra and jirga were seen as competing power centers that needed to be neutralized. They began to target traditional leaders such as elders, *maliks,* and *khans,* replacing them with religious clerics and imams, historically holding little to no power in Pashtun society. The Taliban's ideology was rooted in a distorted and extremist interpretation of Islam, and they sought to impose that interpretation on the entire region. However, it is important to note that the Taliban's rise to power was not solely the result of religious fanaticism, and there were

a range of political, economic, and social factors that contributed to their success. The Hujra and Jirga were largely identified as being the "central institution that challenged the militants," making it most often targeted for political interests. In an effort to take control of the system itself, the Pashtun word Jirga was replaced by the Taliban with the Arabic word *shura* as militants sought to force people into mosques and madrassas instead, transferring authority and power away communities and elders to mosques and clerics (CAMP & Saferworld, 2012, p.1). Suicide bombings such as the 2008 Orakzai bombing which killed over 200 tribesmen gathered in a Hujra became increasingly common (Siddique, 2014). Additionally, economic development had led to the replacement of the communal Hujra by individual *Baitaks*, resulting in a decline in social cohesion and weakened social networks (Elahi, 2015). Simultaneously, the Taliban's targeting of key figures such as maliks, khans, and elders who organized and deliberated over the Hujra and other Pashtun social processes, disrupted the traditional power structures. This left a power vacuum that the tyrants were able to exploit, resulting in a breakdown of the local governance system. As a consequence, the Hujra and its key players and processes became deliberately targeted by militant groups seeking to seize control of the area. This had severe implications for the Pashtuns, as for the first time, key institutions and processes had been abandoned for an extremist religious mandate that was not present beforehand. As a result, the traditional role of the Hujra in maintaining social order and resolving conflicts through collective decision-making was further weakened. Despite all this, the successful resistances by many Pashtun communities were attributed to the support of local Hujra and Jirga leaders. While the Hujra and Jirga were certainly targeted by the Taliban and other extremist groups, these institutions played key roles in resisting and challenging the militants, and in many cases, remained a vital part of Pashtun society and governance during the Taliban era (Ullah & Bano, 2019).

As the fighting worsened post-9/11, the Taliban and other militant groups seized control of the Pashtun tribal belt in Pakistan in the early 21st century. From 2004-2011, millions of Pashtuns became internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, or migrated to other countries and the normative, binding structures of Pashtun culture and society had broken down. These communities faced the erosion of social norms and values that defined their lives while power vacuums were created as leaders and elders, largely considered the gatekeepers and transmitters of Pashtunwali, were killed. During these years, Hujras played an important role in supporting and mobilizing resources for IDPs in Pashtun inhabited areas, as local communities would organize themselves to provide essential resources like food and shelter for the IDPs. The Hujra, as a traditional gathering place, played a critical role in facilitating these efforts. It was used as a venue for meetings where community members could coordinate relief efforts, discuss the needs of the IDPs, and plan further resource mobilization. In some cases, the Hujra itself was used to provide temporary accommodation for IDPs, as local community

members would offer space in their Hujras until more permanent housing could be arranged. This approach allowed for efficient resource utilization and fostered a sense of belonging for the IDPs within the community. The role of the Hujra in this context was one of facilitating the social integration of IDPs into their new communities and helping to build resilience in the face of displacement, showcasing how Hujras are key factors in creating transformative social change.

As Pakistani military-led operations intensified in the tribal areas and Swat regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the Taliban and other militants were slowly driven out and almost wholly eradicated from the area by 2017 and Pashtuns slowly returned to their homelands. However, there now persisted issues of rehabilitation, reconciliation, and rebuilding of entire communities, families, and tribes in whose social processes and institutions had broken down. It is in this moment that the *Hujra* should have experienced a massive comeback, yet it was largely ignored by the government, military forces, and international groups as they imposed their own state-mandated, top-down strategies. As a result, new conflicts arose and even worsened between the tribal Pashtuns and government and military agencies as they were seen as neocolonialists, bringing about further invasion and oppression. This is largely due to the fact that militant enforcement measures and strategies were then replaced by government, international, and military-led rebuilding strategies. For instance, initial efforts in the area were centered around providing developmental funds to rebuild infrastructure, but the government did not consult the local population and even opted to collaborate with religious leaders rather than traditional maliks and elders (Alam, 2021). Immediately, these funds and plans were rejected by the locality and faced resistance in many areas (Alam, 2021). In the face of this, the government repositioned themselves and collaborated with maliks and local stakeholders in a Hujra setting that respected and accounted for the Pashtun Jirga process, and an agreement was finally reached for the reconstruction of dams, roads, and even a university in the tribal areas (Alam, 2021). This proposition was accepted by the locality as it considered and utilized for the Pashtun indigenous social process that was critical to social acceptance. Thus, the resolve of the Hujra after its corruption and breakdown by the Taliban and other forces was an essential piece in the rebuilding and rehabilitation of entire communities.

Further, the Hujra extends beyond rehabilitation and conflict-resolution initiatives as it acts as an effective institution for transformative social change. As noted in a qualitative study by Ahmad & Muhammad (2019), participants interviewed in the Pashtun tribal belt of Pakistan identified the Hujra as the most important aspect of Pashtunwali, citing nine main functions of the Hujra*:*

> (1) a house of peace, (2) a village judicial complex, (3) as a village parliament, (4) as a mean for transmission of peacebuilding knowledge, (5) as a place for catharsis and counseling, (6) as a center of music, poetry and storytelling, (7) as a space for hospitality and communal relationships, (8) as an agency for communal harmony and (9) as a communication hub. (p. 124)

In another study, the Hujra was identified by participants as the connecting bridge between the elders and the youth of the community (Rehman et al., 2021). Many youths expressed that the Hujra represents a transformative space of sharing indigenous knowledge and learning from elders. This knowledge encompasses a broad range of topics such as history, medicine, morals, and religion (Rehman et al., 2021). For the elders, the Hujra is a way to teach the youth about morals and customs, as well as spend quality time with them through leisurely activities and games. Having a space for the community to come together for such activities was found to reduce stress and improve the mental health of Pashtuns, especially those who work physically demanding farm-based jobs (Rehman et al., 2021). Thus, the Hujra is not only essential in the context of conflict resolution, but also in transformative social change as it is an outlet for knowledge to be transferred from one generation to another as well as a way to foster healthy community relationships.

In his study on overcoming barriers to girls' education in the Pashtun region of Pakistan, Jamal (2015) underscores the strategic significance of three historically established and revered institutions within the Pashtun community: the men's guest house (Hujra), the council of elders (Jirga), and the mosque (Jumaat). He particularly highlights the Hujra as a pivotal gathering place for village men, suggesting it as an ideal venue to initiate discussions about expanding educational opportunities for girls. A Jirga member in the Delphi panel in the study noted that "the best way to discuss girls' education is to sit in the Hujra and win the confidence of the village elders." (p. 8). The Jirga itself is another respected and venerable institution among the Pashtun tribes. Its backing carries considerable weight within the community, given its long-standing prestige and credibility as a centuries-old judicial body (Saigol, 2012). The norms and decision-making processes of the Jirga encapsulate the indigenous methods by which Pashtuns address their social, economic, and political challenges at the village, tribal, and regional levels (Wardak, 2003). Thus, the Jirga offers significant promise and serves as a potent platform for engaging community elders in tackling pressing issues of gender justice in Pashtun society.

As noted, the Hujra has a complex and multi-dimensional role in Pashtun society, serving as a central institution for political, judicial, cultural, and social processes. Politically, the Hujra has played a critical role in the governance and administration of Pashtun society (Alam, 2021). It is a space where Pashtun leaders can gather and discuss matters of public concern, make decisions, and forge consensus. The Hujra has been a central venue for the selection of community leaders and the resolution of disputes (Siddique, 2014). Judicially, the Hujra has played a crucial role in the administration of justice in Pashtun society. It is often the first port of call for individuals seeking justice, and disputes are resolved through a collective decision-making process (Yousafzai & Furrukhzad, 2020). The Hujra's decision is typically respected and enforced, even in cases where the state's formal justice system is involved. The Hujra is also the locus for the trans-

mission and preservation of Pashtun culture and traditions. It is where oral histories are shared, where poetry and music are performed, and where Pashtun values and norms are reinforced. The Hujra also provides a platform for Pashtun art and handicrafts, which have significant cultural and economic value. In social terms, the Hujra serves as a place for communal gatherings, where people from different backgrounds and classes come together to socialize and bond (Elahi, 2015). It is a place where hospitality is offered to all, and where people can seek shelter and comfort in times of need. The Hujra also provides an important space for traditional celebrations, such as weddings and other festivals.

The Hujra's multifaceted role in Pashtun society is critical to understanding the significance of the institution in the context of conflict-resolution, peacebuilding, rehabilitation, reconciliation, education, and transformative social change (Yousaf & Poncian, 2018). As such, any efforts to address these issues may consider the Hujra as the primary institution for dialogue, consensus-building, and the resolution of conflicts in Pashtun society (Ahmad & Muhammad, 2019).

Global Indigenous Institutions: Pioneering Peacebuilding and Transformative Social Change

As previously noted, globalization, the enduring impacts of colonialism, and Western-centric approaches to conflict resolution and social change have marginalized indigenous institutions as tools for peacebuilding and transformative social change. Yet, contemporary global examples highlight the potential of these indigenous institutions to play significant roles in local community transformation, offering alternatives to the neoliberal and neocolonial models imposed by Western powers, which have often failed to effectively address these issues.

One indigenous institution which has helped to advance peace and transformative social change in their community is the Oromo's Gada system. The Gada is a democratic and socio-political system which has been practiced by the Oromo people in Ethiopia for centuries. It encompasses every aspect of Oromo social, economic, and political life, and organizes itself into three levels of government: central, regional, and local (Abdurahman, 2019). Through this system, male Oromo are elected democratically as leaders and peace is sustained through the implementation of traditional Oromo values. The traditional system is organized into five "classes" with each class consisting of a chairperson, officials, and an assembly (UNESCO, 2016). While class membership is open only to men, the women are consulted for decision-making on matters relating to women's issues and rights (UNESCO, 2016). Each class is educated and taught through indigenous ways of knowing, by oral historians who cover topics of history, law, myths, rituals, conduct, and the general function of the Gada. Political meetings and social ceremonies take place under a sycamore tree, which is considered a symbol of the Oromo people (UNESCO, 2016), and knowledge and practices are

transmitted orally through generations. The Oromo people uphold justice by implementing principles of truth and peace-making within their society. As such, the conflict resolution of the Oromo people is approached through a "a truth-finding process" (Abdurahman, 2019). In times of conflict or dispute, the council selects five elders based on their "character of altruism, knowledge of societal rules, and willingness to devote their time" (Abdurahman, 2019) to resolve the problem and restore peace. They absolutely reject all forms of violent conflict resolution and uphold values of freedom, justice, democracy, and solidarity throughout Oromo society. Resembling the Hujra, elders are respected through the Gada system, and valuable knowledge is transmitted orally in gatherings under symbolically significant landmarks, creating a sense of community and transformative social change. Although this form of peacebuilding takes a much more informal one, it is proven to be more effective for the indigenous communities than the formal state system is (Abdurahman, 2019).

Another strikingly similar example of indigenous institutions which work to create transformative peace and social changes within their communities can be found in the Liberian Palava Huts. These huts are known as "indigenous reconciliatory and non-adversarial process of justice and conflict transformation used to resolve disputes" in Liberian society (Danso, 2016). The Palava hut is a centuries-old system that was a part of indigenous ways of life and was recently reintroduced into Liberian society after the end of its fourteen-year civil war (Lawson & Flomo, 2020; Danos, 2016). Generally convened by an elder within the community, informal gatherings are organized within the hut to help seek out permanent solutions for disputes regarding theft, marriage, divorce, murder, rape, and more (Danso, 2016). The process often includes aspects of truth-telling, accountability, forgiveness, and sometimes punishment for offenders (Danso, 2016). In the contemporary context, the Palava Hut system is used as a way to help Liberians, especially those living in rural areas, seek justice and reconciliation after the tragedies of the civil war. Initially, a "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" (TRC) was established with the same mission, but it saw little success in conflict-resolution due to it being a more formal criminal justice system built largely upon Western models (Danso, 2016). As a result, the Palava Hut system was then reintroduced as a "non-state justice framework" which presents a more community-based and "people-to-people" approach (Danso, 2016), showcasing how indigenous ways of life can present more practical methods of conflict-resolution than the standardized neo-colonial systems.

Additionally, the indigenous circle process, originating from the indigenous peoples in North America, serves as an effective and culturally appropriate model for fostering transformative social change within communities. These indigenous "talking circles," have proven to be highly effective in groupwork, (re)conciliation, team building, and cooperation (Jennings, Gandarilla & Tan, 2015). Further, the indigenous circle process has been increasingly used amongst health practi-

tioners to "instruct paraprofessionals and community health representatives about tribal community health" (Jennings, Gandarilla & Tan, 2015, p.60; Granillo et al, 2010). Moreover, the indigenous circle process has been used as a form of conflict-resolution and consultation and, similar to the Hujra, the indigenous circle process plays numerous functions, such as facilitating social cohesion, acting as a judicial, political, and decision-making function, support system, being a center point for prayer and healing, or even providing refuge to those seeking it. In a striking comparison to the Hujra process, the Indigenous talking circle designates authority to the eldest person in the room, as they often lead the prayer, discussions, and ceremonial events (Jennings, Gandarilla & Tan, 2015). Furthermore, these circle processes offer a peaceful form of communication and dispute resolution mechanism between individuals through healing, teaching, and supporting all those involved (Lavallee, 2009).

As noted in the examples above, indigenous institutions for conflict-resolution, peacebuilding, consultation, and transformative social change are working around the globe. Engaging in such institutions and processes are critical to the wellbeing and approval of local communities, and as shown in the studies, neglecting such institutions usually leads to preventable conflicts and violence between the local communities and the government and/or foreign actors. As such, indigenous institutions must be recognized as a focal point for the facilitation and promotion of relations, wellbeing, conflict-resolution, peacebuilding, and social change for the indigenous community as well as outsiders who seek to engage with the locality.

Hujra as a Tool for Transformative Learning and Social Change Among Pashtun Diaspora

The refugee, immigration, and resettlement process can be inherently stressful, posing significant mental health challenges for many individuals. This concern is heightened by additional risk factors, such as experiences in refugee camps, traumatic events, family separation, unemployment, poverty, and general instability (Fenta, Hyman, & Noh, 2004; Lorenzetti & Este, 2010). It has been observed that new immigrants typically first find a sense of belonging within their own ethnic groups upon arrival in the host country, before gradually connecting with the broader local community (Salami et al., 2019). Social support systems, communities, and networks are vital for the mental well-being of individuals, particularly for immigrants in Canada. However, these crucial support systems are often lacking, forcing immigrants to cope with their new environment with minimal help, often relying only on close family members. Numerous studies have highlighted the beneficial effects of social support on immigrant mental health, indicating that enhanced access to these supports can significantly ease the stress associated with cultural adaptation (Dahlan et al., 2019; Salami et al., 2019; George et al., 2015).

The Hujra as an institution is an exemplary model that underscores the advantages of strong social support and community bonding, especially among men. Given these insights, it is essential to promote a sense of belonging and support the integration of immigrants into both their ethnic and local communities.

For Pashtun men, who often come from conservative, traditional backgrounds, a culturally resonant framework like the Hujra can be particularly effective. This traditional and supportive gathering, conducted in a culturally appropriate manner, can help address mental health issues and support healthy family and social relationships. Adopting culturally relevant approaches such as the Hujra may yield better outcomes in addressing sensitive matters like mental health, masculinity, and family well being. As a key component of Pashtunwali, the Hujra has been recreated amongst Pashtun diaspora around the world and can act as an effective form of transformative social change among Pashtun diaspora who face unique challenges on their own. Unfortunately, the effects of the Hujra on the Pashtun diaspora have not been adequately researched and thus persists a major dearth in applying the Hujra outside of Pashtun-dominant areas in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Nonetheless, the key tenents of the Hujra and its focus on consensus building, community, collaboration, transmission of knowledge, and the establishment of relationships all can play a key role in its use as a culturally relevant model for transformative social change among the Pashtun diaspora in the western world.

Conclusion

The Hujra has long served as a pivotal gathering point for the Pashtun community, particularly during times of conflict and post-conflict recovery, facilitating rehabilitation, reconciliation, and reconstruction. Its effectiveness stems from its emphasis on community collaboration, knowledge dissemination by elders, mutual trust, and consensus-building. These features not only strengthen its role during crises but also underscore its importance in preserving Pashtun traditions and identity through the principles of Pashtunwali. Furthermore, the Hujra acts as a hub for inter-tribal unity and a venue for vital cultural exchange, significantly impacting community-building and social support.

In contemporary contexts, the Hujra continues to prove its relevance by effectively addressing broader social issues, such as education for girls, peace building and the challenges faced by the Pashtun diaspora. Its application extends beyond traditional settings, offering a culturally attuned approach to the unique stresses of immigration and integration in host countries. This adaptability makes the Hujra a vital model for social work and social development, emphasizing the potential of indigenous institutions in fostering significant social change and aiding immigrant communities in culturally sensitive ways. The Hujra exemplifies a dynamic and culturally ingrained institution capable of guiding the Pashtun community through challenges of both traditional and contemporary natures. As a symbol

of identity and a cornerstone of social structure, it holds profound potential for promoting peace, justice, and sustainable social transformation, demonstrating the lasting relevance of traditional systems in contextual social interventions and transformative learning.

Acknowledgment

We extend our gratitude to Dr. Liza Lorenzetti for her insights, guidance, and editing support, which greatly enhanced the quality of this article.

References

Abdurahman, A. (2019). The Gada system and the Oromo's (Ethiopia) culture of peace. *Skhid: Analitychno-Informatsiinyi Zhurnal, 2*(160), 45–51. https://doi.org/10.21847/1728-9343.2019.2(160).164984

Ahmed, A. S. (1980). *Pukhtun economy and society: Encapsulating systems, economic development and tribal strategy*. Routledge.

Ahmad, N., & Muhammad, N. (2019). Understanding Pakhtun *Hujra* (A Socio-Cultural Institute) and its relevance to peacebuilding. *Pakistan Journal of Criminology, 11*(2), 120-132. http://www.pjcriminology.com/publications/understanding-pakhtun-*Hujra*-a-socio-cultural-institute-and-its-relevance-to-peacebuilding/

Alam, J. (2021). Jirga system and its role in peacebuilding and development in Pakistan's terrorism-affected Pashtun "Tribal" districts. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development,* 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1542316620986138

Alfred, T., & Corntassel, J. (2005). Being indigenous: Resurgences against contemporary colonialism. *Government and Opposition: an International Journal of Comparative Politics, 40*(4), 597–614. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2005.00166.x

Aziz, L., Ali, R., & Khan, A. M. (2021). Episteme and experiences about Pashtunwali: The standpoint of Pashtun women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, *3*(3).

Bearden, M. (2004, March 31). The Pashtuns of Afghanistan: Alexander the Great also got in trouble here. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2004/03/31/opinion/the-pashtuns-of-afghanistan-alexander-the-great-also-got-in-trouble.html

Chaudhry, S. A., & Wazir, M. A. K. (2014). Peacebuilding in federally administered tribal areas (FATA) of Pakistan: Conflict management at state level. *TIGAH, A Journal of Peace and Development, 2,* 124–148. https://www.humanitarianlibrary.org/sites/default/files/2014/02/81.pdf

Community Appraisal and Motivation Programme, & Saferworld. (2012). *The Jirga: justice and conflict transformation.* https://issat.dcaf.ch/Learn/Resource-Library2/Policy-and-Research-Papers/The-jirga-justice-and-conflict-transformation

Danso, K. (2016). *Mending broken relations after civil war: The 'Palava Hut' and the prospects for lasting peace in Liberia*. Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre. Policy Brief 2/May 2016. Accessed August 4, 2018. http://www.kaiptc.org/kaiptc-publication/mending-broken-relations-after-civil-war-the-palava-hut-and-the-prospects-for-lasting-peace-in-liberia/.

Dawar, A. I. (2019). Transnational ideologies, violent conflict, and Pashtun social identity.

Journal of Social and Political Sciences, 2(2), 276-284. 10.31014/aior.1991.02.02.69

Drumbl, M. A. (2007). *Atrocity, punishment, and international law.* Cambridge University Press.

Elahi, N. (2015). Militancy conflicts and displacement in Swat Valley of Pakistan: Analysis of transformation of social and cultural network. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 5*(3), 226-236. https://nmbu.brage.unit.no/nmbu-xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2576231/IntJourHumandSocSci2015.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Granillo, B. et. Al. (2010). Utilization of Native American talking circles to teach incident command system to tribal community health representatives. *Journal of Community Health, 35,* 625-634.

Gray, M., Coates, J., & Bird, Y. M. (2008). *Indigenous social work around the world towards culturally relevant education and practice.* Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Groom, A. J. R. (1997). The world of international relations. *Security Dialogue*, *28*(1), 123–124.

Groom. A. J. R., & Olson, W. (1991). *International relations then and now: Origins and trends in interpretation.* HarperCollins Academic.

Hawkins, J. (2009). The Pashtun cultural code: Pashtunwali. *Australian Defence Force Journal, 180*, 16-27. https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/ielapa.201001585

Iqtidar, H. (2012). Jama'at-e-Islami Pakistan: Learning from the left. In *Beyond Crisis* (pp. 267- 292). Routledge India.

Jamal, A. (2015). Engaging men for gender justice: Overcoming barriers to girls' education in the Pashtun tribes of Pakistan. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 24(3), 273-286. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijsw.12118

Jamal, A. (2016). Why he won't send his daughter to school—barriers to girls' education in northwest Pakistan: A qualitative delphi study of Pashtun men. *SAGE Open,* 1-14. 10.1177/2158244016663798

Jennings, L., Gandarilla, M., & Tan, P. P. (2015). Using the Native American talking circle: Experiential learning on ethnic and cultural diversity of Southern California. *Groupwork, 25*(1), 58-77. https://doi.org/10.1921/gpwk.v25i1.842

Khan, M. B., Ghumman, A. R., & Hashmi, H. N. (2008). Social and environmental impact of *Hujra*. *Environmental Justice, 1*(4), 195-201. 10.1089/env.2008.0540

Khan, S., Faheem, M., & Gul, S. (2019). Understanding Pashtunwali and the manifestation of Pashtun nationalism in Pakistan: A conceptual analysis. *Global Social Sciences Review (GSSR), IV*, *1*, 264-270.

Lal, P. (2015). *African socialism in postcolonial Tanzania: Between the village and the world.* Cambridge University Press.

Lavallée, L. F. (2009). Practical application of an indigenous research framework and two qualitative indigenous research methods: Sharing circles and Anishnaabe symbol-based reflection. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 8*(1), 21–40. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800103

Lawson, E. S., & Flomo, V. K. (2020). Motherwork and gender justice in peace huts: A feminist view from Liberia. *Third World Quarterly, 41*(11), 1863–1880. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2020.1793663

Mehmood, W., Haider, S. I., & Ali, R. (2017). Jirga and Sharitization: An analysis of Maraka in district Karak. *Global Political Review, 2*(1), 54-60. http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2017(II-I).06

Minahan, J. B. (2014). *Ethnic groups of north, east, and central Asia.* ALB-CLIO.

Oberson, J. (2002). *Khans and warlords: Political alignment, leadership and the state in Pashtun society.* Institute for Ethnology, University of Berne.

Rehman, S., Ahmad, I., & Hamid Khan, S. (2021). Preservation and dissemination of indigenous knowledge in Pashtuns' culture: The role of *Hujra* as a learning hub. *Business & Economic Review (Online), 13*(4), 77–92. https://doi.org/10.22547/BER/13.4.4

Richmond, O. P. (2018). Rescuing peacebuilding? Anthropology and peace formation. *Global Society*, *32*(2), 221–239. https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2018.1451828

Shah, Z. A., Badshah, I., Khan, U., & Ma, J. (2022). Orientalist constructions of the frontier pashtuns: On the postcolonial history and repercussions. *Asian Ethnicity*, *23*(4), 784-802.

Shukla, A. (2015). The Pashtun tribal identity and codes: At odds with Pakistan's post-9/11 policies. *THAAP Journal: Culture, Art & Architecture of the Marginalized & the Poor,* 45-64. http://pashtunculturalinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/The-Pashtun-Tribal-Identityand-Codes.pdf

Siddique, A. (2014). *The Pashtun question: The unresolved key to the future of Pakistan and Afghanistan.* C. Hurst & Co. Ltd.

Suleiman-Kheil, L. (2007). *Loss, mental health help-seeking, and resilience among Pashtun men in the Pak-Afghan border* (Publication no. 3588304) [Doctoral Dissertation, Walden University]. ProQuest LLC.

Spitzer, H., & Twikirize, J. M. (2019). Towards integrating indigenous knowledge and problem solving into contemporary social work in Africa. In H. Spitzer & J. M. Twikirize, (Eds.), *Social work practice in Africa: Indigenous and innovative approaches* (pp. 245-256). Fountain Publishers. https://crisowo.org/sites/default/files/Social_Work_Practice_in_Africa.pdf#page=259

Tanabe, J. (2017). Beyond liberal peacebuilding: A critique of liberal peacebuilding and exploring a postmodern post-liberal hybrid model of peacebuilding. *International Relations and Diplomacy, 5*(8), 447-459. 10.17265/2328-2134/2017.08.001

Ullah, J., & Bano, A. (2019). Militancy and Pashtun culture: Challenges and developments in Pashtun society in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)*, *3*(2), 115-127.

UNESCO. (2016). Gada system, an indigenous democratic socio-political system of the Oromo. In *Intangible cultural heritage*. UNESCO.

Yousaf, F., & Poncian, J. (2018). Detriments of colonialism on indigenous conflict resolution: An analysis of Pakistan and Tanzania. *Contemporary Justice Review, 21*(4), 455-473. 10.1080/10282580.2018.1532795

Yousaf, F., & FurrukhZad, S. (2020). Pashtun Jirga and prospects of peace and conflict resolution in Pakistan's 'tribal' frontier. *Third World Quarterly, 41*(7), 1200-1217. 10.1080/01436597.2020.1760088

Yousaf, F. (2019). Pakistan's "Tribal" Pashtuns, their "violent" representation, and the Pashtun Tahafuz movement. *SAGE Open,* 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019829546

Yousafzai, H. M., & Gohar, A. (2005). *Towards understanding Pukhtoon Jirga.* Just Peace International.

Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education
Guidelines for Authors

Editors

J. Cynthia McDermott, Antioch University Los Angeles
Shirley R. Steinberg, University of Calgary

Founding and Managing Editor:
Shirley R. Steinberg, University of Calgary

Vision

Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education is an academic forum for the transdisciplinary study of the critical pedagogical implications and relationships within education. ***Taboo*** was founded on the notion of radical contextualization, encouraging students and scholars to draw from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives to question current approaches in schools, systems, and in higher education. Drawing upon a variety of contextualizing disciplines and critical theoretical ways of knowing including cultural studies, curriculum theorizing, critical race theory, political economy, feminist studies, the social foundations of education, critical pedagogy, interculturalism, queer theory, historiography, symbolic interactionism, literary theory, as examples. Beyond simply articulating critical perspectives we seek contributions willing to speak the unspoken and/or the irreconcilable. We hope to foster discussions across and through different disciplines including explorations into how dialogue and discourse operate throughout and within different educational times/spaces/places. The journal encourages a wide range of contributions from who work within these general areas, expanding methodological practices. ***Taboo*** seeks provocative and controversial submissions.

Journal Issues

Thematic Issues: ***Taboo*** was first published in 1995 and in 2025, we will celebrate its 30th year. To lead up to that milestone, ***Taboo*** will produce thematic issues until 2025. This unique model will invite multiple editors to spearhead each issue. Assisted by ***Taboo's*** editorial collective and assistants, each issue will be a ***deep dive*** within a theme. To suggest a thematic issue please send the name(s) and affiliations of the proposed issue, the topic/theme of the issue, a draft of the call for manuscripts, a tentative timeline, and CVs of the guest editor(s). Editors must ensure that all articles in the special issue go through a blind-peer review process. Editors will be asked to submit final manuscripts with peer reviews to the editors on the negotiated deadline. The entire special issues or specific manuscripts of the special issue may also go through an additional peer-review and/or editorial review process with ***Taboo*** prior to publication. Authors can expect to receive a decision in one month. Upon approval of the issue, one of the ***Taboo*** editors will be assigned to work with the thematic issue team.

Articles and Essays: Taboo accepts ***traditional*** academic articles as well as differently conceived submissions. We invite thoughtful, provocative, and well-researched articles, we also encourage authors to play with form and content. Articles will go through a double-blind peer-review process. Articles should be from 3000-7000 words (including references).
Diatribes: ***Taboo*** accepts opinion pieces. Diatribes are designed to be thoughtful and passion-

ate pieces that utilize research in a provocative manner. They will go through a double-blind peer-review process and should be between 1000-1500 words.

Submitting a Thematic Issue Proposal:

We are now actively looking for submissions for these issues

1. Send a cover-letter with your manuscript and address the following items:
   a. Issue Editor(s) email, addresses, affiliations
   b. Proposed thematic issue and short description.
   c. Justification for issue theme and how it links to ***Taboo***'s vision
   d. Indicate desired month and year of proposed issue
   e. Indicate the research will comply with the rules and regulations of the ethics review board of your lead editors' institution (if appropriate)
   f. Indicate that the articles for the issue will be written specifically for the issue
   g. Submissions for ***Taboo*** thematic issues should be sent to: SubmissionstoTaboo@gmail.com

Preparation for *Taboo*

Style: ***Taboo*** publishes articles that adhere to the guidelines of the ***American Psychological Association (7th edition)***. However, articles from other style guides may be used for single articles.

Acceptance: Before publication of the issue, author(s) of each article will be asked to transfer copyright of the article to ***Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education***. The transfer will ensure the widest possible dissemination of information. ***Taboo*** has an acceptance rate of 15%.

Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education is published electronically by Caddo Gap Press. The annual subscription rate for individuals is $50 US and for institutions is $100 US; for addresses outside the United States add $30 per year. Single issues are available for $30 each. Subscriptions orders should be addressed and payable to Caddo Gap Press, 3145 Geary Boulevard PMB 275, San Francisco, California 94118, USA.

ISSN 1080-5400

Publisher:
Alan H. Jones
Caddo Gap Press
3145 Geary Boulevard PMB 275, San Francisco, California 94118, USA
E-mail: alanhjones@caddogap.com; Website: www.caddgap.com

Taboo

The Journal of Culture and Education

Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education is an academic forum featuring the critical theoretical and pedagogical constructs that focus on the relationship between education and its sociocultural context. Grounded on the notion of "radical contextualization," Taboo presents compelling and controversial pieces from a wide range of contributors.

Taboo began as a publication of Peter Lang Publishing, with two issues published each year in 1995, 1996, and 1997. *Taboo* has since been acquired by Caddo Gap Press, which renewed publication of the journal with the Spring-Summer 2000 issue.

Taboo is published quarterly in electronic format and posted to the journal's website. For those wishing to receive the PDFs of each issue the annual subscription rate is $50 for individuals and $100 for institutions and libraries. Issues are sent via email or mailed in PDF format on disk. For those who read the journal on the website Caddo Gap Press encourages contributions to assist with the costs of publication.

Taboo Subscription Form

☐ YES. Please enter my annual subscription for ***Taboo***
($50 for individuals; $100 for institutions;
add $30 outside the United States for mailed PDFs):

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Email Address _____

Check enclosed (Payable to Caddo Gap Press)
Mail this form with check to address below

Caddo Gap Press
3145 Geary Boulevard, PMB 275, San Francisco, CA 94118, USA
Telephone 415/666-3012; E-mail info@caddogap.com