MIAMI UNIVERSITY
The Graduate School

Certificate for Approving the Dissertation

We hereby approve the Dissertation

of

Kathleen Marie Sellers

Candidate for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

____
Érica Fernández, Director

____
Kathleen Knight Abowitz, Reader

____
Lisa Weems, Reader

____
Veronica R. Barrios, Reader

____
Thomas Misco, Graduate School Representative

ABSTRACT

"IF YOU ARE GOING TO LAST IN THIS PROFESSION, YOU HAVE TO BE YOURSELF": QUALITATIVE PORTRAITS OF CRITICAL EDUCATORS IN URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

by

Kathleen Marie Sellers

This study examines the professional experiences of three teachers in a national network of urban, low-income serving, Catholic high schools. These teacher-participants were chosen to participate in this study because they engaged in experiential, community-based pedagogy within this national network and exemplified a commitment to social justice through their teaching practice. As detailed in Chapter One, such teaching practice resembles critical pedagogy and aligns with best practice in quality civic education. Therefore, by examining the experiences of critical educators, this study aimed to illuminate ways we can enhance civic learning for K-12 students by enhancing support for and removing the barriers to critical educators' distinct pedagogical practice. This is particularly important for Students of Color, who have faced historical exclusion from formal and informal modes of civic learning (Campbell, 2012; Lo, 2019).

Critical theory (Freire, 1970/1993; Giroux, 2003; Horkheimer, 1972[1992]) and social reproduction theory (Bourdieu, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 2016) were used to frame this study, which employed qualitative portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) to answer two key research questions. The first question— *Why do teachers in this Network engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy?* —drew attention to the internal and external factors impacting my participants' practice. This set up inquiry into the second key research question: *How do these educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness about and through their work?*

Findings from this study revealed that both internal and external factors contributed to the choice teacher-participants made to engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy. Professional ecology, consisting of local school and corporate cultures, were particularly influential on these teachers. That ecology functioned in distinct ways at each study site to both aid and obstruct the critical teaching practices of teacher-participants. Despite the obstacles they faced, these teachers all expressed dimensions of critical and/or civic consciousness through their pedagogical discourse, relationship-building, and professional practices. However, each teacher also expressed struggles with Freirean duality (Freire, 1970/2005) as they recognized and responded, to varying degrees, to the hegemonic forces at play in their professional contexts. Implications for practitioners, school community partners, and policymakers are discussed.

"IF YOU ARE GOING TO LAST IN THIS PROFESSION, YOU HAVE TO BE YOURSELF": QUALITATIVE PORTRAITS OF CRITICAL EDUCATORS IN URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

Miami University in partial

fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Educational Leadership, Culture, and Curriculum

by

Kathleen Marie Sellers

The Graduate School
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio

2023

Dissertation Director: Érica Fernández

©

Kathleen Marie Sellers

2023

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review *1*

Introduction **1**

Positioning the Study 2

Santa María Network 4

Civic Education **4**

Civic Moment 5

Civic Debt 5

Civic Advantage 7

Conceptualizing Citizenship 9

Quality Civic Education 10

Experiential, Community-Based Pedagogy **12**

Experiential, Community-Based Pedagogy as an Expression of Critical Pedagogy 12

Figure 1 14

Theopolitical Antecedents of Critical Pedagogy 14

Critical Pedagogy as Quality Civic Education 15

Figure 2 17

Teacher Experiences within U.S. Catholic Schools **17**

Figure 3 18

Factors Impacting Catholic Education 19

Urban Catholic Education 20

Duality and Urban Catholic Teacher Experience 21

Theorizing within Urban Catholic Schools in the U.S. 22

Neoliberalism 22

Catholic Social Teaching as Logic of Neoliberal Resistance 23

Formation as Conscientization 24

Framing Teachers' Experiences **25**

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framing *26*

Social Reproduction Theory **27**

Social Reproduction Within the SMN 27

Financial Dependence and the Corporate Work Study Program 28

Financial Dependence and Venture Philanthropy 29

Accountability to Catholic Identity 30

Limits of Social Reproduction Theory 31

Critical Theory **31**

Critical Theory Within the SMN 33

Corporate Power 33

Inquiring Into Critical and Civic Consciousness 34

Contributing to the Common Good 35

Limits of Critical Theory 35

Conclusion **36**

Chapter 3: Methodology *37*

Introduction **37**

Portraiture Methodology **37**

Setting **38**

Participant Selection **41**

Data Collection **42**
Participant Interviews 43
Context-Specific Data 45
Field Observations 46

Analysis **47**

Trustworthiness **49**
Triangulation 50
Unveiling 50

Conclusion **52**

Chapter 4: Portrait and Analysis of Magdalena Santa María High School *54*

Contextualizing Magdalena Santa María **54**
Mariana October 56
Power 59
Analysis 60
Citizenship 62
Analysis 64
Aimed at Transforming Oppression 66
Analysis 68

Conclusion **70**

Unveiling **71**
Unveiling Analysis 75

Chapter 5: Portrait and Analysis of Northside *79*

Contextualizing Santa María Northside **79**
Liz Sullivan 81
Julia Friedman 84
Power 87
The Faculty Meeting. 87
The Pep Talk 88
Citizenship 97
Law Elective 97
Community Service 100
Aimed at Transforming Oppression 105
Teaching for Critical Consciousness 106
SSA Meeting 108

Conclusion **117**

Unveiling **119**
Unveiling Analysis 121

Chapter 6: Discussion & Conclusion ***124***

Introduction **124**

Key Findings **125**
Why Participants Engaged in Experiential, Community-Based Pedagogy 125
Moral Vision 125
Skills and Training 126
Institutional and/or Community Influences on Participants 127
How educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness 132

Implications **135**
Literature 135
Citizenship 136
Teacher experiences within Catholic schools 137
Theory 139
Social Reproduction Theory 139
Critical Theory 140
Methodology 142
Implications for Practice 143
Table 1 144
Ways Practitioners Can Support Critical Educators 144
Limitations 145

Future Research **149**
Gender 150
Methodology 151
Critical Educator Empowerment 151
Civic Advantage of Catholic schools 152
Critical Catholic Education Studies 153

Final Thoughts **153**

References ***156***

Appendix A: **169**

Appendix B: **170**

Appendix C: **171**

Appendix D: **172**

Appendix E: **173**

Appendix F: **174**

Appendix G: **175**

Appendix H: **176**

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 *Ways Practitioners Can Support Critical Educators* **.. *144***

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 *Relationship Among Quality Civic Education; Critical Pedagogy; and Experiential, Community-Based Education*.. **14**

Figure 2 *The Relationship of Quality Civic Education to Critical Pedagogy*.. **17**

Figure 3 *Relationship Among Quality Civic Education; Critical Pedagogy; and Experiential, Community-Based Education*.. **18**

DEDICATION

To my grandmothers, who modeled for me the attainment of higher education

To my mother, who educated generations of elementary school students and sacrificed much so that I could have the freedom to learn

And to Tyra, David, and my students, who showed me the transformative power of critical hope

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When I first admitted to a teacher colleague that I was thinking about pursuing a Ph.D., he warned me that it would be a lonely process. He wasn't wrong. Indeed, the pandemic it made it far truer than any of us might have imagined, but as I write, at the very end of this journey, I can say confidently that even at the worst of these pandemic years, I was never alone. This dissertation is the fruit of many hands who have accompanied, shaped, and sustained me on the journey: colleagues, teachers, friends, and family. As James Keenan, SJ, often reminded his students, "hope is what sustains us on the journey." Thank you for giving me hope.

To the faculty at Miami: Tom Poetter, you were first faculty member I spoke with at Miami, and your early words of advice not only convinced me to apply to the EDL program but convinced me to start writing and sharing my work. Your early encouragement opened doors I couldn't have imagined. Kathleen Knight Abowitz, you have been a mentor, teacher, colleague, and best of all, a friend. More than just helping me find my footing at Miami, you've helped me find and build community with philosophy folks all over the country and world. I feel welcome at the table because of you. Joe Malin, I have never laughed so hard or so often in school as I did with our public policy class. That, alone, merits thanks. But since then, you have been a true mentor – inviting collaborations, sending opportunities my way, and always saying yes to whatever new projects I've invited you to join. Your encouragement has helped me believe in myself, and the kindness with which you do all things helps me imagine the kind of leader and scholar I want to be. Lisa Weems and Brittany Aronson, you both helped me realize how much I enjoy research methods, and working with you both gave me the courage to critically engage the Catholic educational institutions that have shaped so much of my life. Tom Misco, from our first conversations you have been candid about the limits and opportunities of academic life. You trusted me to work as a colleague in your department, which allowed me to make the most of these final years in the PhD program, including the joy of teaching your social studies cohort and collaborating with Ganiva Reyes, a model scholar-educator. Érica Fernádez, I feel tremendous gratitude for you. You not only taught the most professionally applicable class I've ever taken Miami, but you have accompanied me as my dissertation chair and advisor through this final stretch of the Ph.D. With every chapter, every question, every revision you've given, you have helped me to improve my work and clarify my thinking. You've also supported me on my various side quests, including an extra IRB for that oral history. You've been a rock, showing up for me no matter where you were or what time zones separated us. As a person and scholar, you've made me feel seen, and I am more whole and healthy because of your guidance these past few years. I hope I can sustain future advisees that way that you have sustained me. You will always have my admiration and gratitude.

Beyond Miami, I am grateful to those teachers who have shown me care and colleagues who have been come friends. Sarah Stitzlein, you were the first person outside of my teachers to give me critical (and constructive!) feedback on my writing. Not only have you proven a conversation partner that has challenged me to think more deeply, but you have been a generous friend, whose time, care, and collaboration has made me feel a part of a real scholarly community. Anytime you want to carpool to a conference, let me know. I'll bring more brownies. Kevin Burke and Andrew Miller, reading your work made me realize I wasn't alone as a critical scholar of Catholic ed. Getting to know and build community with you both has made

me confident that together we can, and will, make real change. Mona Zignego, working with you helps me see myself more clearly. I could not have asked for a better critical friend. Stephanie Baer, you helped me understand how higher education and community go hand in hand. I feel lucky to call you my friend. Bro. Ken Homan, SJ, your friendship is the best thing I've encountered on Twitter. To my Miami cohort, especially in my early years in this program, you kept me thinking until my head hurt and laughing until I cried. I am so glad to have sung, danced, and savored life with you all. Thank you for helping me grow. Finally, I give thanks for my teachers and mentors at St. Columban, Ursuline, and Boston College who have inspired me, challenged me, and cared about who I am becoming, even to the present day. You laid the foundation upon which all this is built. Mary Bender, any errant commas are my own doing, but any well-placed ones are thanks to you.

To my friends and students, who led me to this program, you met me at crossroads in my life and led me to take the path less traveled by, and that has made all the difference. Manuel Iris, from the moment I met you, I knew you were my friend. Thank you for helping me see more beauty in life. Kim Farley Smith, you have always been a kindred spirit. One day, I want to be as competent a colleague as I have always known you to be. David Singleton, Erik Crew, and Tyra Patterson, working with you taught me the power of faith, hope, and love. I would not be where I am were it not for you three. Classes of 2018 and 2020, and all my students I taught and coached at DePaul, I love you, am proud of you, and grateful for you every day. You taught me that real education liberates us all.

To the friends who have walked with me through life. Claire Ping and family, from Miss Piggy to our Zoo trips and porch sits, being your friend makes life worth living. Sharmi, Krit, Steph, and Becca, your friendship and that of your families has been an anchor in life. The best meals, the coziest couches, the most honest conversations, the longest walks, bike rides, and trots all are thanks to you. At every stage of life, you have made me feel seen and valued. I love you dearly. Dr. Tamborski, your letters to "Almost Doctor Sellers" have been your latest kindness in our long friendship. Thank you for reminding me, in these last few years, that I can and will complete this journey. I needed it. Boston friends, now scattered far and wide, especially during these pandemic years, you have reminded me to savor life and each other. Our phone calls, Zoom chats, Netflix party, and friendcations have been a balm and a joy. Even if I'm the only two, what a treasure I found, when I met all of you.

Finally, to the women of my family, you were the first people I modeled my life on. Loretta Tierney Byrne, knowing your story made me feel at home, even in my darkest moments. Ruth Fairchild Rye Sellers, your love of reading taught me I could learn at any age and enjoy doing so. Mom, from the time you sat me down on the steps to ask whether I wanted to be the oldest or youngest in class, I have always seen you advocating for my opportunities to learn. I felt free to pursue my education—from Pre-K to PhD—because I knew you were there to support my choices. Thank you for being my mom. You have been my greatest teacher. This is for you.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review

Introduction

Civic learning is essential for American democracy. Nonetheless, civic education has long been neglected in American schools[1]. It is little surprise, then, that for two decades, the majority of American students have not demonstrated proficiency in civic competencies (Lee, et al., 2021). This trend is even worse among Students of Color in low-income communities (Levinson, 2010; Lo, 2019). Drawing on the work of Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006), Jane Lo (2019) has argued that historical political disenfranchisement, which limits the informal ways in which civic knowledge is acquired and transmitted (Campbell, 2019), creates a "civic debt" to racially minoritized communities, a claim with both practical and moral implications. Further, research has suggested that historical political disenfranchisement explains why Students of Color demonstrate the *most* benefit from civic education in schools (Campbell, 2019; Gainous & Martens, 2012). Accordingly, Lo (2019) asserts that investing in quality civic education for Students of Color can, and *should*, serve as a practical means for repaying the civic debt owed to minoritized communities in the United States. Indeed, to leave this debt unpaid would be immoral.

Catholic schools may serve as an example of such quality civic education, as their students consistently exhibit higher incidence of civic knowledge, volunteerism, and skills than their peers in public schools, a phenomenon known as the "civic advantage" (Campbell, 2012). This is consistent with the moral teachings of the Catholic Church, which missionally committed itself to civic education more than half a century ago, at Vatican II. "Civic and political education is today supremely necessary for the people, especially young people. Such education should be painstakingly provided, so that all citizens can make their contribution to the political community" (Paul VI, 1965, #75). While it has been theorized that the ethos of Catholic schools, reflected in this Papal statement, may explain their "civic advantage," we actually know little about *how* Catholic schools provide a different type of civic education than traditional public or charter schools (Campbell, 2012). What we do know is that across the political spectrum families want better civic education[2] for K-12 students, "and teachers are the most trusted to advocate for a strong civics education" (Lee et al., 2021a, p. 4). Accordingly, if we are to learn how to improve civic education generally, we would do well to look at the practice of teachers in Catholic schools, and if we wish to attend to the civic debt owed to Communities of Color in the United States, we should pay particular attention to the practice of teachers in urban[3] Catholic schools.

---

[1] Recently, scholars have suggested that the reason for this neglect is a 1968 study by Kenneth Langston and Kent Jennings. The study indicated that civics education in high schools didn't result in white students' increased civic engagement. However, African American students in the same study showed significant gains, a result described as a "compensation effect," indicating that schools compensate for the lack of civic opportunities in students' home communities. More recent research makes clear that civic education positively impacts *all* students to varying degrees, though Students of Color continue to benefit most from civic education in schools (Campbell, 2019).

[2] I use the terms "civic(s) education," "citizenship education," and "political education" interchangeably throughout this text to describe the processes by which people acquire the skills and dispositions necessary for participation as citizens in democratic society. I elaborate on this concept later in this chapter, in the sections on *Conceptualizing Citizenship* and *Quality Civic Education*, pp. 19-25.

[3] For purposes of this project, I understand the term "urban" to mean both a densely packed metropolitan area, often with higher numbers of racially minoritized and/or lower-income residents, as well as areas with "a set of challenges associated with urban contexts" (Behizadeh et al., 2019, p. 59). Such challenges, as they relate to schools, can

As such, my dissertation responds to this need by exploring the lived experience of educators engaged in experiential, community-based pedagogy in the Santa María Network (SMN) of urban Catholic high schools. While research often attends to the theoretical and curricular dimensions of citizenship education, the activity of the civics teacher[4] is less frequently studied. When they are studied, researchers tend to examine their experiences in a piecemeal fashion, looking, for example, at gatekeeping pressures (Misco et al., 2018), organizational culture (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Black, 2015; Rodriguez & Briscoe, 2019), or teacher characteristics (Behizadeh et al., 2019). I wish to add to this picture of citizenship education a more holistic understanding of the experiences of civic educators. Accordingly, I employ portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) to answer two key research questions: *(1) Why do teachers in the SMN engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy? (2) How do these educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness about and through their work?* Such pedagogies are appropriate and needed for civic education today (Sellers & Knight Abowitz, Forthcoming), especially when those pedagogies are "infused with a spirit of criticality" (Stitzlein, 2021, p. 33). Thus, my study provides an important opportunity to expand our understanding of how experiential, community-based educators may contribute to the civic advantage of Catholic schools and in so doing, will make strides toward paying the civic debt owed to racially minoritized communities across education sectors in America today.

In the following sections, I describe the context of the study and my positionality as a former religion teacher in the Santa María Network. Then, I situate this study within the relevant literature on civics education. I then define experiential, community-based pedagogy, paying particular attention to its critical roots, and explain the relationship between this pedagogy and quality civic education. This leads toward a section addressing teacher experiences within U.S. Catholic schools, including both material and ideological factors impacting teacher experiences, especially those of experiential, community-based educators. I conclude this chapter with a brief summary and introduction of my theoretical framework for Chapter Two.

Positioning the Study

My interest in this topic stems from my own experience serving for more than four years as an experiential, community-based educator in an urban Catholic school in the Santa María Network. In my first year teaching, I partnered with a non-profit law firm to introduce my junior religion students to the moral dilemma of mass incarceration in the United States. They responded, much to my surprise and far exceeding the initial curricular aims, by resolving to advocate for the freedom of a wrongfully incarcerated woman, the client of our community partner. In my second year teaching, our collective interventions contributed directly to her release from prison. As the sole teacher-facilitator of this civic activity, I experienced a range of institutional support and resistance to my teaching practice and, especially, the collective action of my students, the majority of whom were Students of Color and all of whom were from low-income households. While my approach to pedagogy was distinctive from that of my peers, the

include but are not limited to, "lack of resources, less qualified teachers, lower academic achievement, and large numbers of English language learners" (p. 59).

[4] I understand the "civics teacher" to be any educator, in any subject, at any grade level who is facilitating the acquisition of civic competencies and dispositions, thereby enhancing students' ability to engage in citizenship behaviors (See sections on *Conceptualizing Citizenship* and *Quality Civic Education*, pp. 19- 25, below). This aligns with the position of contemporary scholars who assert that civic learning, like literacy, takes place across the curriculum (Lee, et al., 2021).

aims of that pedagogy – to serve the common good, to do justice, and to love our neighbors as ourselves – was consistent with the mission of the school, and I would argue, Catholic education more generally. None the less, the more immersed in this civic project that my students became, and the more collectively organized and strategic our work, the more resistance I faced from administrators at my school. This tension—between mission and action, traditional and experiential, community-based pedagogy—struck me as deeply paradoxical and counterproductive for student learning. Yet, I was not then in a position to understand or offer a meaningful counterstory[5] to those resisting this civic work. Today, I am. My doctoral coursework and related research have equipped me with the language to name and analyze what I experienced as a teacher in the SMN. Indeed, working and studying together, through most of that coursework, provided time and opportunity to engage in action and reflection, my own critical praxis (Freire, 1970/1993), that nuanced my understanding of the SMN and my place within it.

One of the fundamental challenges that I faced as a teacher was isolation. I did not know other educators engaged in justice work and community partnership the way that I was. I was not taught how to practice this kind of pedagogy. Indeed, I had not received any formal instruction in education, save one graduate course on Freirean pedagogy and philosophy, while I was studying for my master's degree. I used to joke that my approach to instruction was so out of the box, I didn't even know the box existed. Rather, I "made the road by walking" (Horton & Freire, 1990) with my students and community partners. These partners were not only experts in their field of law and community organizing, but they were People of Color. My students could see themselves in these partners in ways they could not see themselves in me, a white, middle-class, cis-gender woman. This contributed strongly to the quality and depth of community that emerged through this civic work, community made more striking to me for how different it was from the relationships between students and the majority white teaching staff and all-white administration, which existed at my school at that time. Watching these relationships develop between my students and community partners, including the incarcerated woman for whose release my students were advocating, made me aware not only of the isolation I experienced facilitating this distinct pedagogy, but the isolation my students faced culturally within the power structures of our school community.

It is because of this experience that I am committed to understanding holistically the experiences of fellow civic educators in urban Catholic schools. It is not enough to simply listen to their stories. Rather, those stories may only be understood within the context of their school, attentive to the cultural and political dynamics at play in their specific practice site. Accordingly, as I detail in Chapter Three, a key sub-question of this study is: *What institutional and/or community influences (e.g., church, state, corporate partners, families, and/or community partners) impact the work of experiential, community-based educators?* The SMN business model, which I introduce in the following section and nuance further in Chapter Three, involves a cross-section of U.S. society, which is distinctive from, more complex than, and more reflective of U.S. society as a whole than more traditional Catholic schools. As such, SMN schools provide a rich and distinctive context for studying the experience of civic educators.

[5] Denise Taliaferro Baszile (2015) explains that "counterstory" is a narrative about the lived experiences of people from marginalized communities which they use to "talk back" to dominant cultural narratives, especially about race. She further explains that "critical race counterstorytelling has historically been fundamental political strategy in ongoing struggles over the relations of power, knowledge, and difference in the United States and beyond" (p. 239), struggles concerned "with the best way to practice democracy for the common good" (p. 239).

Further, because the SMN schooling model has been lauded by political leaders at the local, state, and national levels for its innovation and economic potential (SMN, n.d.), the experience of civic educators in this setting may be particularly resonant with political leaders, who in turn, impact education policy. By crafting a holistic portrait of such educators, I seek to "talk back" (Taliaferro Baszile, 2015, p. 239) to those figures who would resist the work of experiential, community-based civic educators, while also offering counterstories to sustain the hope and expand the community of those same teachers, in and beyond the SMN, who may feel isolated, as I did, doing the necessary work of civic education.

Santa María Network

The SMN model provides an affordable, college-preparatory, Catholic secondary education to low-income students in urban communities across the United States (SMN, n.d.). The first Santa María school opened its doors in 1996 in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago; Santa María Jesuit High School worked unlike any Catholic school in America. The roadmap created by this school led to the development of the Santa María Network in 2010 and guided the development of all SMN schools in the country (Donovan & Thielman, 2017; Kearney, 2008), which today number near forty (SMN, n.d.).

The Santa María business model is distinctive for its Corporate Work Study Program (SMN, n.d.), in which all students participate, and through which all students contribute to their tuition expenses by working one day a week in a paid corporate internship. Income from the internships is paid directly to the school and when a school is fully operational, it aims to provide fifty to sixty percent of overall school expenses (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). "This revenue model breaks away from the traditional Catholic school approach that relies on tuition and fundraising" (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 5) and helps boost attendance and graduation rates[6] well beyond the "national averages for students from similar economic or ethnic backgrounds" (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 5). Before being sent to work sites, all incoming students undergo intensive training in corporate skills and culture, skills which they continue to develop through the course of their four years of corporate internships. In exchange, corporate partners received the benefit of inexpensive labor for entry-level work (Donovan & Thielman, 2017) and the potential of diversifying their corporate pipelines (SMN, 2021). To allow student participation in the Corporate Work Study Program (CWSP) at least one day per week, Santa María Jesuit High School developed a 4-day/week class schedule, with extended school hours. A similar schedule is utilized by all SMN schools today (Donovan & Thielman, 2017; SMN, 2021), and it informs the school culture and curricular design across the Network. I provide more detail about the SMN, when I describe the study context and methodology in Chapter Three.

Civic Education

As I asserted above, investing in quality civic education for Students of Color can, and *should*, serve as a practical means for repaying the civic debt owed to minoritized communities in the United States. This claim, though, begs the questions: what is civic education, and how is that different from *quality* civic education? I approach these questions in the sections which follow by first contextualizing our civic moment, both in terms of current events and the state of the field of civics education, as well as the civic debt owed to Students of Color (Lo, 2019) and

---

[6] In 2017, the SMN had a graduation rate of 97%, while the national average for a similar student population was less than 92% (Donovan & Thielman, 2017).

the civic advantage Catholic schools may offer their students(Campbell, 2012). I then draw on recent scholarship to define and differentiate between civic education and quality civic education and explain why the latter is essential to sustain democracy.

Civic Moment

At the time of writing this chapter, America is grappling with multiple and intersecting challenges – an ongoing global pandemic and concomitant public health crisis; economic inflation and market instability; persistent racial injustice; climate change; political polarization and the mass consumption/sharing of misinformation domestically; and increasing risk of nuclear aggression abroad. American democratic institutions are designed to accommodate change (Stitzlein, 2012) and thus, can be responsive to such challenges, when people contribute to civic life and trust in political institutions. Yet, America's democracy has always been contingent; the public's trust and deliberative contributions to civic life cannot be taken for granted. And, in light of current events, democracy feels especially tenuous and the need for remedy urgent.

This is especially true for Communities of Color, who have faced systematic oppression throughout American history and who experience these various contemporary crises in ways that intersect with and are compounded by their racial marginalization (Crenshaw, 1991). Likewise, the educational and civic debt owed to Students of Color (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Lo, 2019) are compounded by the events of this civic moment, just as the need to pay this debt becomes more urgent. In their recent report, *Educating for Civic Reasoning and Discourse*, the National Academy of Education asserted that

> Addressing these public issues as a country is essentially asking every member of society the question of "What should we do?" To wrestle with these complex issues, one needs to develop knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions as an active and responsible civic agent, both individually and in collaboration with others.... In both the short and long term, the education of young people in both formal and informal settings plays deeply consequential roles. (Lee et al., 2021a, viii)

Indeed, education plays a causal role in civic participation, particularly through the cultivating of civic resources, vis-à-vis knowledge, skills, and disposition for civic engagement (Campbell, 2019). Accordingly, to fulfill the promise of democracy "*every* member of society" (Lee et al., 2021a, viii, emphasis added) can and should be part of naming and responding to problems that have consequence for their lives and the lives of their neighbors, that is, civic problems. This promise can *only* be fulfilled, though, when all people have equitable resources and opportunity to participate fully in civic life, an aim that is persistently obstructed by America's civic debt (Lo, 2019), as I explain further below. For educators, this means that our work is urgently needed to pay this debt owed to Students of Color, so that those students and their communities may have the resources they need, and deserve, to respond to this civic moment.

Civic Debt

In her 2006 AERA Presidential Address, Gloria Ladson-Billings introduced the concept of "educational debt" to describe the interconnecting "historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral" (p. 3) factors which have systematically obstructed People of Color from equitable access to education. She suggested the term "educational debt" should be used, instead of the more ubiquitous term "achievement gap," because the latter implies that responsibility for the phenomenon of educational inequity lies with the victim of racial oppression, while the former

implies responsibility for redress lies with the public. And further, "this all-out focus on the 'Achievement Gap' moves us toward short-term solutions that are unlikely to address the long-term underlying problem" (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 4). Ladson-Billings suggests more, though, than a simple change in language.

She argues that this debt must be paid, and she lays out three primary reasons for doing so: "(a) the impact the debt has on present education progress, (b) the value of understanding the debt in relation to past education research findings, and (c) the potential for forging a better educational future" (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 9). Educational debt is compounded by educational policies that provide greater funding to low-poverty schools and allow the resegregation of schools, despite the Brown decision more than half a century ago, (Orfield & Lee, 2004). Brown v. Board of Education admitted that the earlier Plessy precedent, separate but equal, was insufficient to achieve educational equity, thereby laying a legal pathway for school integration. Yet in the years since the Brown decision, Ladson-Billings (2006) lays out clear evidence that Students of Color continue to lack equal access to a high quality education, thereby compounding the education debt.

> If we are unwilling to desegregate our schools and unwilling to fund them equitably, we find ourselves not only backing away from the promise of the Brown decision but literally refusing even to take Plessy seriously. At least a serious consideration of Plessy would make us look at funding inequities. (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 9)

Generations of families have watched these educational policies, again and again, fail to provide Students of Color with equal educational opportunities. This erodes the trust that Communities of Color have in schools (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), and so, teachers and administrators must work that much harder to maintain relationships with families, efforts that might otherwise be invested in educating their children (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Accordingly, as long as these unequal education policies persist, this debt not only remains unpaid, but it accumulates compounding interest, in the form of mistrust and missed educational opportunities.

This debt has bearing on the future of education, because it shapes the possibilities we have today and the imaginaries we dream of for tomorrow. Ladson-Billings (2006) invites us to consider the implications of educational bankruptcy, which would lead to a total collapse and restructuring of the educational system. "The only thing that would matter in an environment like this would be that education researchers were bringing their expertise to bear on education problems that spoke to pressing concerns of the public" (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 10). Such pressing concerns, importantly, because they are "of the public" are civic in nature. As such, this educational debt is a civic problem that demands civic competencies to answer.

Jane Lo (2019) draws on Gloria Ladson-Billings' work to argue that historical political disenfranchisement, which limits the informal ways in which civic knowledge is acquired and transmitted (Campbell, 2019), creates a "civic debt" to racially minoritized communities. Ladson-Billings (2006) calls this "sociopolitical debt" and explains that it is a component of the "educational debt" (p. 7). Extending Ladson-Billings' (2006) argument, Lo (2019) details how researchers and practitioners have employed deficit language to study the "gaps" in civic learning, participation, and opportunity between white and minoritized communities. She goes on to argue that it is "time for the burden of civic educational inequity to shift away from glaring gaps to the underlying problems in these gaps" (Lo, 2019, p. 113). Lo's (2019) conception of civic debt, though, extends further than sociopolitical debt. "Civic debt embodies this sociopolitical debt as well as two additional imbalances: a) a lack of racial dialog in the classroom and b) the teaching of a political philosophy that has been notoriously White-centric"

(Lo, 2019, p. 114). This three-pronged conception—persistent sociopolitical disenfranchisement, lack of racial dialogue- and white-centric political philosophy in the classroom—is largely what I mean when using in this study the term "civic debt." However, I want to also make plain that I read civic debt as a moral debt as well. As Ladson-Billings (2006), who drew on Catholic moral theologian Thomas Aquinas to ground her argument, explains

> a moral debt reflects the disparity between what we know is right and what we actually do. Saint Thomas Aquinas saw the moral debt as what human beings owe to each other in the giving of, or failure to give, honor to another when honor is due. This honor comes as a result of people's excellence. (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 8)

Human excellence is derived from the way people exercise their free will. How excellent we are is directly related to how we choose to treat others, and if we choose to treat others well, we are particularly excellent and therefore due more honor (see *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 131, a. 1, resp). Put simply, our moral debt to our neighbor increases when we fail to do good to them, and it increases further still if that neighbor does good to others, even as they are mistreated. For those who have been systematically excluded from civic and educational opportunities because of racism, who have had to grapple with the consequences of generations of compounded exclusion, and who work still to increase civic and educational opportunities for all, society owes them a great debt in-deed. Accordingly, the choice to center "civic debt" in my research is, for me, an ethical one, and it necessarily impacted my research design. Because Catholic schools in the U.S. are both whiter and wealthier than their public counterparts (Sellers, 2021b), even as they may provide a civic advantage to their students (Campbell, 2019), they do not contribute equally to the civic debt owed Students of Color. By locating my study in the Santa María Network, whose students are ninety-eight percent People of Color, my findings speak more directly to the experience of teachers working to pay this debt.

Civic Advantage

The choice to study the experiences of educators at Catholic schools relies largely on the assertion that Catholic schools provide a "civic advantage" to their students. As I noted above, this term refers to the phenomenon whereby students at Catholic schools consistently exhibit higher incidence of civic knowledge, volunteerism, and skills than their peers in public schools (Campbell, 2012). This is not the first time that Catholic schools have claimed that they provide a particular academic advantage to their students. Andrew Greeley (1982) was one of the first to suggest a "Catholic school effect" accounts for higher academic performance among African American and Latinx students in Catholics schools compared to their peers in private schools (Currance, 1984; Miller et al., 2021). This was reinforced by a follow-up study, which suggested that Catholic schools were responsible for significantly higher academic achievement of their African American, Latinx, and lower-SES students, than their counterparts in public schools, and also showed measurable benefits, albeit with a smaller effect size, for white and higher-SES students (Hoffer et al., 1985). More recent quantitative research challenged this claim, demonstrating instead that differences in academic performance between students in private and public school largely disappear when researchers control for socioeconomic status and other demographic variables not included in these earlier studies (Miksic, 2014; Miller et al., 2021). This history is relevant for my study because, it underscores the need to examine taken-for-granted truths about education research in light of our educational debt (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Likewise, as much as researchers have, thus far, consistently affirmed the claim that Catholic schools offer a civic advantage (Berner, 2017; Campbell, 2012; Campbell, 2019; Sikkink &

Schwartz, 2017; Wolf, 2007), they also agree that little is known as to why. Accordingly, more research is needed to understand whether this civic advantage benefits all students in Catholic schools equally, and relevant to my study, what accounts for Catholic schools' civic advantage, especially in urban Catholic schools.

David Campbell (2012) suggests that it is the "ethos" of Catholic schools that leads to this phenomenon. Barber and colleagues (2021) characterize such "ethos" as a matter of school climate, especially shared values. This is consistent recent quantitative research that draws on the "the world's longest active panel study of households and families" (Sikkink & Schwartz, 2017, p. 6), the Panel Study of Income Dynamics. David Sikkink and Jonathan Schwartz (2017) show that graduates of Catholic schools volunteer and donate to charitable causes more often than their peers at public schools, although some of these effects disappear when controlling for social and economic factors. Interestingly, the nature of volunteering and charitable giving among Catholic school graduates is quite distinct from their public or other private school counterparts (Sikkink & Schwartz, 2017). "Catholic school graduates are over 50 percent more likely to volunteer for [organizations that serve the poor] than are public school graduates, even after including demographic, SES, and religion controls" (Sikkink & Schwartz, 2017, p. 10), and Protestant school graduates are significantly less likely than their public counterparts to volunteer in similar organizations. Further, "graduates of Catholic schools are forty percent more likely to give to poverty relief programs compared to public school graduates" (Sikkink & Schwartz, 2017, p. 17) or their peers from other private schools.

These patterns of giving and volunteerism, which prefer supporting the economically marginalized, align with core moral teachings of the Church, Catholic Social Teaching (Mich, 1998). I detail these teachings in later sections. Noteworthy here are two points. First, this quantitative data points to a qualitative difference in the civic socialization happening at Catholic schools, a socialization which prioritizes the needs of the poor[7]. Second, such a socialization aligns with much broader moral aims and practices typical of Catholic education, namely the "formation of conscience" (Catholic Church, n.d.). "Conscience must be informed and moral judgment enlightened. A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful.... the education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin" (Catholic Church, n.d., par. 1783). Further, this process is understood as lifelong task and intimately connected to the mission of Catholic schools. As such, the ethos of Catholic schools may be linked to the practice of moral formation, which is informed by the moral teachings of the Church, distinguishes Catholic schools from other types of schools, and is facilitated largely by teachers. As such, understanding the perspectives of experiential, community-based educators in Catholic schools, especially concerning their distinctive contributions to the moral formation of their students, may provide important insights in into the process by which the civic advantage is achieved.

[7] One of the seven themes of Catholic social teaching, which I allude to here, is "preferential option for the poor and vulnerable" (Mich, 1998). This principle functions like a sort of moral triage in that it is deemed morally right and just to respond to the needs of the poor *before* the needs of the privileged. There is a broad literature in Catholic moral thought, which defines "the poor" in various ways ranging from those approaching death to anyone who is marginalized in society. Accordingly, unless I am quoting specific texts, I will hereafter use the words "oppressed" or "marginalized" to refer to this group of people. In so doing, I wish to add clarity for my readers, who primarily approach this text from the field of education research and who may, therefore, be unfamiliar or uncomfortable with "the poor" as an umbrella term. However, in making this linguistic shift, it is important not to lose the cultural and spiritual origins of this concept or the motivating import it may play in the life of schools, especially those schools who serve communities familiar with oppression.

Conceptualizing Citizenship

The choice to engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy is a choice to facilitate quality civic education. As I describe further in Chapter Two, educators engaged in this form of pedagogy have a distinct and conscious disposition that favors critical practice. Accordingly, I suggest that such a disposition may reflect the way critical educators understand what it means to be a citizen, and this distinct notion of citizenship may sustain and motivate experiential, community-based educators in their practice.

The literature on quality civic education regularly distinguishes between students and adults. While many scholars agree that citizens are characterized by their actions rather than a static legal status (Gutmann, 1999; Lee et al., 2021; Westheimer & Kahne, 2002), a closer reading of such claims reveals an implied contradiction. The recent NAEd report on *Civic Reasoning and Discourse* provides a clear illustration. In laying out the philosophical approach of the NAEd to civic education, Sarah Stitzlein (2021) asserts that citizens are better defined "in terms of what they do.... Citizens... [are] people who engage in activities of citizenship," even if they "are not granted citizenship in terms of formal legal or informal membership status" (p. 25). However, the editors of this same report assert that civic skills, which are attained through civic education, "are essential to cultivate as students prepare for their *future roles* as adults, citizens, and being full members of their varied communities" (Lee et al., 2021, p. 3, emphasis added). Here, we see the bifurcation at work. Adults, citizens, and full members of community are implicit characteristics of the role of *present* citizen, while students are identified with the role of *future* citizen with the implied characteristics of youth and not full members of society (DeCesare, 2021).

This bifurcation between student learners and adult citizens presents several problems for civic education. First, it seems to imply that, despite the NAEd's claims to the contrary, the *real* indicator of citizenship is an unspecified marker of adulthood, perhaps voting, in which case, one would become a citizen when they reach the age of enfranchisement, a strictly legal definition. This calls into question the initial claim that citizenship is a function of doing civic things and also raises doubts about the citizenship potential of those who are disenfranchised (e.g., returning citizens, rural residents, jerrymandered district residents, racially and economically minoritized people, etc.). Second, if adulthood is the marker of citizenship that animates the imagination of civic educators, and if students are not present citizens, it follows logically that many teachers will feel less urgency to train students in civic skills, particularly through active modes of learning, as would be typical of experiential, community-based education. "Banking" civic education can suffice (Freire, 1970/1993). Conversely, adults who have been socialized in this way of thinking may understand that they are no longer learners but current citizens, capable of enacting civic responsibilities. Therefore, adults may believe that they do not need to continue learning and developing civic knowledge or skills. Recent scholarship on democratic education has theorized that this generational bifurcation of citizenship into student/future citizen and adult/current citizen categories obstructs the lifelong civic learning potential of both youth and adults (DeCesare, 2021), fostering a more passive civic disposition across generations, which results in youth less-trained in civic skills and adults less-informed (and less willing to get informed) about civic knowledge. This coheres with theories of social reproduction (Bourdieu, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 2016), which suggest that in capitalist societies, schooling tends to reproduce inequalities rather than democratic aims.

Quality Civic Education

Throughout American history, one of the fundamental aims of education has been to equip students for citizenship through training in skills, knowledge, and disposition appropriate for participation in a democracy (Lee et al., 2021a). Only in the 20th century did the notion develop of "civic education" as a class in a social studies curriculum (Beadie & Burkholder, 2021). Before this, these aims were fulfilled in a variety of ways, including practical experience, apprenticeship, common schools, and even religious study, like training in seminary (Tyack, 1974). Who had access to these educational opportunities, however, has been highly contested and consistently racialized. We see this in the prohibition on enslaved African diaspora from being permitted literacy education (Beadie & Burkholder, 2021), the forced displacement and vocational training of Indigenous peoples at Indian boarding schools (Beadie & Burkholder, 2021), the targeted Americanization curricula developed for public schools in the early 20th century as they enrolled large waves of European immigrants (Tyack, 1974), and Mexican-origin school segregation policies (Santiago et al., 2021). These exclusions from formal and equitable educational opportunities were compounded by disenfranchisement for most residents of the U.S. throughout the majority of the country's history – women did not get the vote until 1920; Indigenous Americans were not granted legal citizenship and the voting rights that go with it until 1924; People of Color were not guaranteed voting protections until 1965; and speakers of languages other than English were not guaranteed voting access until 1975 (Beadie & Burkholder, 2021; Library of Congress, n.d.; Reichard, 2018; Zinn, 1980). These significant political elisions kept the majority of U.S. citizens from participating fully in civic life and thus, kept these citizens, who are part of historically marginalized groups, from gaining the educational benefits of informal, civic learning opportunities. It is because of this history that Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006) asserts there is a sociopolitical debt owed to Students of Color in the U.S. and Jane Lo (2019) argues that this is a civic debt, one to be paid in quality civic education which prepares students to participate in society as full citizens. I suggest that such a quality civic education inheres a critical notion of citizenship.

Critical notions of citizenship challenge the two forms of citizenship discourses which dominate K-12 curricula in the United States: civic republicanism and liberalism (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006). In their review of contemporary citizenship discourses, Kathleen Knight Abowitz and Jason Harnish (2006) explained how civic republicanism is a common logic of the political right. It emphasizes community boundaries and patriotism and sees civic actions, like community service, as a means of learning about one's patriotic duty to the nation, an exclusionary concept (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006), rather than a means to foster a more inclusive or equitable democracy. The second dominant discourse, liberal citizenship,

> prioritizes the rights of individuals to form, revise, and pursue their own definition of the good life, within certain constraints that are imposed to promote respect for and consideration of the rights of others.... Whereas civic republican discourse values the common good of political communities, political liberalism envisions a more limited political arena, with greater focus on procedures that would ensure fair, inclusive deliberation about governance and policy (Gutmann, 2000). (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006, pp. 661-662)

Liberal citizenship discourses in education value equipping students with the skills to reason, deliberate, and assess truth claims as they relate to individuals' participation in democratic governance. Under the umbrella of liberalism, neoliberal discourses, which I address further below, have strongly influenced K-12 education, but Knight Abowitz and Harnish (2006) assert

that "educators rarely take up the neoliberal discourse as an explicit discourse of citizenship; and most...theorists also largely reject neoliberalism as a civic discourse" (p. 662) due to its individualism being "so severe as to be incompatible with the civic ideals long associated with democratic public life and common schooling" (p. 662). Imbedded in their analysis of civic republicanism and liberalism is a tacit admission that exclusionary forces, be they hyper-individualism or nationalism, can be dangerous to democracy.

By contrast, critical citizenship discourses in education seek to foster an inclusive and participatory democracy. Accordingly, part of the work of critical citizenship is to identify and respond to "exclusions based on gender, culture, ethnicity, nationality, race, sexuality, or socioeconomic class" (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006, p. 666). By this reasoning, one is not a good citizen because they hold a legal status, like naturalization papers or a U.S. birth certificate, nor are they a good citizen because they vote in every election or feel duty-bound to do community service. Rather, like the National Academy of Education explained in its recent report on civic education (Lee et al., 2021a), a good citizen is one who contributes meaningfully to the manifold parts of civic life. They volunteer, participate in community groups, facilitate the PTA meeting, attend peace vigils, write letters to their elected officials, and bring tamales to the church potluck. And they do so because they recognize the humanity of their neighbors and are moved to act, to respond to their neighbor's needs, by virtue of their mutual humanity, which is not limited by the exclusionary forces which guide the liberal or civic republican. This humane disposition helps the critical citizen pay attention to what is going on in their community, so they can be responsive to the needs of their neighbors, sometimes through the political process. To become this good citizen, as I have noted, requires particular knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Campbell, 2019; Lee et al., 2021a), and it is the aim of such citizenship education to equip students with these various competencies in order "to broaden and deepen the liberal agendas of human freedom" (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006, p. 666).

This inclusive and liberatory approach civic education has seldom been reflected in the U.S. school system or practice. Not only have large portions of the population been kept from formal and informal civic learning opportunities (Campbell, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Levinson, 2010; Lo, 209), but the formal notions of civic education have been reduced to banking notions of civic knowledge acquisition (Beadie & Burkholder, 2021; Campbell, 2019), aimed at supporting the interests of individuals or limited nationalistic bodies (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006). Here, I am using "banking" in the Freirean sense of rote memorization and teachers' power-over students, not power-with (Follett, 1924; Freire, 1970/1993). This narrowing of civic education is reflective of the shift in educational norms, more broadly, toward neoliberal interests (Apple, 2006). Often, it involves a reduction of citizenship education to a single "civics" course in a social studies curriculum (Beadie & Burkholder, 2021), with easily quantifiable benchmarks to which the teacher can be held accountable. The practical outcome of such instruction is that students are not invited to apply the skills needed for critical citizenship nor are they encouraged to develop dispositions that favor civic agency and social inclusion. That is, they are not provided a *quality* civic education, a concept I will discuss in detail below. The cumulative outcome of this atrophied notion of civic education is that in recent decades, less than half of U.S. students have demonstrated proficiency on standardized assessments of civic competency (Berner, 2017; Lee et al., 2021a), and these indicators are even worse for Students of Color (Levinson, 2010).

The lack of civic proficiency has been felt more acutely in our civic moment as the threat of intersecting crises and the persistence of racial oppression has increased the visibility of our

democracy’s contingency (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Lee et al., 2021a). Research suggests that there is a causal relationship between education and civic participation; the type of education we receive impacts the type of civic behaviors in which we engage (Campbell, 2019). Accordingly, quality civic education equips students with the skills, knowledge, and disposition to be good citizens, ones that are active in civic life. Contrary to banking approaches to civic education, “citizenship education should not be boiled down to a fixed body of static knowledge to convey to children. Instead, knowledge should be taught as part of active inquiry into authentic controversies in our democracy and struggles to live well together within it” (Stitzlein, 2021, p. 29). Such instruction is cross-curricular and spans all grade levels. Like numeracy or literacy, the best approach to civic education involves all teachers incorporating civic learning into their curriculum (Lee et al., 2021a; Lee et al., 2021b). Further, developing the skills for civic life requires practical application. The National Council for the Social Studies asserts “[l]earning how to apply civic ideals as part of citizen action is essential to the exercise of democratic freedoms and the pursuit of the common good” (NCSS, n.d.). Indeed, the best civic learning bridges life inside and outside the classroom, allowing students to participate meaningfully in civic life, not simply learn content (Lee et al., 2021b; Levinson, 2010). Accordingly, quality civic education should be experiential and community-based, a claim I will explore more in the sections to follow.

Experiential, Community-Based Pedagogy

As I indicated above, this study explores the experience of educators in urban Catholic secondary schools who practice experiential, community-based pedagogy. I understand this pedagogy to be reflective of quality civic education and this setting to both offer a civic advantage to its students and be responsive to the civic debt owed Students of Color. As I describe in the next chapter, I approach these claims through a critical framework. Indeed, when I began this project, I wanted to strictly look at the work of critical educators in the SMN. However, inquiry into the literature on critical educator experience and concern about contemporary political discourses, which portray criticality in education as controversial (Knight Abowitz & Sellers, Forthcoming), led me to focus, more generally, on teachers who engage in visible practices which one might expect of critical educators. To make sense of this choice, I explore three interrelated claims. First, experiential, community-based pedagogy may be a visible expression of critical pedagogy. Second, critical pedagogy has theopolitical antecedents in Catholic theology and social movements. Third, critical pedagogy is a form of quality civic education. I address each of these claims, in order, in the sections which follow.

Experiential, Community-Based Pedagogy as an Expression of Critical Pedagogy

The claim that experiential, community-based pedagogy may be a visible expression of critical pedagogy inheres two distinct concepts. The first, critical pedagogy, includes a wide body of literature (e.g., critical complex pedagogy [Kincheloe, 2008], revolutionary critical pedagogy [McLaren, 2010], engaged pedagogy [hooks, 2004], critical composition pedagogy [Behizadeh et al., 2019]), which has taken shape over the past half century. By contrast, experiential, community-based pedagogy, as I am using it, describes educator practices more than a single body of literature. To illustrate how these concepts are related, I first detail what they mean independently.

Critical pedagogy, like critical theory which informs it, is deeply concerned with how power operates in society. Critical pedagogies can be practiced across the curriculum and take

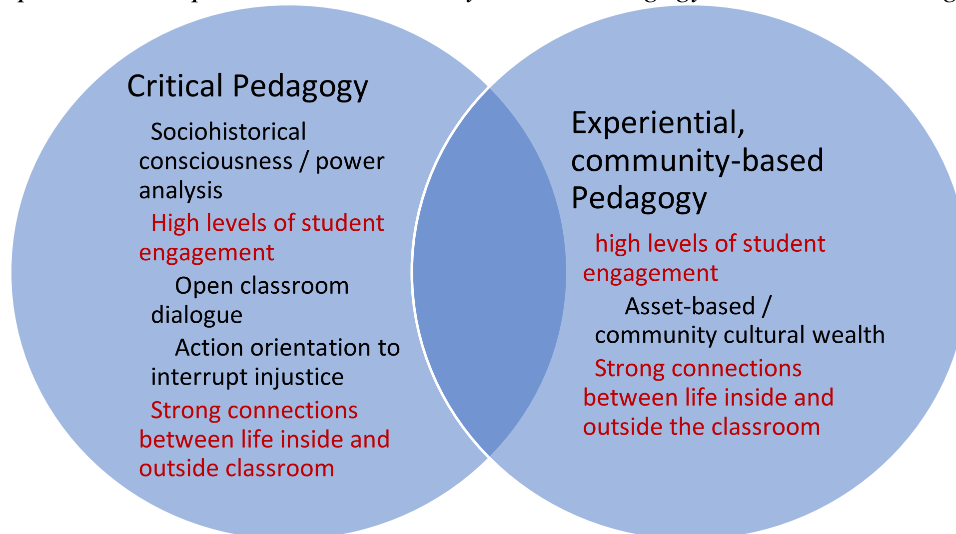
many shapes, inside and outside the classroom (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Gilbert, 2013; Mitchell, 2008; Sellers & Knight Abowitz, Forthcoming; Stinson et al., 2007). As I explain further in Chapter Two, critical pedagogy is anchored in critical theory, which is deeply concerned with how power operates in society. Paulo Freire (1970/1993) is widely considered to be the founder of critical pedagogy, though he employed the terms "humanizing pedagogy" (p. 68) and "problem-posing education" (p. 79) to describe this form of instruction. Freire (1970/1993) distinguished this type of education from what he termed "banking education" (p. 80) in which the teacher treats the student as an empty vessel in which to deposit knowledge. By contrast, critical pedagogues recognize that their students bring essential knowledge and experience to the classroom, which can and should be leveraged to facilitate learning (Freire, 1970/1993). Moreover, Freire (1970/1993) suggested that because all figures in classrooms bring meaningful resources to bear on the learning process, all students are also teachers and all teachers also students. This is not to say they do not have distinct knowledge and skills, quite the contrary; this is why it is essential that all teachers and students learn from each other. Accordingly, critical pedagogy equalizes power relationships in the classroom (Schor, 1996).

Beyond the student-teacher relationship, critical pedagogy is distinct from banking education in the way that it depends on real-life experience as a text to inspire both learning and action (Freire, 1970/1993). Not only does one learn from the world around them, but one must name one's true reality, attentive to oppression and power inequities, and then interact with the world in order to transform those inequities and humanize oppression (Freire, 1970/1993). This philosophically rich origin to critical pedagogy has been adapted for use across the curriculum and developed into numerous specialized forms of critical pedagogy (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Gilbert, 2013; Stinson et al., 2007). Today, scholars recognize that across critical pedagogies, certain characteristics are consistent; these include sociohistorical consciousness (Behizadeh et al., 2019), which strives, through open classroom dialogue (Gainous & Martens, 2012), to promote a critical awareness of social justice issues (McLaren, 2007); strong linkages between life inside and outside the classroom (Morrell, 2004); and action orientation to interrupt oppressive systems (Behizadeh et al., 2019). The kind of activity that is typical of critical pedagogy can make critical educators especially visible in schools (Black, 2015; Kareepadath, 2018). They are taking their students into the community, engaging their students in civic activity, and energetic discussions (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Freire, 1998). They talk about controversial issues, which might elicit strong emotions from their students and families (Zembylas, 2021). They may engage the content standards, and engage them deeply, but their greater concern is leveraging student knowledge to work together for social justice (Behizadeh et al., 2019). Such teachers are both practically and dispositionally distinct from traditional educators (Black, 2015; Jones & Enriquez, 2009; Perumal, 2016; Sondel, 2015) and as such may be hard to locate in order to invite to participate in a study.

However, as noted above, there are certain features of their practice which are particularly visible to outsiders, namely: their high level of student engagement and community-based practices (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Black, 2015). It is from these features that I came to employ the descriptive term "experiential, community-based pedagogy," which I use in this study and illustrate in Figure 1 below. In this figure, items that are common across both critical pedagogy and experiential, community-based pedagogy are indicated in red.

While I use the term "experiential, community-based pedagogy" descriptively, there is a growing body of literature on the concept of community-based pedagogy, which provides contours that may be helpful both for research in culturally diverse communities, like the SMN,

Figure 1
Relationship Between Experiential, Community-Based Pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy



Sources: Adapted from Behizadeh *et al.* (2019) with insights from Bowels & Gintis (2016); Freire (1970/1993; 1998); Mich (1998); and Sharkey, et al. (2016)

and asset-based orientations, as is characteristic of portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), the methodology proposed for this study. Judy Sharkey and colleagues (2016), quoting Sharkey and Clavijo Olarte (2012), explain community-based pedagogy consists of

> curriculum and practices that reflect knowledge and appreciation of the communities in which schools are located and students and families inhabit.... [A]n asset-based approach that does not ignore the realities of curriculum standards that teachers must address but emphasizes local knowledge and resources as starting points for teaching and learning. (Sharkey & Clavijo Olarte, 2012a, pp. 130-131) (p. 2)

This literature finds its antecedents in Freirean theorizing, though it does not emphasize the power analysis and action-orientation typical of critical pedagogy. Further, it draws on and amplifies the cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) of the communities engaged in the learning process. This alignment is illustrated in Figure 1, above.

Theopolitical Antecedents of Critical Pedagogy

Freire was raised Catholic and was a young man when Catholic social movements of workers and students were spreading across Latin America (Gigacz, 2012; Kirylo & Boyd, 2019). He was deeply involved in these Catholic social movements and was inspired by their use of a method of moral decision making called See-Judge-Act (Sellers, 2022). This method informed Freire's (1970/1993) conception of praxis, iterative learning through action and reflection directed at social transformation and provided the foundation for the approach to instruction later scholars called critical pedagogy. As such, it is right to understand that critical pedagogy, because it is informed by Freirean thinking and Freire's thinking was so informed by Catholic teaching, find a significant portion of their philosophical and pedagogical antecedents in the theopolitical logics of Catholic theology, especially Catholic Social Teachings (Kirylo & Boyd, 2019; Sellers, 2022), which I will detail more below.

Freire's pedagogy and philosophy also informed the creation and expansion of liberation theology, particularly through the intellectual exchanges between Freire and his spiritual mentor, Dom Hélder Câmara. Câmara was a leader of Catholic social movements in Brazil and

contributed to the emergence of liberation theology among the Latin American Church (Sellers K. , 2022). These close ties to the Church led Freire, when he was exiled from Brazil, to work with the World Council of Churches (Freire, 1996; Oldenski, 1997), who applied his philosophy and pedagogy to expand their ministries globally. More recently critical theorists, recognizing the intellection ties between Freire's humanizing pedagogy and liberation theology, have drawn directly on liberation theology (McLaren, 2021; Sepulveda, 2011) and Black liberation theology (Duncan-Andrade, 2009) to articulate critical pedagogical responses to contemporary sociopolitical struggles.

The theopolitical dimensions of Freire's work are often lost in the translation between Portuguese and English. David Saavedra (2021) analyzed these translational discrepancies in Freire's (1970/1993) Pedagogy of the Oppressed. He specifically outlined use of the term *conscientia*, from which we get the foundational concept of "conscientização," or critical consciousness. *Conscientia,* in Portuguese (and Spanish), has the unified meaning of "consciousness" *and* "conscience." "Morality and love must be understood as well as felt," explained Saavedra, thus the cognitive and moral inhabit this term in Portuguese. This is coherent with the spiritual influences of Catholic Social Teaching and the concern Catholic education has with forming the conscience of students. Yet this complexity, and its spiritual inflections, is rendered silent in the English translation. Of the 142 times that Freire used *conscientia* in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, it was translated as "consciousness" 141 times and "conscience" only once (Saavedra, 2021). The spiritual identity that animated Freire's life and work may have been secularized through the English translation, but his intentions for critical pedagogy is clear: critical consciousness has a conscience. Accordingly, in examining the experience of educators at Catholic schools it will be appropriate and helpful to stay attuned to the theopolitical meanings inherent to critical pedagogy, particularly the *conscientia* of critical educators.

Critical Pedagogy as Quality Civic Education

In the sections above, I have tried to establish independently the meaning of both critical pedagogy and quality civic education. Here, I wish to suggest that these two concepts are integrally related. Specifically, critical pedagogy is a form of quality civic education. If this is so, critical pedagogy; quality civic education; and experiential, community-based education are all interconnected concepts. I will address both these claims below.

In the first part of the chapter, I suggested that quality civic education equips students with the skills, knowledge, and disposition to be good citizens, ones that are active in civic life and have inclusive notions of civic community. It involves "active inquiry into authentic controversies in our democracy and struggles to live well together within it" (Stitzlein, 2021, p. 29), and crosses all subjects and grade levels (Lee et al., 2021b; Lee et al., 2021a). The best civic learning bridges life inside and outside the classroom, allowing students to participate meaningfully in civic life, not simply learn content or even engage in simulations. As such, we may rightly describe quality civic education as experiential and community-based (Hess et al., 2022).

In the second part of the chapter, I suggested that critical pedagogy, like critical theory which inspired it, is deeply concerned with how power operates in society, and while critical pedagogy has many iterations today across the curriculum and grade levels, all forms of critical pedagogy share several key characteristics. These are sociohistorical consciousness (Behizadeh et al., 2019), which strives, through open classroom dialogue (Gainous & Martens, 2012), to promote a critical awareness of social justice issues (McLaren, 2007); strong linkages between

life inside and outside the classroom (Morrell, 2004); and action orientation to interrupt oppressive systems (Behizadeh et al., 2019).

Here, we can begin to see some clear parallels between these two concepts. Both exist across the curriculum, at all grade levels. Both have an action orientation that links life inside the classroom and outside the classroom. Both are directed at problem-solving, one under with the goal of interrupting "oppressive systems" and the other "active inquiry into authentic controversies...and struggles to live well together" (Stitzlein, 2021, p. 29). Though she did not explicitly say that critical civic learning was better than liberal or civic republican approaches to citizenship education, Sarah Stitzlein (2021) went so far as to argue, in a recent report from the National Academy of Education (NAEd), that quality civic education must be "infused with a spirit of criticality" (p. 33). Though this report did not cite the work of critical theorists, the strong alignment of this report with the literature on critical approaches to citizenship education is notable. Given the highly visible and political nature of the NAEd, and how critical race theory has been politicized and weaponized against educators in the years leading up to this report's publication (Sawchuck, 2021), it seems likely that the direct use of critical theory to ground a discussion of civic education would be impractical. Nonetheless, this alignment is hard to ignore.

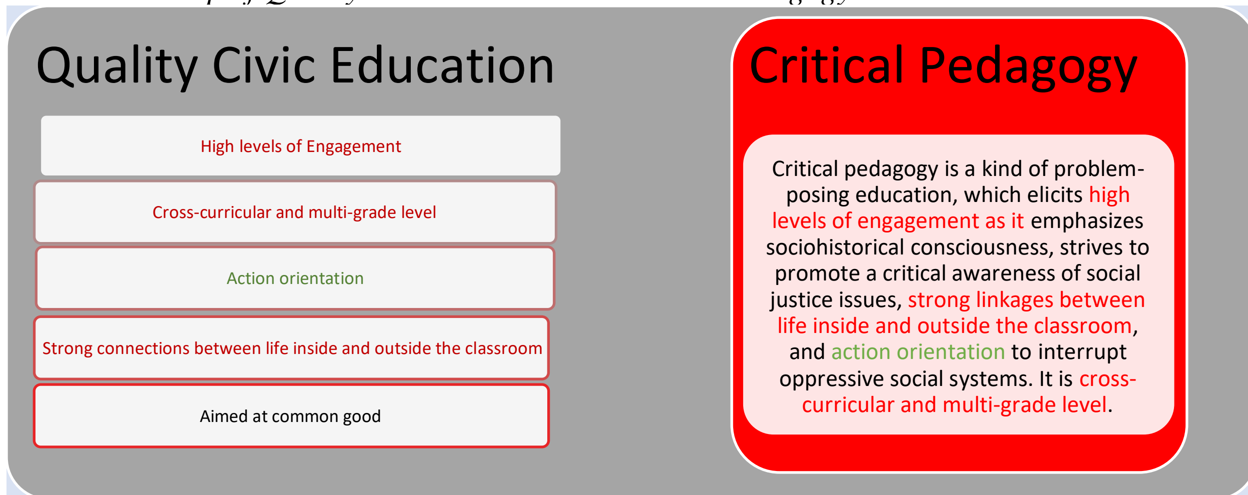
However, not all quality civic education is critical pedagogy. Learning some skills and knowledge that contribute to civic life does not necessitate power analyses or action to interrupt oppressive systems. This is evident, for example, in Ursula Aldana's (2015) study of one Santa María school. Multiple teaching strategies were observed in the study (e.g., debate, discussion, and reflective writing on prompts related to civic aims). However, when classroom activities generated critical student insights that presented opportunities to bridge life in the classroom with action to interrupt oppressive systems outside of it, the teachers in the study consistently shifted trajectory to avoid deeper critical engagement. So, while students in these classes may have deepened their knowledge of civic competencies and reflected some on meaningful civic dispositions, they did not extend their civic learning to action oriented toward changing oppressive social systems, even when students were able to name those systems and direct impact on their own lives.

Accordingly, we may say that while all critical pedagogy is a form of quality civic education, all quality civic education is not necessarily critical pedagogy (See Figure 2 below). This critical-civic relationship is coherent with Freire, who understood that education was inherently political, and the aim of critical education should be nothing less than the transformation of society, an aim which could not be disentangled from ethics, democracy, or civic courage (Freire, 1993/1970; 1998). This points toward my final claim that critical pedagogy; quality civic education; and experiential, community-based education are interconnected concepts.

I conceptualize experiential, community-based education as a descriptive concept that points to the especially visible features of critical pedagogy – its high level of student engagement and its action in the community beyond the classroom. Literature on community-based pedagogy also suggests particular attunement to community cultural wealth (Sharkey, et al., 2016), though this is a less visible feature of the practice. Accordingly, just as critical pedagogy fits within the umbrella of quality civic education experiential, community-based pedagogy fits within the umbrella of critical pedagogy. As illustrated in Figure 3 (below), these three concepts overlap in terms of student engagement, grade-level, cross-curricular potential, and strong connections between life inside and outside the classroom (indicated in red). Civic education and Critical pedagogy further align along action orientation and ethical aims (indicated

Figure 2

The Relationship of Quality Civic Education to Critical Pedagogy



Sources: Adapted from Behizadeh, *et al.* (2019) with insights from Bowels & Gintis (2016); DeCesare (2021); Freire (1970/1993; 1998); Mich (1998); and Stitzlein (2021)

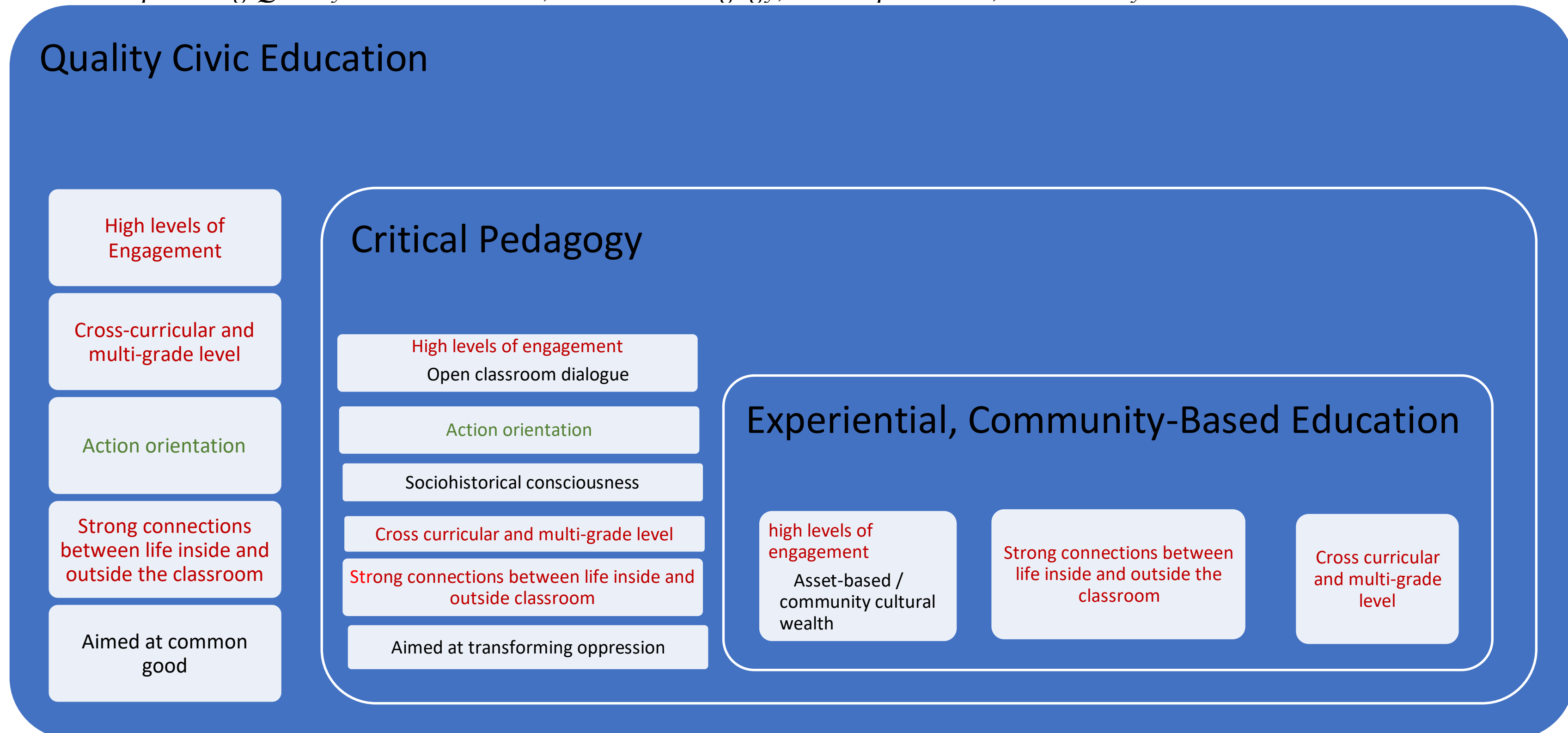
in green). While the aims are distinct—the former seeks the common good while the latter seeks to redress oppression—these aims are not in conflict, a claim I will address in Chapter 2. The few areas where these are not aligned (indicated in black) concern slight differences in philosophical orientation, differences which may be mitigated or disappear altogether within a specific context, particularly one like an urban Catholic school, where values are shared and integrated into school culture.

Teacher Experiences within U.S. Catholic Schools

Just as the choice citizens make to engage in civic life is impacted by their disposition, knowledge, and skills (Lee, et al., 2021b), as well as the political freedoms afforded them (Lepore, 2020; Weiner, 2022), the choice teachers make to engage in various types of pedagogies are influenced by their philosophies of education, training, skills, and context (Black, 2015; Misco et al., 2018; Perumal, 2016). For teachers to engage in pedagogies that go against the grain (e.g., critical service-learning [Mitchell, 2008] or citizen science [All About Arsenic, 2022]), which take extra time to implement and demand greater resources than banking pedagogies require, as is typical of critical pedagogical practice (Billig, 2011; Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Perumal, 2016; Sepulveda, 2011; Zembylas, 2021), suggests they possess a disposition that is committed to such practice. In the sections below, I address two distinct types of influences which impact teacher practice in U.S. Catholic schools, material and ideological factors. I pay particular attention to influences on urban Catholic schools, like the Santa María Network, and the pressures teachers there may face from financial and ideological interests to engage in banking pedagogies. I then suggest how the moral teachings and spiritual pedagogies of Catholicism may serve as a resource for ideological resistance and conscientization.

Figure 3

Relationship Among Quality Civic Education; Critical Pedagogy; and Experiential, Community-Based Education



Sources: Adapted from Behizadeh *et al.* (2019) with insights from Bowels & Gintis (2016); DeCesare (2021); Freire (1970/1993; 1998); Mich (1998); Sharkey, et al. (2016); and Stitzlein (2021)

Factors Impacting Catholic Education

Catholic schools are the largest segment of the non-public school sector in the U.S (Sellers, 2021b). These schools, by and large, tend to be whiter and wealthier than their public school counterparts (Sellers, 2021b). About three percent of K-12 students in the U.S. today attend a Catholic school (NCES, 2019). This is so, despite persistent declining enrollment and increasing labor expenses over the past half century (O'Toole, 2008). These labor expenses are largely attributable to the departure of large numbers of vowed religious women from religious life, women who had primarily staffed Catholic parochial schools for little to no pay (O'Toole, 2008). Their departure meant that lay teachers needed to be hired to staff Catholic schools, teachers that were paid lawful wages (O'Toole, 2008). Because the Catholic school business model has traditionally depended on revenue from tuition and philanthropy, they have been particularly sensitive to changes in enrollment and labor costs (Murnane et al., 2018).
The Catholic Church operates hierarchically, and so, its leaders have often been able to coordinate responses to changing times with practical and wide-ranging effect (Murnane, et al., 2018). Such has been the case with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the leadership body of the Catholic church in the U.S., which has responded to these changes by establishing institutional policies and advocating for public policies that support the long-term financial viability of Catholic schools (Sellers, 2021b). Internally, church leaders have mitigated labor expenses by establishing a culture that widely supports low wages (O'Toole, 2008) and resists teachers' unions, a stance that was bolstered by the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in National Labor Relations Board v. Catholic Bishop of Chicago (1979). Externally, church leaders have sought to increase revenue from public sources through persistent, coordinated political advocacy for local, state, and federal voucher programs (Bailey & Cooper, 2009; Cunningham, 2015; NCEA, n.d.). This effort won a significant victory in 2020, when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the constitutionality of Blaine Amendments[8] in its ruling on Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue (2020; Oyez, n.d.). Despite these significant policy efforts, Catholic schools continue to struggle with financial viability. More than 200 Catholic schools consolidated or closed across the country in the 2020, a significant escalation from previous years, and financial pressures precipitated by the pandemic suggest an even more tenuous future for U.S. Catholic schools (Lovett, 2021).

While the financial state of Catholic schools has experienced numerous changes over the past half century, the culture of Catholic schools has remained more consistent. Policy contributes to this through First Amendment protections; the separation of church and state has been interpreted in ways that reduce government influence on Catholic schools (Coughlin, 1993). While local and state policies vary, it is generally the case that Catholic schools have more flexibility in licensing their teachers than their public counterparts (Burke, 2012) and can include

[8] Blaine Amendments refer to an effort in the 1870s, led by Republican minority leader of the House of Representatives, James Gillespie Blaine, to legislate prohibitions on state funding for parochial schools. Blaine and his supporters "sought to augment the more general language of the establishment clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution by explicitly placing restrictions on the use of public funds by states for the support of religious institutions" (Rainey, 2009). While this effort failed by a slim margin in the Senate, many states "adopted similar amendments to their constitutions, and some had previously done so in response to Congress passing a law in 1875 requiring new states to put Blaine-type amendments in their constitutions," (Rainey, 2009). While such laws had the effect of keeping public funding from Catholic schools, they did not keep public funding from common schools which implemented Protestant practices. Such discriminatory practices forced Catholic schools to self-fund, which they did through family tuition and philanthropy.

religious curricula and cultural practices which are prohibited in public school settings (Lannie, 1973). This flexibility allows Catholic schools more control over their hiring practices and use of time during the school year, and it allows teachers the opportunity to infuse faith and values into their practice across the curriculum (Lannie, 1973; O'Toole, 2008). Indeed, a defining feature of Catholic schools is their inclusion of theological instruction and religious practice across grade levels, including instruction in Catholic social teaching (USCCB, 2007). Also contributing to this cultural stability is the homogeneity of Catholic school staff and students. As noted above, Catholic school students are typically wealthier and whiter than their public school counterparts (Sellers, 2021b). They also tend to attract predominantly Catholic students and staff (USCCB, 2016). Indeed, many Catholic schools require school leaders and staff to be practicing Catholics, and in recent years, some have begun requiring staff to sign "morality clauses" in which they commit to embodying lifestyle choices, both inside and outside of school, which are consistent with the moral teachings of the Church (Dirks, 2014). Given the racial demographics of the Catholic church in the U.S. such policies have contributed to the maintenance of predominantly white faculty and school leaders at Catholic schools across the U.S. (Burke, 2012; Lovett, 2021), and with them, an emphasis on Eurocentrism in religious instruction (Sellers, Forthcoming).

Urban Catholic Education

Over the past half century, urban Catholic schools have been impacted by the same factors as their rural and urban counterparts. Enrollment has declined, and with it, revenue from tuition (Sellers, 2021b). Labor expenses have increased, even as teachers' wages have been kept low and unionization mitigated or eliminated all-together (Sellers, 2021a). However, while public policy has allowed urban Catholic schools to maintain curricular and hiring freedoms similar to their suburban and rural counterparts, they have been impacted by the expansion of voucher policies quite differently than wealthier Catholic schools (Joseph et al., 2017; Miller et al., 2021).

Because of centuries of systemic oppression and marginalization which have shaped urban areas around the U.S. (McGhee, 2021) urban Catholic schools, like their public counterparts, tend to face different challenges than suburban or rural Catholic schools. Urban Catholic schools tend to serve low-income communities. Consequently, the schools, which are funded partly by tuition, are more resource-limited than their counterparts serving wealthier, suburban communities (USCCB, 1986). Further, these schools are racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse (Groome, 2021; Miller et al., 2021), which requires teachers that, along with general content knowledge and skill in content delivery, are culturally competent and responsive to student differences (Delpit, 2006). Put simply, urban Catholic schools, and the teachers who work there, must do more with less.

The economic scarcity endemic to urban communities and reflective of systemic oppression, especially of racially minoritized people (McGhee, 2021), impacts the application of vouchers program policies. While each voucher program is distinct to the specific state and municipality where it operates, many models for voucher programs link public school performance or family income to students' qualification for vouchers (Blackwell & Robinson, 2017). For example, Ohio's EdChoice program allows students from families who are deemed either low income or in low-performing school districts to leave their local public school and carry their state funding with them to a private school of their choice (ODE, 2022). This model allots public school funding on a per-child basis, such that individual enrollment determines public school budgets. When a student leaves the public school, they can carry to their private

school their individual portion of the public budget, a so-called "voucher." Because many urban districts have been deemed failing, their students have been the ones that predominantly qualify for vouchers, and Catholic schools have welcomed these students and their public funding. This has been especially true in urban Catholic schools, which typically charge less tuition than their counterparts in wealthier communities (e.g., DePaul Santa María [2020; 2021]). Indeed, advocates of urban Catholic education have "in the past thirty years sought to reverse declining enrollment trends by pursuing sector-level policy responses designed to eliminate barriers preventing parents and students from accessing these schools" (Miller et al., 2021). This has resulted in a significant influx of lower-income, racially minoritized, linguistically diverse, and non-Catholic families into urban Catholic schools (Burke, 2012; Groome, 2021), an influx that may persist as legal barriers to state voucher programs dissipate.

Important for teacher experience is that even as the population of Catholic schools, generally, has become more racially diverse, the diversity of Catholic school teachers has not kept pace. This is especially clear among Latinx teachers, who comprise only eight percent of U.S. Catholic school teachers but seventeen percent of Catholic school students (Sanchez, 2018). Similarly, two percent of Catholic school teachers are Black, compared with eight percent of students (Sanchez, 2018). In urban Catholic schools, where the great majority of students are People of Color, these trends toward teachers' homogeneity create significant need for cultural representation and competence. Accordingly, if school leaders and faculty are not trained to teach in culturally competent ways, and evidence suggests that few receive such training (Hayward, 2016), or if they do not implement the training they possess, then this cultural mismatch risks fostering oppressive pedagogy.

Duality and Urban Catholic Teacher Experience. As noted above, critical theory is concerned with the ways in which power operates in society (Bohman, 2005). Likewise, critical pedagogy is concerned with how power operates in schools and classrooms (Schor, 1996). In contrast to traditional "banking" structures, which align power vertically, with the teacher dominating the student, critical educators seek to align their power horizontally with students, who they also learn from and collaborate with (Freire, 1970/1993). Such horizontal alignment is understood to be less oppressive and more humanizing (Freire, 1970/1993). For instance, a critical educator may view their students in a particularly empowering way and organize their practice accordingly, yet they must do so with the understanding that external expectations are always operative in the larger culture and organizational functioning of the school. Because experiential, community-based educators likewise engage in a-typical pedagogical practices, similar if not identical to critical educators, they also risk this tension with the culture and organizational functioning of the school.

For this reason, experiential, community-based educators, within traditional Catholic learning environments like the SMN, wrestle with a duality (Freire, 19070/1993), by which they see themselves and their practice both through the eyes of their organization's hegemonic norms, including its Catholic identity and value for hierarchy and conformity, and through the humanizing experience and aspirations of more critical pedagogical practice. I suggest such duality, if the educator is to resist burnout, must be both pragmatic and motivating. It allows the teacher to see themselves as they are, participant in an oppressive system, yet strategically resistant to that system. In this regard, such duality is strongly aligned with Freire's understanding of *conscientia* (Freire, 1970/1993), in that the teacher is conscious of what is, yet morally compelled toward what ought to be. Because what is is inconsistent with their self-understanding of what ought to be, the critical educator is motivated to strive for that greater

good, wherein they might align their internal and external worlds, their classroom praxis and their school's operating norms. Freire (1970/1993), though, reminds us that existing in such a dual state comes with risks.

> The oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized. (p. 48)

Such tensions, particularly in schools with traditional or "no-excuses" educational cultures, are unavoidable. This, perhaps, is why the disposition of these educator is so prominent in the literature. Only if they understand themselves not only as morally compelled to change what is, but also as a highly efficacious change-agent, might they persist in resisting the pressure to conform to and reproduce oppressive organizational norms.

Theorizing within Urban Catholic Schools in the U.S.

Santa María schools operate exclusively in urban settings, serving low-income students, the majority of whom are Students of Color (SMN, n.d.). From the moment students begin orientation freshmen year, the SMN trains them to engage in corporate life, professional environments that are typified by white, patriarchal norms (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007). The SMN both depends on and is dedicated to this corporate partnership (SMN, n.d.), making it particularly receptive to neoliberal logics, which seek market solutions to problems of the public (Anyon, 2011; Apple, 2006). Simultaneously, Catholic social teaching, which informs the mission and identity of Catholic schools, seeks solutions to problems of the public that are grounded in inalienable notions of human dignity (Mich, 1998); the human is not a chip to be bargained but a beloved creature to be cherished (USCCB, 1986). Accordingly, the ideological landscape of the SMN, which contributes to the school climate in which experiential, community-based educators practice, is shaped by neoliberalism and the missional commitments of Catholic social teaching which resists it. Teachers must negotiate these tensions as they contribute to the moral formation of their students, a practice typical of all Catholic schools (Catholic Church, n.d.; USCCB, 1990). I will address each of these claims, in order, in the subsections below.

Neoliberalism

Catholic schools today experience tension between the appeal of neoliberal logics and fidelity to core moral commitments, known as Catholic Social Teachings (Sellers, 2021b). Neoliberalism employs market-based logics (Apple, 2006). School choice, teacher accountability, and standardized testing regimes are indicative of this way of thinking. Indeed, many have argued that neoliberalism is the normative logic of school discourse today, including some citizenship discourses (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006), and that it reduces human value to economic utility (Anyon, 2011; Apple, 2006; Chouinard, 2013). Accordingly, Paulo Freire (1998) asserted "it is my duty to denounce the antihumanist character of this neoliberal pragmatism," (p. 127). Despite such condemnation from Freire, who was deeply informed and inspired by Catholic social movements, American Catholic schools find neoliberal logics particularly salient, given their position in the school marketplace and their dependence on tuition and philanthropy for economic viability. While this logic may hold true for financial viability in our capitalistic society, it also functions to instrumentalize the work of teachers.

Within the setting of the SMN, where tight budgets are coupled with corporate partnerships, the appeal of market logics may be particularly strong. Teachers who work in this environment may feel heightened pressure to conform to accountability standards, like mandatory, standardized end-of-year course assessments. For experiential, community-based educators, who are bringing their students beyond the classroom, drawing on their students' cultural assets, and facilitating interactive learning experiences, it may prove especially difficult to conform to these accountability norms. This may lead to external tension with colleagues and administrators and/or internal tension, viz. the duality described above.

Catholic Social Teaching as Logic of Neoliberal Resistance

Neoliberal logic runs counter to Catholic Social Teaching, which understands teachers' labor to be something that should be intrinsically dignifying (Mich, 1998), or, to use Freire's (1993) term, "humanizing." Accordingly, Catholic Social Teachings offers an institutionally valid language of resistance to neoliberal logics. There are seven core tenets of Catholic Social Teaching[9] (Mich, 1998; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004). Each of these tenets derives from sacred scripture and reflects more than a century of social analysis, ethical debate, and political action within the Catholic Church leadership and by lay faithful (Mich, 1998; O'Toole, 2008). *Gaudium Et Spes*, the Papal encyclical which was quoted in the introduction and articulates the priority Church places on civic education, especially for young people, is a prime example of the documentary tradition of Catholic Social Teaching. This, and many documents like it, have been promulgated by Popes and bishops, since 1891, to clarify the moral teachings of the Church and the responsibilities of Catholic faithful to live out those teachings (Mich, 1998). Catholic schools are understood to hold great responsibility for educating young people, through example *and* instruction, in matters of the faith, including, notably, Catholic Social Teachings. Indeed, American Catholic secondary schools are encouraged to provide all students with instruction in Catholic Social Teaching during at least one semester (USCCB, 2007). Thus, it is fair to say that Catholic social teaching is integral to the mission of Catholic schools, and as such, is necessary to understand the ideological tensions at play in Catholic schools.

Educators in the SMN, who work on a daily basis with lower-income and minoritized communities, are well-positioned to witness, reflect on, and respond to these oppressive realities. Such work, if done appropriately, is a direct embodiment of Catholic Social Teachings. By appropriate, I mean student-centered (Estes, 2004), culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995), and critical (Morrell, 2004; Oldenski, 1997). Student-centeredness and cultural relevancy align with the commitment of Catholic social teaching to the fundamental dignity of the human person (Mich, 1998). Cultural relevancy and criticality further align with the commitment of Catholic social teaching to family, community, and participation (Mich, 1998). Finally, consistent with the theopolitical roots of critical pedagogy that I noted above, criticality is especially well-aligned with Catholic social teaching's preferential commitment to the oppressed and marginalized (Mich, 1998). Accordingly, SMN teachers who practice student-centered, culturally relevant, and critical instruction—as we might expect from experiential, community-based educators—embody, through their instruction, the moral teachings of the Church.

Further, experiential, community-based pedagogy can serve as a concrete way to invite students to live out these same moral teachings. This is especially true if the pedagogy reflects

---

[9] These tenets are life and dignity of the human person; call to family, community, and participation; rights and responsibilities; preferential option for the poor and vulnerable; the dignity of work and the rights of workers; solidarity; and care for God's creation. See Mich (1998) and Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (2004).

critical and civic aims, as all tenets of Catholic Social Teaching concern either civic life and the common good—the call to family, community, and participation; life and dignity of the human person; rights and responsibilities; dignity of work and rights of workers; solidarity; and care for God's creation —or a power analysis consistent with a critical disposition – preferential option for the poor and vulnerable (Mich, 1998). In this way, these teachers, even in the midst of an oppressive organizational climate, which may obstruct critical practice, may align their work and validate their pedagogical choices through appeals to the mission of the school and Catholics education more generally.

Formation as Conscientization

More than simply helping teachers to resist constraining professional environments and neoliberal ideologies, when teachers in Catholic schools can align their pedagogy with Catholic Social Teaching, they are participating actively in their own formation of conscience and that of their students. As noted above, the formation of conscience is integral to Catholic moral life and an essential function of Catholic education (Catholic Church, n.d.). By this logic, Catholic educators should actively seek to shape the moral imaginations of their students so that they are attuned to the needs of their community. Note how this closely aligns with the logic of critical citizenship discourse (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006), which I detailed above. To provide for the needs of the oppressed, preferentially, as Catholic Social Teaching advises, students must be able to engage in social analysis, which makes clear those with privilege and those without. To participate in community life in ways that truly serve the common good, as Catholic Social teaching insists we must, students need to understand how democratic institutions work and understand policy sufficiently to make informed decisions (Mich, 1998). These are just some of the manifold ways in which Catholic schools can and should be helping to form the conscience of their students'.

Catholic formation of conscience is clearly aligned with and likely antecedent to Freire's notion of "conscientization," critical consciousness (Freire, 1970/1993). As I noted above, and David Saavedra (2021) recently argued, for Freire, critical consciousness has a conscience. In his preface to the 30th anniversary edition of Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Freire reflected at length about how this concept of conscientization has been received. Many people, he claimed, were resistant to this practice because of the emotional labor it would require of facilitators or impose on the oppressed (Freire, 2005/1970). Freire (2005/1970) dismissed these claims as fearful of freedom, which conscientization enables. Indeed, Freire (2005/1970) asserted that conscientization actually allows the oppressed to "enter the historical process as responsible Subjects" (p. 36). This suggest that particularly for oppressed communities, the development of critical consciousness inheres a kind of civic consciousness, an awareness of one's identity as a citizen, capable of contributing to "the historical process as responsible Subjects" (Freire, 2005/1970, p. 36), regardless of hegemonic norms which suggest otherwise. Further, only through the application of critical conscience can we act responsibly, and that ability to act responsibly is both free and morally good.

This relates to the prior claim that Catholic educators should actively seek to shape the moral imaginations of their students through the formation process. The reason they should do this is so that they are attuned to the needs of their community. However, if we look at the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we find more specific guidance. Formation of conscience "*prevents or cures fear*, selfishness and pride, resentment arising from guilt, and *feelings of complacency*, born of human weakness and faults...*guarantees freedom* and engenders peace of

heart" (par. 1784, emphasis added). Further, it shapes our conscience so that we are prepared to "assimilate it in faith and prayer and *put it into practice*" (par. 1785, emphasis added). This text makes clear that in the Catholic moral imagination formation of conscience cures us of fear and complacency and guarantees freedom for right action. While vague in the pedagogical details, the outcomes of this process mirror the effects of conscientization. Accordingly, the formation that happens in Catholic schools, properly understood, is a form of conscientization. As such, it may provide a helpful lens through which to explore the ethos of catholic schools and understand in more nuanced ways how experiential, community-based educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness through their work.

Framing Teachers' Experiences

I began this chapter with the assertion that civic learning is essential for American democracy. Such learning is not the purview of the privileged but the right of all citizens (Stitzlein, 2012). Yet, for much of American history, up to the present day, large swathes of society have been denied access to quality civics education (Levinson, 2010). This places society in civic debt to racially minoritized students, debt which can begin to be paid through quality civic education (Lo, 2019). Such education is engaging, action-oriented, relevant, multi-grade level, cross-curricular, and aimed at the common good (Hess et al., 2022). In many ways, it aligns strongly with critical pedagogy, which is why I have situated my interest in civic education around the work of critical educators (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Freire, 1970/1993; Morrell, 2004; Oldenski, 1997; Sepulveda, 2011) and those whose visible action in and beyond schools reflects the actions typical of critical educators. This choice is practical and ethical because critical pedagogy is inherently civic and ethical (Freire, 1998). Critical educators care about making society better with and for their students through action in the community (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Sepulveda, 2011). In this sense, they are citizens *par excellence*, because to be a good citizen is to do civic things (Lee et al., 2021b).

Within urban Catholic schools, especially those like the Santa María Network which have adopted strong accountability regimes and value banking methods, critical pedagogy may go against the instructional grain. But it is also ethically aligned with Catholic mission. This may be particularly helpful in understanding the work of experiential, community-based educators in the SMN because it provides them strong pedagogical and spiritually-aligned resources to respond to challenges which may be typical in their teaching context including but not limited to cultural mismatch between staff and students, limited funding, pressures to conform to hierarchy and corporate interests, and neoliberal ideological influences. This tension between critical practice and SMN norms points toward the theoretical frameworks which I use to guide this study: critical theory and social reproduction theory.

In the following chapter, I detail the theoretical frameworks which guide my study. I explain how critical theory (Giroux, 2003; McLaren, 2007; Morrell, 2004) is necessary to understand the power dynamics that influence SMN teachers' practice and why it should be used to analyze the experience of those teachers practicing experiential, community-based pedagogy. I then detail the characteristics of social reproduction theory (Bourdieu, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 2016), paying particular attention to its economic and cultural features, and explain why it is both appropriate and necessary to understand and analyze the work of teachers within the Santa María Network. I conclude by using these frameworks to theorize the civic disposition of teacher participants in this study, laying the groundwork for the methodology chapter that follows.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framing

Introduction

In Chapter One, I introduced the Santa María Network of urban Catholic high schools, where I located my study. I explained how my prior experience as a critical educator in the Network informs my interest in studying the experience of teachers engaged today in experiential, community-based pedagogy and my choice to use portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) to answer research questions related to their experience. I situated this study within the literature on civics education, explaining how I understand critical pedagogy to be a form of quality civic education and critical educators to be citizens *par excellence*. Further, I explained how my choice to study civic educators in the Santa María Network (SMN) reflects my ethical commitment to conducting research that may contribute to the civic debt owed Students of Color (Lo, 2019). This commitment—to take action that interrupts systemic injustice—is consistent with the practice of critical pedagogy (Behizadeh et al. 2019). Critical pedagogy finds its antecedents in critical theory and likewise, is concerned with how power operates in society (Bohman, 2005). The power structure of the SMN is shaped by business partnerships with corporations, major grants from big philanthropy, and school sponsorships by Catholic religious organizations (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). These institutional alliances—which are informed by white, patriarchal privilege (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007; Sellers, Forthcoming)—work together to shape the culture of SMN schools, which in turn place pressure on teachers to shape their students in the image of these institutional partners. Accordingly, to make sense of the distinctive educational context of the SMN and the critical educators who work there, it is necessary to employ social reproduction theory and critical theory, together, to frame this study.

Within this context, the number and type of obstacles critical educators face is Sisyphean, and yet, this study is premised on the expectation that a small fraction of teachers engage in such pedagogy, undaunted. Finding these teachers and inquiring into their experience revealed a great deal about the factors, both internal and external, which enable and obstruct their pedagogy, and thereby, quality civic education. This inquiry, the findings of which I detail in Chapters Four and Five, not only reveals opportunities to enhance the work of great teachers, but it also reveals how urban Catholic schools create a climate that enhances and/or obstructs the facilitation of quality civic learning. In so doing, it offers a small way to pay the civic debt owed to the students of the SMN and racially minoritized students in the United States.

In the sections which follow, I describe social reproduction theory and explain why it is necessary to make sense of the distinct context in which SMN teachers practice. I pay particular attention to the distinct pressures faced by experiential, community-based educators, as these pressures, and this distinctive practice, make clear that social reproduction theory alone is insufficient to make sense of the practice of these teachers. Accordingly, I introduce critical theory and explain how it both bridges the gap left by a social reproduction framing, making possible a sharper analysis of power and privilege in the SMN, and helps to nuance the way I conceptualize critical educators and analyze their pedagogical choices in this context and consciousness about their work. I conclude with a few remarks on why these theories, together, provide the strongest possible framing for this study.

Social Reproduction Theory

Social reproduction theory emerged from the work of Karl Marx (1969), who observed that society is divided into economic classes which are relatively stable. That is, those born into working-class families tend to remain working-class, while those born into capital tend to retain their property and pass such privilege on to their descendants. Society – in its cultural, structural, and ecological dimensions—literally reproduces itself, although Marx perceived this social division not as a fixed reality, though it was prone to stasis, but as a class struggle wherein the working-class might (and ought) one day obtain control of the means of production (Marx, 1969). Later scholars named this phenomenon social reproduction theory and elaborated upon it by theorizing, for example, how culture is reproduced (Bourdieu, 2016) and assimilation into white culture is rewarded (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Bowles and Gintis (2016) were some of the earliest scholars to link social reproduction to education. They contested the view of progressive educational figures like Horace Mann who, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, perpetuated a perception of schooling as democratic and egalitarian. By contrast, in the mid-1970s, Bowles and Gintis (2016) drew on a large body of empirical data to demonstrate:

> The system as it stands today provides eloquent testimony to the ability of the well-to-do to perpetuate in the name of equality of opportunity an arrangement which consistently yields to themselves disproportional advantages, while thwarting the aspirations and needs of the working people of the United States. (p. 56)

Not only is the American education system non-egalitarian, but they argued that "the history of the progressive-education movement attests to the intransigence of the educational system to 'enlightened change' within the context of corporate capitalism" (Bowles & Gintis, 2016, p. 63). By their reasoning, the progressive educational project that Mann and likeminded educational reformers theorized had, in reality, never been attempted, because the "integrative function" of schooling, by which the education system serves to equip students with the skills needed by the capitalist economy, had dominated the reforms enacted in the American school system. Training students to serve the economic hierarchy, however anti-democratic, was profitable for and promoted by capitalists; training students to think creatively and act collectively was not. This view has been supported by later scholars, who have detailed how economic and political (including religious) forces have interacted to reproduce, even at the expense of democratic life, an education system which serves best the interests of economic and political elites (Anyon, 2011; Apple, 2006; Ravitch, 2010; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). As such, social reproduction theory helps frame my understanding of the context within which my teacher-participants work and make sense of the specific institutional pressures endemic to the SMN, especially pressures to conform to the interests of powerful institutional partners (i.e., elites), which inform my participants' pedagogical choices. In the section which follows, I explain how social reproduction theory helps make sense of the SMN context and the experiences of my participants and thereby, enhances my ability to respond to both of my research questions.

Social Reproduction Within the SMN

Schools within the Santa María Network, in order to fulfill their mission to deliver "a career focused, college preparatory education in the Catholic tradition *for students with limited economic resources*" (Anonymized, n.d., p. emphasis added), depend upon the support of multiple institutional stakeholders. These include corporate partners, major philanthropists, and Catholic Church sponsors (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). Each of these

stakeholders influences the work of SMN schools in distinct ways shaping the culture, finances, policy constraints, and accountability regimes that inform the choices that teachers make. As I explain further below, within the Santa María Network social reproduction theory helps me to make sense of the distinct institutional factors that shape this context and influence teachers' practice.

Financial Dependence and the Corporate Work Study Program

While all Catholic schools in the U.S. must self-fund, predominantly through tuition and philanthropy (Sellers, 2021b), the SMN is distinct among Catholic schools for its Corporate Work Study Program (CWSP) (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). Indeed, it is "the only network of high schools in the country that integrate four years of rigorous college preparatory academics with four years of professional work experience" (Anonymized, 2022a), and it is the largest network of high schools to exclusively serve low-income students (Anonymized, 2022c). Each CWSP functions like a staffing agency within the school, providing student employees to staff entry-level positions in white-collar corporate environments. This program is marketed to potential partners as a way to diversify their corporate pipeline (Anonymized, 2022c). Rather than paying students directly, these corporate partners pay local SMN schools, which use this funding to meet budgetary needs, similar to how more traditional Catholic schools would use family tuition. The SMN recruits students from households of "limited economic means" (Anonymized, 2022a), a reality which it ensures by creating a household income cap for applicants. Accordingly, the CWSP is designed to meet the financial needs of the families who send their children to SMN schools. As noted in Chapter One, these families are predominantly People of Color, about 98 percent (Anonymized, 2022b), and as such, they are directly affected by historical oppressions, which has contributed to their lower-economic status and the educational and civic debt owed to them (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Lo, 2019). By subsidizing the cost of education, the CWSP program reduces or even eliminates the need to charge tuition to these lower-income families.

While this context may seem outside the purview of teacher practice, these close corporate ties, and the economic dependency of the SMN which fuels them, strongly influence the culture of SMN schools and the expectations placed on teachers to prepare students for corporate life. From the language used to talk about student success, to the dress code teachers are required to enforce, to the kinds of software that teachers are expected to incorporate into their instruction to reinforce skills valued by CWSP partners, teachers in the SMN are pressured explicitly and implicitly to support the culture and business interests of corporate partners. The culture of those corporate partners has predominantly been shaped by white, middle-class, patriarchal norms (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007). As such, the skills that SMN students must learn, and which teachers are expected to teach, reproduce the cultural norms of white, middle-class, patriarchy. This is complicated by the fact that most Catholic school teachers are white (Hayward, 2016) and so, do not share a common cultural identity with their students. Accordingly, social reproduction theory—which explains how economic and cultural forces interact at the school level to reproduce an education system which serves best the interests of economic elites—helps me to recognize and make sense of the distinct pressures faced by teachers within the SMN context.

Financial Dependence and Venture Philanthropy

Economic forces shape the SMN through more than just corporate partners; big philanthropy has also been part of the establishment and scaling of all but the first Santa María high school (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). The SMN model, begun in Chicago, was replicated after a venture capitalist, BJ Cassin, visited Santa María Jesuit High School and decided to create a multi-million dollar foundation to support this effort (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). Cassin explains,

> My wife and I had been supporting students through scholarships and I was looking for leverage where a dollar could be $10 worth of education for city kids... I told (Fr. Frank) that from the research I had done there was demand for this and we were willing to put a foundation together to replicate the model. (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 8)

The Cassin Educational Initiative Foundation was established shortly thereafter and helped provide grants of $400,000 to $600,000 to launch the first sixteen Santa María schools (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). Cassin's language, above, evidences the influence of neoliberal market logic. As a venture capitalist, he claimed he wanted a 1000 percent return on his investment. Moreover, he did research to determine market demand would support this aim. Accordingly, future SMN schools were established on the basis of market feasibility studies rather than community organizing, as had shaped the first Santa María school (Donovan & Thielman, 2017).

As SMN schools proliferated, so did the number of "prominent philanthropists committed to educational reform" (Anonymized, n.d.). These included but were not limited to the Gates Foundation and Walton Family Foundation (Anonymized, n.d.). Each of these investors placed expectations on the Network to ensure returns on their investments. Unlike corporate investments, which seek financial profit, philanthropic investments seek measurable gains in mission fulfilment (Hayes, 2021). This language of measurement echoes neoliberal ideology (Anyon, 2011; Apple, 2006), to which, as I noted in Chapter One, Catholic schools are susceptible. As an educational endeavor committed to getting students "to and through college" (Anonymized, 2022c), such measures of mission effectiveness include but are not limited to standardized testing scores, rates of college acceptance, college matriculation and graduation data (Anonymized, 2022b). Indeed, the SMN prominently asserts on its website that the

> national office protects the integrity of the [SMN] movement and advances school excellence and innovation by...standardizing effective practices across all schools through professional development offerings, convenings, and consultation in academics, college enrollment and completion, Corporate Work Study Program, performance measurement, and governance (Anonymized, 2022a)

and "Supporting mission accountability.... through school evaluations and data analysis" (Anonymized, 2022a). This language points to the how SMN teachers are each directly impacted by philanthropists who fund and inform these standardization practices. Teachers participate in "professional development" led by the network, "convenings," and consultations about academics and "performance measurement." Schools are held accountable through "evaluations and data analysis" (Anonymized, 2022a), data which, I have experienced first-hand, is collected from each teacher semesterly or annually through mandatory end-of-course standardized testing. These tests are designed to reflect national content and testing standards (i.e., SAT and pre-SAT college entrance exam-style questions and Common Core content). SMN teachers are even utilized, often on a volunteer-basis, to draft, review, and field-test these end-of-course assessments, a process in which I participated during my years teaching in the Network.

This data is compiled annually by the SMN, and schools, and even departments, are ranked against each other. In my own experience in the Network, when this data was presented each new school year, during professional development days, it functioned to create both a sense of relationship across the Network and, especially, competitiveness among schools and academic specializations, particularly related to literacy and numeracy. This data was used to guide teachers' annual planning, inform their weekly lesson design, and motivate their daily practice. In short, consistent with research on "no-excuses" charter schools, which employ similar accountability regimes to the SMN and are likewise shaped by philanthropic interests (Reckhow, 2013; Stahl, 2020), the standardization regimes enforced by the Network function to reproduce norms of practice for all teachers, in all subjects taught in the SMN. Accordingly, social reproduction theory is constructive in naming and analyzing how that standardization and accountability regime shapes the instructional practice of teachers. For teachers who engage in practices that defy the norm, like experiential, community-based educators, this analysis helps pinpoint areas of tension between the school organization and teacher practice.

Accountability to Catholic Identity

A third and important institution which shapes the culture and mission of the SMN is the Catholic Church. The first "mission effectiveness standard" of the SMN is that a school is "explicitly Catholic in mission and enjoys Church approval" (Anonymized, 2022a). This requires the integration of Catholic identity into the leadership, culture, and curriculum of the school, and such integration is assessed by the Network (Anonymized, 2022a) and independent accrediting organizations (Cognia, Inc., 2022; OCSAA, 2022).

The specific nature of a school's Catholic identity is influenced by the local religious sponsor (e.g., Jesuits, Sisters of Charity, Catholic Diocese of Columbus, etc.). While all Catholic schools are informed by the moral teachings of the Catholic Church (Catholic Church, n.d.; USCCB, 2016), like Catholic social teaching (Mich, 1998; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004) and are encouraged to integrate into their curriculum a common religious instructional framework (USCCB, 2007), each Catholic organization has a distinctive "charism," or spiritual characteristic, that informs its missional aims (Ahern, 2005). For example, in my former SMN school, which was sponsored by the Sisters of Charity, teachers were encouraged to incorporate the virtue of charity, or related characteristics, into their individual professional develop plans, plans which were then incorporated into the school accreditation process and about which teachers had to produce evidence of their fulfillment.

Beyond their individual professional development, teachers' practice is shaped by the Catholic Church through the structure and timing of classes to accommodate all-school prayer and worship and extracurricular activities (e.g., retreats, community service); the symbols incorporated into their classrooms (e.g., crucifixes); and the content and contours of their instruction to reflect the moral teachings of the Church (e.g., human biology teaching that life begins at conception, government teaching that active civic participation is a moral practice). Accordingly, teachers in the SMN may feel particular pressures to conform their practice to the cultural habits, moral norms, and timed boundaries guided by the school's Catholic identity. As such, social reproduction theory is helpful for naming and analyzing the religious forces that reproduce the interests of Church leaders.

These examples, together, suggest that all SMN teachers are impacted by corporate culture, philanthropic interests, and Catholic identity, specific to their teaching context. Social reproduction theory suggests that these teachers may be pressured implicitly and explicitly to

conform their pedagogy to the interests of business, philanthropic, and religious elites (Anyon, 2011; Bowles & Gintis, 2016). Accordingly, this theory supports my study in at least two ways. First, it enriches my understanding of the study context, which in turn helps me analyze the choices of teachers within that context, a practice essential to portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Second, by helping to make sense of teacher choices, it is crucial to answering my first research question: *(1) Why do teachers in the SMN engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy?* Explaining why teachers do what they do requires sensitivity to the specific pressures and cultural norms endemic to their context. As such, social reproduction theory is a necessary framework for my study.

Limits of Social Reproduction Theory

Nonetheless, there are limits to what this theory can explain, particularly in relation to the practices of experiential, community-based educators. As noted in Chapter One, these educators exhibit the visible practices we might expect of critical pedagogues. Their classes are engaging, their curriculum tied to the community. However, any analysis of their practice and the reasoning behind it must be attuned to a critical key. That is, to respond to my second research question—*How do these educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness about and through their work*? —I need to pay attention to how power operates in society, in the school, and on the teachers themselves. While social reproduction theory alludes to differences in power through such language and ideas as "well-to-do" and "equality of opportunity" (Bowles & Gintis, 2016, p. 56), it does not provide as sharp a power-analysis or action-orientation, nor does it make moral claims, all of which are inherent to critical theorizing (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Bohman, 2005; Schor, 1996). Therefore, to make sense of what is going on within the teacher, to analyze their civic and/or critical consciousness, I need critical theory to enhance my study's framework.

Critical Theory

Critical theory is deeply concerned with how power operates in society (Bohman, 2005; Schor, 1996). Critical theory emerged from the Frankfurt School in the 1920s and 30s through the work of such scholars as Adorno, Marcuse, and Habermas (Morrell, 2004). Earlier social theorists, like Durkheim and Weber, were primarily concerned with understanding how society functions and using that knowledge "to achieve some independent goal" (Bohman, 2005, par. 2). In this sense, these functionalists viewed humans instrumentally, as a means rather than ends in themselves. Critical theorists, by contrast, believed that humans were ends in themselves, and that in order for knowledge about humans and human society to be practical, it had to liberate people from oppressive systems (Bohman, 2005; Freire, 1970/1993). James Bohman (2005), writing about a foundational lecture given by Max Horkeimer, explains that "a theory is critical to the extent that it seeks human 'emancipation from slavery', acts as a 'liberating … influence', and works 'to create a world which satisfies the needs and powers of' human beings (Horkheimer 1972b [1992, 246])" (par. 1). Accordingly, critical theory is grounded in a moral impulse that understands knowledge as something to be acquired and used for the service of others, namely their liberation from oppression (Lincoln et al., 2018). Power is implicit in the analysis of critical theorists, as it is an exercise of power to oppress, just as it is an exercise of power to liberate (Giroux, 2001).

Critical theorists conceptualize liberation as both interior and exterior. Interiorly, critical theorists understand humans to be innately dignified and deserving of self-governance. In this sense, critical theory aligns with human rights (Moka-Mubelo, 2017) and Catholic social

teaching (Mich, 1998), both of which are grounded in fundamental notions of human dignity, and hold that people have a democratic right to self-governance (Hollenbach, 2003). Yet, many people are not conscious of their innate dignity or the rights derived therefrom; in this sense, they lack what Freire (1970/1993) called "critical consciousness." To the degree that society denies people the ability to fulfill their natures (i.e., live in dignity, be cognizant of their equal humanity) it is morally flawed (Bohman, 2005; Freire, 1970/1993, 1998). Critical theorists conceptualize this moral flaw as an abuse of power (i.e., oppression) that demands transformation – both in terms of one's interior consciousness as well as the external systems that constrain the freedom of the oppressed and violate the humanity of both the oppressed and oppressor (Freire, 1970/1993; Giroux, 2010). This demand derives from the moral weight of power asymmetries, much like the moral debt Ladson-Billings (2006) alluded to in her discussion of educational debt.

The status quo is perpetuated through hegemonic power, whereby a privileged minority of people guide the norms and expectations that shape the imaginations of the masses, and by extension, their day-to-day actions (Giroux, 2003; Gramsci, 1995). People need liberation because they have literally and figuratively been enslaved through hegemonic norms of culture, economy, and politics (Horkheimer, 1972[1992]). One key reason that this oppressive status quo can be maintained is because people do not see clearly how hegemonic interests operate to maintain the status quo; humans are socialized to believe that what *is* is what *ought* to be, a belief that critical theorists resist strongly (Freire, 1970/1993). As such, critical liberation must begin through an interior transformation of consciousness, which as I noted in Chapter One, equips people with the ability to act responsibly (Freire, 1970/2005), to resist oppressive hegemony (Gramsci, 1995), vis-à-vis critical consciousness (Freire, 1970/1993).[10] To achieve critical consciousness, according to Freire (1970/1993) "is to engage in authentic transformation of reality in order, by humanizing that reality, to humanize women and men" (p. 183). As such, critical consciousness inheres civic consciousness and demands civic courage (Freire, 1998).

Likewise, scholars generally agree that the axiological commitment of critical theorists, and the research they conduct, is the transformation of the world (Lincoln et al., 2018). Humans are driven to such transforming action in the world when they become conscious of moral dissonance, wherein what exists in the world—hegemony, oppression, dehumanization, exclusion—is not what ought to be—self-governance, liberation, humanity, participation (Freire, 1970/1993). Thus, we can say that critical consciousness, wherein our interior world is liberated from hegemony, fuels action that liberates the exterior world to reflect and align with that interior moral imaginary of self-governance, freedom, and humanity dignity (Freire, 1998). Freire (1970/1993) suggests this process is iterative, requiring an ongoing *praxis* process, whereby action (for liberation) leads to reflection (about how to become freer), leading to still more action and reflection directed toward freedom.

Many critical theorists have written extensively about education – both the way that education is often used to perpetuate oppressive hegemonic norms and how it can function to interrupt oppression and achieve liberation (Freire, 1970/1993; Giroux, 2001; McLaren, 2007). Indeed, in recent decades, some notable critical theories have suggested that democracy hinges on our ability to enact a more critical pedagogy in schools (Giroux, 2001; McLaren, 2021). Part of the reason for this, as I discussed in Chapter One, is that critical pedagogies, informed by critical theory, strive to equalize power relations between students and teachers, just as they strive to name and interrupt oppression in society (Freire, 1970/1993; Giroux, 2010; Schor,

[10] See Chapter One for discussion of the relationship between conscientization and responsibility.

1996). These dispositions and practices align with quality civic education (Lee et al., 2021a; Hess et al, 2022). As such, critical theory helps to anchor my understanding of the teacher-participants I have included in this study, who exhibit visible practices consonant with critical pedagogy, and make sense of the reasoning behind their choices. In the section which follows, I explain how critical theory supports sensemaking about the study context and the experiences of my participants and thereby, enhances my ability to respond to both key research questions.

Critical Theory Within the SMN

As noted previously, the Santa María Network was founded to provide a rigorous college-prep education to economically marginalized people (Anonymized, n.d.). Further, I have explained that this marginalization is largely the result of systemic oppression of racially minoritized communities, which places society in educational and civic debt to Communities of Color (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Lo, 2019). Accordingly, the mission of SMN schools, and the work of teachers within them, may be responsive to this debt, at least at face value. However, as I detail below, a critical analysis of the SMN reveals differences in power and privilege that impact the choices of teachers and their perception of their practice, which in turn, impact their ability to fulfill this mission. This may be especially true of critical educators who are more likely than traditional educators to resist oppressive systems through their pedagogy (Behizadeh et al., 2019). Accordingly, critical theory strengthens the framework of this study in at least three ways. First, it helps me to name and interpret the asymmetrical power relationships that impact teacher choices in the SMN. Second, it helps me to identify and analyze the critical consciousness, and related pedagogical and civic animus of experiential, community-based educators participating in this study. Third, insomuch as a critical analysis clarifies the moral and/or civic animus of teacher participants, it helps align the work with one of the fundamental tenets of portraiture, a commitment to seeking the good in one's participant-narratives (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020). Accordingly, critical theory enhances my ability to answer both key research questions using portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Corporate Power

Each SMN school strives to fund its mission through partnerships with corporations (Anonymized, 2022c). This business model is built upon the dependence of the economically marginalized on the economically powerful. While the long- term aim of this model, ostensibly, is to help students achieve economic self-sufficiency, as graduates of college with skills and experience valued by white-collar corporations, the immediate reality of enrolled SMN students is power asymmetry. Those with money (corporations) have power; those without money (students) do not. Teachers fit within this model as veritable rungs in a ladder, facilitating the instruction of students in content that helps them gain acceptance to and success in college. Without teachers, students cannot ascend to the higher ranks of education.

Teachers contribute to this ascent through the choices they make about what and how to teach, and what student behaviors to affirm and discourage. These choices are informed by their teaching context. As noted above, that context includes pressures from corporate, philanthropic, and religious institutions. SMN teachers must plan their instruction around the timing of their students' CWSP placements, cutting one or two instructional days from every week (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). The time that remains is shaped by pressures to prepare students for standardized test (e.g., pre-SAT, SAT, state graduation exams, or end-of-course assessments), a practice which provides evidence of academic success. Whether teachers judge these tests to be in the best interest of their students or not is irrelevant to the requirement that they cooperate in

their administration and, regarding end-of-course assessments, grade and report these scores to their administration and, by extension, the Network and its philanthropic backers. Teachers are further expected to enforce school dress codes, which are in turn, shaped by norms of professionalism informed by corporate partners and SMN branding, branding which, in turn, is informed by philanthropic investments. Additionally, teachers are expected to incorporate Catholic spiritual symbolism into the classroom (e.g., crucifix on classroom wall), teachings into the curriculum (e.g., the entire religion department with eight semester curriculum and all subjects where moral teachings intersect with state-mandated content), and worship into the academic schedule (e.g., daily prayer over the announcements, weekly chapel/mass services, and annual spiritual retreats). Teachers may even experience pressure, as noted above, to incorporate into their instruction the practice of skills valued by corporate partners, like Microsoft Office Suite. In each of these examples, teachers' choices are directly and indirectly impacted by the interests of corporate partners, philanthropy, and Church.

Critical theory (Giroux, 2010; McLaren, 2007) helps name these pressures as expressions of institutional power, which rather than liberating teachers to practice according to their expertise and conscience (i.e., professional and moral judgment), operate to constrain the choices of individual teachers. Indeed, these constrains shape the time teachers have to teach, the content they are expected to include in lessons, the curricular goals they set for the school year, and the standards for student appearance which they must enforce in and beyond their classrooms. Yet, these examples are general to the SMN and any teachers within it.

Within my study, I use critical theory to help name the ways power operates asymmetrically in specific school contexts and interpret how that context informs my participants' pedagogical choices. In this way, a critical framing enhances my ability to respond to my first research question: *Why do teachers in the SMN engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy?* Moreover, by understanding the organizational and institutional factors which impact teachers' choices, I can begin to identify how SMN schools may enhance teachers' ability to engage in this sort of pedagogy, which I explained in Chapter One, may contribute to quality civic education.

Inquiring Into Critical and Civic Consciousness

More than simply naming and analyzing the external, contextual factors, which impact teacher choices, as I built relationships with my participants, I sought to learn about the interior factors which motivated these educators to engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy. This is consistent with critical theory, as noted above, insomuch as it is concerned with both an interior and exterior transformation and has an inherently moral impetus (Bohman, 2005). Accordingly, as I got to know my teacher-participants through interviews and field observations, I paid attention to their expressions of comfort and discomfort regarding their choice to engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy, as it could point to particular experiences related to power asymmetry and/or moral judgment. This is particularly important, as I detailed in Chapter One, because of the relationship between moral conscience, Catholic formation, and Freirean (1970/1993) notions of critical consciousness. Thus, a critical theoretical framework helps me to recognize and make sense of these interior factors, particularly as they relate to critical and civic consciousness (Freire, 1998; Freire, 1970/1993). The specific concepts about which participants exhibited power consciousness varied according to their positionality, but only through such a critical analysis was I able to fully answer my second research question – *How do these educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness about and through their work?*

Because (1) critical consciousness is what differentiates critical educators from other practitioners (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Freire, 1970/1993); and (2) critical pedagogy is inherently concerned with "ethics, democracy, and civic courage" (Freire, 1998); and (3) as explained in Chapter One, experiential, community-based educators exhibit the *outward* signs of critical pedagogy, I anticipated that at least some of my participants would exhibit an *internal* critical and civic consciousness. Further, I anticipated that such consciousness would be shown to animate their pedagogical activity, through which they would strive to redress specific power asymmetries, which they and their students identified as oppressive. As I detail in Chapters 4 and 5, this anticipatory framework was supported by the data generated in this study, and a critical theoretical framework enhanced my ability to identify the critical educators among my participants and draw connections between their *inward* identity, moral judgements, and the *external* choices they made to engage in pedagogy that could enhance their students' civic learning (Freire, 1998; Hess et al., 2022).

Contributing to the Common Good

The third way in which critical theory enhanced my study is that it more closely aligned my inquiry with one of the fundamental tenets of portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), the methodology I employed in this study. As I explain further in Chapter Three, portraitists seek the good in their participants' narratives (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020). Accordingly, insomuch as quality civic education is deemed good for people in a democracy, which evidence suggests it is (Campbell, 2012; 2019; Hess et al., 2022; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Levinson; 2010; Lo, 2019); and insomuch as critical educators contribute to quality civic education, which I explained in Chapter One that they do; a critical theoretical framework helped me identify and describe those participants who contributed to the common good vis-à-vis their critical pedagogical practice. Further, it helped me name and describe how they understand their practice as morally and/or civically good. In this way, I hope the portrait(s) that resulted not only affirm my participants in their critical practices but, consonant with the third tenet of portraiture (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020), inspire my audience – in the SMN, in other Catholic schools, and urban education more broadly— to reflect on how they may contribute in similar ways to the quality civic education of Students of Color and their liberation from oppression.

Limits of Critical Theory

While I anticipated that critical theory would be essential to answering both of my research questions, especially understanding the *internal* animus which motivates the work of my study participants, this theory alone was insufficient to name and analyze the *external*, social context within which SMN teachers work. SMN schools are distinctive for their CWSP funding model (Anonymized, 2022c), and this institutional alignment contributes to particularly complex teaching environments. Accordingly, to make sense of teachers' choices within this context, I needed to incorporate into my study both data and analysis regarding the institutional interests impacting each teaching context, especially, how those interests impact teachers' pedagogical choices. Accordingly, a social reproduction framework (Bourdieu, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 2016) enhanced my documentation and analysis of my participants' social context, a choice that I explain further in Chapter Three is strongly aligned with portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). This choice, to leverage social reproduction theory (Bourdieu, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 2016) and critical theory (Bohman, 2005; Freire, 1970/1993) together, is not new. Before the first Santa María school was founded, Henry Giroux (2001) argued that such

theoretical framing was not only appropriate but necessary for contemporay education research, given the threat which "the corporatizing of...schools" (p. xxiv) posed to the "democratic and civic life of the nation" (p. xxiv). Given that this study addressed similar context (corporatized schools) and concerns (quality civic education), as Giroux (1983; 2001) anticiapted decades ago, it is unsurprising that a joint social reproduction (Bourdieu, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 2016) and critical (Bohman, 2005; Freire, 1970/1993) framework made possible a more robust analysis of teachers' interior motivation and consciousness regarding their pedagogical choices.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to make clear that social reproduction theory and critical theory are essential for understanding the context of the SMN and the choice some SMN teachers make to engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy. I have explained that SMN teachers, the majority of whom are white, are expected to cooperate in the process of training their students for white-collar corporate life, a professional culture that was shaped by and for white, middle-class men (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007). Accordingly, social reproduction theory helped me see and analyze the experiences of teachers in the context of the SMN, who feel pressured to cooperate in training their students for middle-class life. Yet, to be truly attentive to the moral and civic implications of their practice, social reproduction theory alone was not enough. Critical theory helped me understand the power dynamics that impacted and are perpetuated /interrupted by my participants' work. This was especially true for teachers engaged in experiential, community-based education, because to the degree that such forms of education resemble critical pedagogy, this specific subset of educators is likely to problematize and resist the hegemonic and dehumanizing features of social reproduction within the SMN. Thus, the choice to employ social reproduction and critical theory together to frame this study, not only positioned me to gain deeper insights into the context and contours of SMN teacher experience, an essential component of portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), but it reflected my deeper philosophical commitment to justice, and especially paying the civic debt owed Students of Color (Lo, 2019), by identifying oppressive social structures and exploring teachers' purposeful efforts to transform oppression through pedagogy that has substantial civic learning potential.

In the following chapter, I explain how I used portraiture methodology to answer my two central research questions: *(1) Why do teachers in the SMN engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy? (2) How do these educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness about and through their work?* These questions invited deep, qualitative inquiry into the storied lives of SMN teachers and the contexts which informed their practice. Yet, more than simply listening *to* a story, as is typical of ethnographic methodologies, I explain in Chapter Three how I sought to "listen *for* a story," (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, p. 11) to which I was particularly attuned as a former critical educator in the SMN. Portraiture methodology "admits the central and creative role of the *self* of the portraitist" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, p. 11) and so, allowed me to leverage my insider knowledge to inform my methodology. Specifically, I detail how I used three tenets of portraiture—relationship, goodness, and audience (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020)—to inform my choice of participants, means of data collection, and analysis. In so doing, I sought to clarify not only my methodological intent for this study but why portraiture methodology was empirically and ethically appropriate for this work.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of teachers in the Santa María Network, who engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy, in order to contribute to our understandings of quality civic education. In this chapter, I describe how I fulfilled this purpose, using portraiture methodology. The research plan I used and which I detail in this chapter was reviewed and approved by the Miami Research Ethics and Integrity Office, protocol ID 04257e (See Appendix H). I first describe social science portraiture and explain how I used this methodology to answer my key research questions. Further, I explain why portraiture is appropriate given both my positionality and the critical and social reproduction frameworks, which informed this study. I then provided a general introduction to the study context, the Santa María Network (SMN). Next, I addressed, in order, how I engaged in participant selection, data collection, and analysis. I then describe, in the final section, how I ensured trustworthiness throughout this study.

Portraiture Methodology

As a former educator in the SMN, I experienced significant institutional resistance and isolation as I engaged in experiential, community-based pedagogy. This positionality makes portraiture an especially fitting form of inquiry for this study, because this methodology "admits the central and creative role of the *self* of the portraitist" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, p. 11). Accordingly, through portraiture I leveraged my insider knowledge to enhance my inquiry process. For example, as I shared in Chapter One, I experienced significant institutional resistance as my students became more strategic and organized in their advocacy. Accordingly, I asked participants directly about the support and resistance leaders in their school express for their distinct pedagogy, and because, consistent with critical theory's concern with power, I expected they may not be comfortable speaking candidly about their school leaders, I paid attention not only to what they said but evidence of discomfort or evasion as they responded. Further, informed by my experience of isolation in the SMN, I sought to enable my participants to feel seen as they are, as well as to see themselves in new light, through the creation and unveiling of their portraits. Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot and Jessica Davis (1997) explained that portraiture is a

> method of qualitative research that blurs the boundaries of aesthetics and empiricism in an effort to capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience... Portraits seek to record and interpret the perspectives and experience of the people they are studying, documenting their voices and their visions. (p. xv)

By both recording and interpreting teacher experience the portraits that resulted from this study reflect a co-creative process with my teacher participants, a process whereby my anticipatory framework, informed by my experience in the SMN and reading of the literature, shaped the narratives that they provided into a coherent, aesthetic whole. This co-creative process was enhanced by the relationships I built with my study participants (Kim, 2016). In this way, portraiture allowed me to share authority with my participants (Liu, 2020), which I conceptualize as power-with them rather than power-over (Follett, 1924; 1995; Sellers & Knight Abowitz, Forthcoming). As such it aligns well with the critical framing of this study, which I explained in Chapter Two is deeply concerned with how power operates in society (Schor, 1996).

Sarah Bruhn and Raquel Jimenez (2020) identify three tenets of portraiture: relationship, goodness, and audience. First, "portraiture demands that the relationships be entered into with respect, a desire to learn, and grace" (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020, p. 50). Experiential, community-based pedagogies demand extraordinary investments of time and care (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Morrell, 2004), a reality with which I am intimately familiar. As such, centering relationship with my participants is, for me, an ethical imperative for this work. This commitment meant I set out to limit my study to 3-5 teacher participants, eventually identifying three teachers to participate, with whom I could dedicate time to build meaningful relationships. Kim (2016) suggests researcher-participant relationships may be the greatest factor contributing to the trustworthiness of narrative inquiry, of which portraiture is a type. Accordingly, as I detail further below, by limiting the number of study participants for the purpose of developing stronger relationships, I enhance the trustworthiness of this research. Second, "portraiture asks the researcher to illuminate and explore goodness within the topic under study" (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020, p. 50), a process which required foregrounding the experiences of my participants. By choosing to explore what is good within these teachers' stories and practice, this method resists efforts at work in America today to denigrate and silence the contributions of teachers to civic life (Kumashiro, 2012; Sawchuck, 2021). As I argued in Chapter Two, teachers' contributions, particularly when they are shaped by a critical impetus to interrupt oppression (Behizadeh et al., 2019), may resist social reproduction of hegemonic norms (Bourdieu, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 2016). Third, "in its attention to the aesthetic whole of the final research product, portraiture asks us to consider how our work will be read and used by communities outside the academy walls, including our participants" (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020, p. 50). This is consistent with my own hopes for this project, as I understand my primary audiences to be, first, my participants; then, the Santa María Network; teachers in Catholic schools more generally; and most generally, experiential, community-based educators outside of Catholic schools. While I am now part of and responsive to the academy, the civic and pedagogical concerns at the heart of this study lie in the everyday actions of citizens and the kind of society we are building together.

Setting

Portraits in this study illustrate vignettes from each participant-teacher's labor within the context of a Santa María Network school. That context is essential for understanding the specific pressures, obstacles, opportunities, and aids which inform a participant's decision-making. As such, portraiture requires a deep, localized understanding of participant context (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). While participants were necessarily identified before their localized context was examined, all SMN schools share a common history, business model, and standards of success (Anonymized, n.d.). Understanding this foundation provided roots to anchor inquiry into specific teaching contexts, which took place later in the study.

The SMN model provides an affordable, college-prep, Catholic secondary education to low-income students in urban communities across the United States (Anonymized, n.d.). The first Santa María school opened its doors in 1996 in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago; Santa María Jesuit High School worked unlike any school in the Catholic school system in America, and it created a roadmap which has guided the creation of all Santa María schools in the country (Donovan & Thielman, 2017; Kearney, 2008). The Santa María business model is distinctive for its Corporate Work Study Program (Anonymized, n.d.), in which all students participate, and through which all students contribute to their tuition expenses by working one day a week in a

paid corporate internship. Income from the internships is paid directly to the school and when a school is fully operational, aims to provide fifty to sixty percent of overall school expenses (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). "This revenue model breaks away from the traditional Catholic school approach that relies on tuition and fundraising" (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 5) and helps boost attendance and graduation rates[11] well beyond the "national averages for students from similar economic or ethnic backgrounds" (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 5). Before being sent to work sites, all incoming students undergo intensive training in corporate skills and culture, skills which they continue to develop through the course of their four years of corporate internships. In exchange, corporate partners receive the benefit of inexpensive labor for entry-level work (Donovan & Thielman, 2017) and the potential of diversifying their corporate pipelines (Anonymized, 2021). To accommodate the Corporate Work Study Program (CWSP), Santa María High School developed a 4-day/week class schedule, with extended school days. Instruction at this first Santa María school was bilingual, in Spanish and English, and teachers were predominantly bicultural, not just bilingual (Kearney, 2008).

Despite significant resistance by local Catholic schools in Chicago, Santa María Jesuit High School proved to be very successful in its early years. It gained national attention from the Church and media outlets, which were fascinated by the model of urban high school students working for their private Catholic education. In 2000, the same year the first class of Santa María students graduated from their high school in Pilsen, venture capitalist BJ Cassin visited campus. Cassin, "who was finishing his term as chairman of the board of trustees of St. Mary's College of California, had been looking for a new approach to Catholic education in urban areas" (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 8). Following his visit, he "agreed to invest $12 million to create other Santa María Schools around the country" (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 8). Cassin explains,

> My wife and I had been supporting students through scholarships and I was looking for leverage where a dollar could be $10 worth of education for city kids... I told (Fr. Frank) that from the research I had done there was demand for this and we were willing to put a foundation together to replicate the model. (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 8)

The Cassin Educational Initiative Foundation was established shortly thereafter and helped provide grants of $400,000 to $600,000 to launch the first 16 Santa María schools (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). The first of these schools was De La Salle North Catholic High School, in Portland, Oregon, which opened its doors in 2001 and today is rated the most diverse private high school in the state of Oregon (De La Salle North Catholic High School, n.d.). Another school opened in Los Angeles in 2002 and in Denver the year after that. In 2003, the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation invested a further $9.9 million, which they supplemented with another $6 million in 2006. "With two foundations involved, the combined grants to open new schools rose to about $1 million per school" (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 8). This enabled 23 new Santa María schools to open between 2001 and 2009 (Donovan & Thielman, 2017; Anonymized, n.d.), and this growth was dispersed among old Catholic cities, like Boston and New York, and growing, primarily with Latinx immigrants, Catholic cities in the Sunbelt, like Los Angeles and Tucson (O'Toole, 2008). This expansion was so remarkable, especially in light of decades of continuous Catholic school contraction (Lannie, 1972), that in 2008, the founder of the first Santa María School, Fr. Joseph Frank[12], was awarded by President George W. Bush, the

[11] In 2017, the SMN had a graduation rate of 97%, while the national average for a similar student population was less than 92% (Donovan & Thielman, 2017).
[12] This is a pseudonym used to anonymize the Santa María Network.

"Presidential Citizens Medal, the second highest civilian honor, for founding the Santa María movement" (Anonymized, n.d.).

Following these years of extensive growth, these Santa María schools formally coalesced into the Santa María Network (SMN). The SMN was formed in 2010 to protect

> the integrity of the movement and [advance] school excellence and innovation by
>
> - Surfacing, scaling, and standardizing effective practices across all schools through professional development offerings, convenings, and consultation in academics, college enrollment and completion, Corporate Work Study Program, performance measurement, and governance;
> - Facilitating new school growth through development and implementation of a national growth plan and support for new schools;
> - Supporting mission accountability – as defined by the Mission Effectiveness Standards –through school evaluations and data analysis; and
> - Stewarding national branding, visibility, and fundraising. (Anonymized, n.d.)

These founding commitments of the SMN also, and importantly for critical analysis, point to the power structure in which Santa María schools are embedded. By joining the SMN "schools agree to operate" (Anonymized, n.d.) in accordance with the Mission Effectiveness Standards, which includes they be "an active participant of the Santa María Network" (Anonymized, n.d.). While the Network is not strictly in charge of each SMN school, like a franchise model, they have significant influence over the culture, curriculum, fundraising, and branding of member schools. Specifically, the SMN national office sets "effectiveness practices across all schools", hold schools accountable "through school evaluations and data analysis", and steward "national branding, visibility, and fundraising" (Anonymized, n.d.). As I detailed in my discussion of the influence of philanthropy in Chapter Two, the Network's interests are felt in concrete ways by teachers (e.g., pressure to teach to the test). At the local level, SMN schools are often managed financially by a non-elected, governing board and school president and managed academically by a school principal. School leaders and teachers are all, also, responsible to the school's religious sponsor. So, for example, in my own religion department our course sequence was informed not by the SMN but by the guidance of our local archdiocese, and we had to submit annual, religion graduation test scores to the Catholic Archdiocese. Further, periodically, we had to provide evidence of cross-curricular collaboration between religion teachers and other subject teachers. However, because we were not strictly a diocesan school but were overseen by a religious order, teachers at our school did not have to sign the same employment contracts, with morality clauses, as did our peers at other Catholic high schools in the region. Accordingly, to understand the power dynamics that impacted study-participants, it wase necessary to inquire into their specific school context.

Much of the standardization efforts that characterize the SMN today reflect the original insight of the first venture capital investor, BJ Cassin, who was confident the SMN "design could be put into a business plan format and fleshed out through a feasibility study in other cities. If the study determined there was demand in an urban area, the business plan would show how to open and run a Santa María school" (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 8). A decade later, his intuition had proven correct.

> As new schools were added the Santa María Network...standardize[d] procedures and develop[ed] resources for support and development. Ten Mission Effectiveness Standards were created that have evolved through the years, except for the first standard which has

been consistent.... "As a member of the Santa María Network, a school: 1. Is explicitly Catholic in mission and enjoys Church approval." (Donovan & Thielman, 2017, p. 8)

Curiously, while the SMN requires all its schools be Catholic and teach Catholic theology according to the guidelines of the local diocese in which a school is located, this most stable feature of the Mission Effectiveness Standards is also one of the least regulated by the Network. The Catholic identity of the school is generally left to the devices of school educators, campus ministers, and staff. Given the interconnectedness of Catholic identity and civic education (Paul VI, 1965), noted above, I suspect this decentralized approach to Catholic identity accountability may strongly impact the teaching context and thereby, the experience of civic educators participating in this study. Here, what's important to note is that the SMN is far more engaged in overseeing financial viability, business practices, and instructional data collection (i.e., standardized assessments) of member schools. Toward this end, The Walton Family Foundation was one of the first major development partners to join the newly-formed SMN. In 2012, it announced "an investment in the Santa María Network to support the onboarding of the School Growth Team and award seed funding to new schools opening in choice markets" (Anonymized, n.d.). With ample funding to launch new schools, Santa María staff could focus on recruiting students, building corporate relationships, and training staff in SMN best practices.

Indeed, in my own onboarding as a SMN teacher, I experienced firsthand how new faculty, from SMN schools across the country, were convened for an intensive, weeklong training to prepare them for life in the SMN. Whether they were veteran, certified teachers or uncertified novices, like I was, all new SMN teachers were encouraged to attend a common training lead by the national office in Chicago. There, we were introduced to the use of common materials and teaching strategies, as well as welcomed personally to the "Santa María movement" by Fr. Frank, who made a point to meet new faculty personally and lead them in reflection and prayer. My former colleagues, who had joined the SMN before me, recalled a similar, all-expenses paid trip to Chicago, which even years after, prompted them to reflect fondly on the experience. Some even chose to return for a second summer training, following experience in their SMN classrooms. These experiences fostered a sense of faculty solidarity across SMN schools, even as they taught and reinforced standardized norms across schools. Accordingly, to make sense of my study context(s), a necessity for portraiture analysis (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), especially the influence of the Network on individual teachers' practice, I paid attention to the Network-led professional development opportunities experienced by and formative for participant and their colleagues.

Teachers at Santa María schools across the Network share these same training opportunities, business model, accountability regimes, and historical context. The blending of corporate partnership and Catholic identity, along with the education policy requirements appropriate to each state and region, create a complex institutional tapestry distinct among Catholic schools in the U.S. As such, each SMN school functions as a microcosm of neoliberal hegemony and thus, provides a unique context in which to practice civic education, especially engaged, community-based civic education, and study holistically the experience of educators engaged in this form of pedagogy.

Participant Selection

As I noted above, my study was limited to three teacher participants, with whom I could dedicate time to build meaningful relationships. I identified these teachers using a combination of snowball sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and school-leader nomination, followed by a

screening interview. I used snowball sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018) of former SMN colleagues and a Catholic education researcher who had recently conducted professional development with SMN school leaders, to identify school leaders in the SMN that would be particularly knowledgeable about experiential educators in the SMN.

In selecting participants, in order to gain understanding the SMN more broadly, I sought to include participants from more than one school. However, it was also important that I deepen my understanding of each teaching context and gain multiple perspectives on work within each school(s), an approach consistent with portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Accordingly, I gave preference to teachers at the same SMN school and aimed to limit my participants to two schools, with 2-3 participants at each site.

Three SMN school leaders were identified through my snowball sampling process, one school principal and two school presidents. Each school leader was contacted by email template. In one email, I indicate how they had been recommended to me by mutual professional connections. In two other emails, the education researcher made initial email introductions to school leaders he thought would be helpful. I then continued correspondence with all school leaders by asking if they could nominate teachers who met the following three selection criteria: (1) a teacher working in the SMN, (2) whose practice is experiential and/or linked to the community beyond the classroom, and (3) who exemplifies a commitment to social justice[13]. Together, these three selection criteria align with features of critical pedagogy and experiential, community-based education, discussed in Chapter One, and also resonate with SMN mission specifically (Kearney, 2008) and Catholic education generally (Oldenski, 1997; USCCB, 1990).

All three school leaders responded to my email inquiry, and the two school presidents promptly nominated faculty at their schools. The school president of CR Northside nominated two faculty, both of whom expressed interest in participating in my study. The school president of CR Magdalena nominated five faculty, one of whom expressed interest in participating in my study. I scheduled screening interviews with all three teachers, and found they fit my selection criteria and were interested in participating in this study. The third school leader, a principal, acknowledged my email but asserted they needed more time to consider a response. After meeting my goals of identifying 2-3 teacher participants at two SMN campus, following multiple unsuccessful follow-up emails to this principal, I discontinued correspondence with them.

Data Collection

Portraiture requires the portraitist to gather multiple forms of data to help identify, contextualize, and interpret the complexity of the figure(s) at the heart of their study (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Participant interviews anchored my data collection process, providing substantial narrative data and indicating the local context where additional data was collected. Consistent with portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), as I explain further below, I also sought opportunities to make field observations at each participants' school and keep an impressionistic record (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), or researcher journal, in which I daily record observations and connections that I made about and across all forms of data collected, from interviews to news reports to classroom observations. I used that data to

[13] Social Justice is a value-laden term in catholic education (Rausch, 2010), which I choose intentionally for its layers of meaning and linkages to catholic moral theology (Mich, 1998; Oldenski, 1997), critical pedagogy (Giroux H. , Critical Pedagogy, 2021), and civic aims of education (Freire, 1998). As such, while I seek participants for this study, I will refrain from defining this term in order to mitigate the possibility of biasing future data. However, I will intentionally invite participants to explore this concept during interviews.

characterize the organizational context, wider community, and various obstacles and aids to each participant's enactment of experiential, community-based pedagogy. This, in turn, enabled me to better interpret the narrative data obtained from teacher participants.

Participant Interviews

Over the course of this study, I interviewed participants five times, with the first and last interviews serving purposes distinct from the middle three. I conducted the first interview to screen teachers who were identified by their school leaders as potential participants, because they fit the three selection criteria named above. I invited these teachers to participate in a short screening interview (see Appendix A) over Zoom. These interviews lasted between 18:34 to 32:18 minutes. In that interview, I introduced myself, a former SMN teacher, and the study; shared expectations of participants in the study; and invited them to share any questions or concerns they had relative to the choice to participate. I then asked them to react to the selection criteria, which led them to being nominated by their school leader. Based on their responses to these questions, which affirmed they fit the selection criteria, I then extended a verbal invitation to each teacher to participate in the study, telling them explicitly that they did not need to respond to me then, but could think about the invitation and respond to an email I would send them later that day. Each teacher responded to this verbal invitation by expressed interest in participating and verbally confirming they would look for my email later. I concluded each screening interview by asking them if they had any SMN colleagues that fit the selection criteria, which they might also wish to nominate. Though each teacher acknowledged their intent to think about peer nominees, no additional nominations were received through this invitation. I took notes during each interview and kept a detailed researcher journal, which I updated promptly after each interview. The same day I completed each interview, I also emailed each teacher a form to confirm their consent and an invitation to schedule the next interview.

Once teachers agreed to participate, I began data collection – both about their school context, which I detail in the next section, and their own narratives about teaching in the SMN. These interviews provided foundational narrative data that I wove into each portrait.

> The drawing of a portrait is... shaped through dialogue between the portrait and the subject, each one negotiating meaning and resonance and becomes the arena for navigating the empirical, aesthetic, and ethical dimensions of authentic and compelling narrative. (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. xv)

The depth of this dialogue hinged largely on the quality of the relationship that I cultivated with participants, and such relationships were built over time and repeated interactions.

After screening each teacher and confirming their participation in this study, I engaged in a series of three, semi-structured interviews with each participant (Kim, 2016), followed by a final unveiling interview (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), which I detail below. Each interview lasted approximately 60-minutes and was recorded on Zoom. This allowed for all interviews to take place remotely and ensured transcription consistency and efficiency. Though, two of the three participants chose to complete the third interview in-person, during the fall term, while I was on campus for field observations. I discuss field observations more below. For each interview, including those two conducted in-person, I used Zoom's auto-transcription function to generate a time-stamped transcript of each conversation, and shortly after each interview, I reviewed the auto-generated transcript for accuracy, editing and amending the transcript where appropriate. I also took notes during each interview and added those notes, along with a written reflection, to my researcher journal shortly after each interview.

The series of three interviews built sequentially in subject matter. I began by gathering biographical and professional training information from each teacher-participant. Many critical educators have distinct training or personal experiences which inform their choice to engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy (Behizadeh et al., 2019) or their commitment to social transformation (Black, 2015; Perumal, 2016). Accordingly, the first interview with each participant (See Appendix B) provided a chance to gloss these formative learning experiences as well as get a sense of their general biography. Further, this interview began to suggest a response to my first research question— *Why do teachers in the SMN engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy?* — as teachers shared those pedagogical and/or personal experiences that inform their choice of pedagogy.

The second interview (See Appendix C) built on the first, by asking about specific stories that both exemplified and shaped their identity as teachers. Because portraiture draws on specific vignettes to illustrate key themes (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), rather than a more linear style typical of other forms of narrative inquiry (Kim, 2016), this interview was especially constructive in identifying content which I later incorporated into each participant's portrait. These also provided a deeper response to my first research question, as specific experiences both anchored and illustrated teachers' choices to engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy. These also helped address the sub-question, which I mentioned in Chapter One, related to the institutional influences which inform participants' pedagogical choices: *What institutional and/or community influences (e.g., church, state, corporate partners, families, and/or community partners) impact the work of experiential, community-based educators?*

In the third interview, I explored each participant's beliefs and teaching philosophy (See Appendix D). I wanted to understand not only what training, events or experiences informed and illustrated participant practice, but how conscious these teachers were about the beliefs which animated their choices. And more, where they showed consciousness, what were they conscious about? As such, this interview was essential to addressing my second research question— *How do these educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness about and through their work?* — and aligning this study with its critical and civic aims. As Behizadeh and colleagues (2019) described in their ethnographic study of one critical educator, teachers don't need to be conscious of critical theory to enact critical pedagogy. However, teachers' critical consciousness will be evident through their praxis, both teaching actions and reflection on those actions (Freire, 1970/1993). Where interviews one and two provided narrative insights about teacher actions, this third interview aimed to understand how participants reflected on those actions. Were they conscious of critical concerns, like power and privilege? Did they seek social transformation or the humanization of their students, through their pedagogy? Had they internalized a commitment to the common good or living out Catholic social teaching with their students? Did they see their labor as an act of faith or civic virtue? By revealing the civic and/or critical consciousness of participants, I intended for this interview to clarify ways in which each participant may also grow in such consciousness and concomitant practice. As I explain further below, by capturing this truth in participant portraits and unveiling it to them, I sought to provide participants a chance to change, by more consciously and actively aligning their practice with the ethical commitments of Catholic education, commitments that, I explained in prior chapters, align with the aims of quality civic education and critical pedagogy.

Context-Specific Data

In order to make meaning of participant stories, I needed to understand the specific context in which my participants' stories took place (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). "Portraits are always framed by the ecological context: a vivid description of the geography, the demography, the neighborhood, and a detailed documentation of the physical characteristics of the place that evokes all the senses," (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 44). Accordingly, I also gathered data from and about participants' teaching site(s), the city and neighborhood where the school was located, and the demographics of the school and community. I started collecting context-specific data once a teacher completed the screening interview and returned the signed consent form, agreeing to participate in the study. As noted above, consistent with portraiture analysis (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), I gave preference to participants from the same teaching context in order to facilitate a richer contextualization of their ecology. This choice added depth to the contextualization of Santa María Northside, where two teachers agreed to participate in the study. However, at Santa María Magdalena, where only one teacher agreed to participate in the study, I was not able to provide the same multi-perspectival contextualization.

During remote interviews with two of my teacher-participants, the internet connection was briefly interrupted. In one case, the disruption lasted only a few seconds, leading a short gap in audio. When the audio resumed, I was able ask the teacher to repeat their response, and the interview continued without delay. In another case, the disruption led the participant to be disconnected from the interview. Within a few minutes, they were able to log back into Zoom and rejoin the interview, continuing the conversation uninterrupted. In a third case, I was disconnected from the interview, and rejoined the conversation after I connected to a new WIFI source, a few minutes later. In each case, the Zoom recording continued uninterrupted, and our conversation recommenced smoothly, right where we had left off. Following each interview, I reviewed these moments in the recording to confirm that the interviews had indeed continued smoothly. As such, consistent with the recommendation of David Saavedra (2022) for how best to respond to technological disruptions during online video interviews conducted via Zoom, I determined that the disruptions did not impact the reliability of the data.

In addition to the interviews and researcher journal indicated above and described in greater detail below, I sought out context-specific data related to the composition of the student body and broader community, the culture of the school, and the institutions that had particular influence over the life of each school in this study and the teachers that work there. This data included school websites and news reports about the school and their religious sponsor. Given the financial challenges endemic to Catholic schools in recent decades (Lannie, 1972; O'Toole, 2008; USCCB, 1990), and the relation of capitalistic interests to social reproduction in schools (Bowles & Gintis, 2016; Giroux, 2001), I paid particular attention to data related to corporate partners, major donors, and/or public policies, like school vouchers, which could impact the culture of the school and the resources available to teachers. Further, as is typical of Catholic education, each SMN school is sponsored by a specific religious order or organization (e.g., Jesuits, Sisters of Charity, local diocese) (Anonymized, n.d.; Anonymized, n.d.). These religious sponsors emphasize certain charisms, a Catholic term for spiritual characteristics (e.g., Jesuits value education of the whole person, while Sisters of Charity emphasize the virtue of charity). These charisms may be incorporated into the school mission or spiritual life of the school, including teacher professional development, and so, inquiry into these sponsor organizations was essential for understanding both the institutional influences on each teacher and the sources which informed their civic and/or critical consciousness. I also sought out other publicly

available data sources, like NCES or state departments of education, to obtain descriptive statistics about the school and its students. Finally, as I got to know my participants better and learned what, if any, community organizations they partnered with to facilitate instruction, I researched those organizations as well. This added some contour to the narrative vignettes as well as provided clarity about the relationship between school mission, teachers' beliefs, and the mission of those organizations beyond the school, where applicable, with which teachers chose to partner. As I sought out relevant data, I made regular updates to my researcher journal and also created and updated two separate school profile documents, one for each Santa María school in my study.

Field Observations

Field observations were a final source of data, which I collected during the fall term. Field observations are a key feature of portraiture, as they help clarify the ecological context that frames the portrait. In order to evoke a sensory experience, through my teacher portraits, I needed to have a clear understanding of participants' teaching context, an understanding best obtained through field observations (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Indeed, in their foundational text on portraiture methodology, Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) seem to take field observations for granted as an essential part of data collection, though they do not specify a fixed number or type of observation.

Rather, Davis (1997) advises that the portraitist must be sensitive to boundaries, seeking to forge relationships and make observations "sufficient to inform (authenticate) the product (the developing portrait) while doing no harm to the subject" (p. 161). Likewise, I visited each study site and made observations of each teacher over the course of one business week, a period of time similar to a study conducted by Davis (1997) and limited enough as to not obstruct or distract from the teachers' work. Given the distinct SMN work-study model, this one-week campus visit included the equivalent of 3-4 instructional days, per teacher, plus the 1-2 days of planning and meeting time.

Initially, I intended to align the timing of these observations with the delivery of specific lessons /strategies which the teacher has identified, during prior interviews, as particularly important to their practice as experiential, community-based educators. However, the timing of these visits was ultimately determined in relation to each school's academic calendar, participant preference, and my availability to travel. All teacher-participants asked that I visit after they had established a working relationship with their students. So, my visit to campus took place a month or more after the start of class. Santa María Magdalena, the first campus I visited, started their school year in early August. So, I made my visit during September 12-16th. Santa María Northside, by contrast, started their school year after Labor Day, the first week of September. So, I visited from October 24-28th. During visits to both campuses, I followed local public health guidelines and the recommendations of my teacher-participants regarding masking.

While on site, I followed my teacher-participant(s) closely, observing their classroom and/or office space, instructional practice, duties around campus, and contributions in extracurricular activities and staff meetings. Further, I engaged in more generalized observations of the physical space of the school, its surrounding neighborhood, any public transit used regularly by students or staff, and the broader cityscape where students engaged in CWSP placements. While making field observations, I use my researcher journal to record observations during the school day, in real time. I focused this real-time observation especially, though not exclusively, on sensory observations – things I could see, hear, smell, taste, or touch. After the school day, or during breaks in observation, I reviewed these sensory observations and added

impressionistic memos to capture ideas, connections, or other relevant insights which emerged. To more systematically collect and recording these observations, I adapted a graphic organizer created by Nicole Kras (n.d.) for use with ethnographic field observations about work (See Appendix E). Additionally, consistent with Sam Stiegler's (2021) account of go-along interviewers, I engaged in informal, often-mobile interviews and observations with participants as they accompanied me in school, during unplanned time, whether between classes, teacher observations, or meetings. This in-the-moment interviewing provided particularly rich data, which I incorporated into the portraits in Chapters Four and Five. This multi-layered record-keeping was consistent with portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997; McCarthy, 2017), and provided rich data sources to enhance the trustworthiness of my findings.

Analysis

Portraiture engages multiple levels of qualitative analysis. The first level concerns the "intellectual framework" of the study (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). As noted previously, the portraitist's identity is central to their enactment of portraiture—from the framing of the study, to the building of relationships with participants, to analysis of data and writing the research report (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005; Liu, 2020). Accordingly,

> The portraitist comes to the field with an intellectual framework and set of guiding questions. The framework is usually the result of a review of the relevant literature, prior experience in similar settings, and a general knowledge of the field of inquiry. It also resonates with the echoes of the researcher's autobiographical journey.... (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 185).

As I have noted above, my experience as a former teacher in the SMN who practiced experiential, community-based pedagogy, as well as my training in Catholic moral theology, informs my intellectual framework for this study. While I am intimately familiar with my own reasons for engaging in this pedagogy, my first research question asks why other SMN teachers may make similar choices. Likewise, given my own reflections on my practice, the relevant literature those reflections led me to explore, and the theoretical framing which guided this study (e.g., Catholic social teachings, current policies and practices in Catholic education, civic education, critical theory, and social reproduction theory), my second research question inquired into the consciousness of similar educators. Accordingly, to ensure the transparency of my anticipatory framework, I drafted a set of provisional codes (Saldaña, 2013) which informed, though did not bound, the impressionistic record I kept throughout this study (See Appendix G). In so doing, while I tried to be explicit and formal in communicating my anticipatory framework, I did not mean to make "propositions to be proved or disproved" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 186). Rather, by leveraging my personal experience and literature so explicitly, before I went in the field, I sought to align my research more closely with my theoretical frame while being "attentive to the cues in the field to which [I] must respond and adapt" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 186).

Indeed, while Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) note that this is somewhat paradoxical, I agree with their claim that "the articulation of early presumptions does not inhibit or distort [my] clear vision; rather it is likely to make [my] lens more lucid, less encumbered by the shadow of bias," (p. 186). Accordingly, my intellectual framework contributed directly to the overall trustworthiness of my work, hedging against power imbalances between my voice and that of my participants, an aim consistent with my critical framework, a topic I address further in the next section.

The second step of data analysis began when I started collecting data. "With each stage of data collection, at the close of each day, the portraitist gathers, scrutinizes, and organizes the data, and tries to make sense of what she has witnessed" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 187) by compiling an "Impressionistic Record" (p. 188). I referred to this record in the prior two sections, when I described how I planned to take field notes and write reflections in my researcher journal. This is where I not only kept track of data but tried to synthesize reactions (my own and others'), identify patterns, and eventually, name emergent themes. "The development of emergent themes reflects the portraitist's first efforts to bring interpretive insight, analytic scrutiny, and aesthetic order to the collection of data. This is an iterative and generative process; the themes emerge from the data and they give the data shape and form" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 185). While Laurence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) prefer the phrase "emergent themes" to "coding," they are clear that this stage of data analysis is similar to other forms of qualitative analysis (e.g., ethnography, grounded theory) in that it follows an iterative process of coding initial data, and letting that early coding guide future data collection, which is then analyzed and coded further, leading gradually toward categories and eventually, "greater clarity and refinement of emergent themes" (p. 188). Likewise, they affirm that the process of writing an "Impressionistic Record" is similar to the "constant comparison method" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and "memoing" (Miles & Huberman, 1994) (See Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, pp. 188-190).

Where portraiture varies, however, is in the way this analysis incorporates the aesthetic. Laurence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) assert that there are five distinct "modes of synthesis, convergence, and contrast" (p. 193) which contribute to the identification of an emergent theme. They explain,

> First, we listen for repetitive refrains that are spoken (or appear) frequently and persistently, forming a collective expression of commonly held views. Second, we listen for resonant metaphors, poetic and symbolic expressions that reveal the ways actors illuminate and experience their realities. Third, we listen for the themes expressed through cultural and institutional rituals that seem to be important to organizational continuity and coherence. Fourth, we use triangulation to weave together the threads of data converging from a variety of sources. And finally, we construct themes and reveal patterns among perspectives that are often experienced as contrasting and dissonant by the actors. (p. 193)

Like the composer who hears a short phrase of music and struggles to understand where that phrase is leading them, the portraitist listens for repetitive refrains, then resonant metaphors or poetic and symbolic expression, and finally themes from culture and rituals. They might hear this chorus of meaning in the midst of interviews or field observations, or they might see this meaning in the written texts and images created about and within the study site. Only once these distinct phrases become clear does the portraitist attempt to weave them together into one coherent melody through triangulation. Finally, like a composer that creates harmonies by layering distinct tones upon their melody, the portraitist constructs "themes and reveals patterns" that may be "experienced as contrasting and" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 193) even dissonant by the study participants. Within this study, that included, for example, paying specific attention to language linked to professionalism and corporate life, as well as spirituality and belief. Such language reflected the institutions that impacted the SMN and pressured teachers to reproduce their interests. As I described in Chapter Two, in the case of corporate interests and Catholic social teaching, these interests can conflict (discussed in Chapter One), creating a

paradoxical landscape which experiential, community-based educators may struggle particularly-much to navigate. Accordingly, I paid attention to heightened emotion in my participant interviews, as an indicator of institutional tensions that shaped teacher experiences and consciousness, and thereby were helpful in addressing both key research questions.

This second phase of analysis generated three themes from the data: power, citizenships, and aimed at transforming oppression. Power was the most pervasive theme across the data. It related to participants' social and intellectual capital (Bourdieu, 2016), and the ways they engaged students and colleagues vertically and or horizontally. Citizenship was exhibited through active and community-oriented teacher practices. This theme aligned with two provisional codes I identified as part of my anticipatory framework (Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis, 1997), "action-orientation" and "Aimed at Common Good" (See Appendix F). By labeling this theme "citizenship," I mean to suggest that the active expressions of this theme have civic implications, both for students and people beyond the school. The third and final theme evident in the data comes from the provisional code "aimed at transforming oppression." Consistent with this code, data from each participant illustrated that "certain voices and knowledge are represented in society and curriculum, while other voices are silenced" (see Appendix F). However, in contrast my provisional codes, which anticipated that such data would be limited to classroom practices, I found expressions of this theme in events both inside and outside the classroom.

Once I completed identifying these themes, I moved to the third stage of analysis: portrait construction. Like the synesthete, whose senses cross over, the portraitist must see a participant's story when they hear the harmonics of a theme which they have constructed. More specifically, they must choose a single story or vignette which exemplifies, in the life of each study participant, each emergent theme which they have identified. And once the portraitist has identified these stories, like the composer transcribing a symphony into sheet music, they must weave these stories together into a narrative that communicates the truth of their participant's lived experience—in language that evokes the senses, while also drawing attention to the complex themes—with their aesthetic symbolism, poetry, metaphors, and rituals—embodied in each experience. The portrait that results, if the portraitist is successful, should ring true to each participant when it is unveiled to them. As I discuss in the final section of this chapter, the portrait may also evoke in participants a desire for change.

Trustworthiness

Trust is at the heart of empirical research (Kim, 2016). While previous generations of qualitative researchers, informed by empiricism, were deeply concerned with the validity of their research, today, qualitative researchers are more concerned with trustworthiness (Kim, 2016). This reflects a paradigm shift from positivist notions of absolute truth to more constructivist or interpretivist notions of collaborative meaning-making (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). While inconsistency was problematic for positivists, for constructivists "inconsistencies can help to reveal the complexity of a situation" (Glesne, 2016, p. 45), which can add to its trustworthiness. In so much as portraiture co-constructs meaning through dialogue with participants and researchers, together, it reflects this constructivist paradigm. However, Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) has suggested that portraiture also aligns well with a more critical paradigm, which adds to the constructivist paradigm a concern with power and a desire for change. I explore this claim further below.

Here, I wish only to make clear that multiple features of portraiture contribute to Its trustworthiness. This includes, as I have noted above, the relationship that the researcher builds with their participants, which contribute directly to the work's trustworthiness by enhancing the quality of data collection. This may be the greatest factor contributing to the trustworthiness of narrative inquiry, of which portraiture is a type (Kim, 2016). Beyond relationship, portraiture also incorporates two additional features into its analysis, which enhance trustworthiness: triangulation and unveiling. I detail both below.

Triangulation

Triangulation is a term that qualitative researchers have adopted from surveying and navigation, whereby one uses multiple points of reference to confirm the location of landmarks of interest (Glesne, 2016). In qualitative research, it is generally understood as the "practice of using multiple methods" for obtaining data (Glesne, 2016, p. 44). As I have noted previously, triangulation is the fourth of five "modes of synthesis, convergence, and contrast" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 193), which comprise the second part of portraiture's data analysis. Once the portraitist has listened for various aesthetic patterns in their multiple forms of data, they begin to weave these codes together through triangulation. "Using triangulation, the researcher employs various strategies and tools of data collection, looking for the points of convergence among them. Emergent themes arise out of this layering of data, when different lenses frame similar findings" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 204). In this study, such different lenses included multiple interviews with multiple teachers, artifacts, field observations, my impressionistic record, and demographic data. I included each of these forms of data as well as media reports and other publicly available data, to aid in triangulating my findings. When each of these lenses combined to focus attention on one insight, we can say that they were triangulated, or to use more contemporary language, "crystalized" (Glesne, 2016, p. 45).

Sometimes, though, triangulating data does not reveal a commonality of insight but divergence of views. As I noted above, while this might have been problematic in the past, today, such divergence can actually enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative research by revealing "the complexity of a situation" (Glesne, 2016, p. 45). For the portraitist, this may be especially true, as they seek to "construct themes and reveal patterns among perspectives that are often experienced as *contrasting* and *dissonant* by the actors" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, pp. 193, emphasis added). As I detail further in Chapter Six, such contrasting and dissonant moments surfaced particularly often through cultural differences between Santa María Northside and Magdalena. I explore these cultural differences in Chapters Four through Six.

Unveiling

Portraiture's fourth, and final layer of analysis involves a three-step process: unveiling the portrait to the participant, capturing their response, and incorporating their response into the written report (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997; Liu, 2020). In my study, unveiling served as a way to member-check my interpretation of participants' narratives (Glesne, 2016), which I had compiled by weaving stories from our semi-structured interviews and field observations. Further, consistent with my critical framing, unveiling was intended to empowered teacher-participants in this study (Chouinard, 2013). As I detail in Chapters 4 and 5, I provided each of the teachers with their respective portrait chapters in December, during their winter break. When I shared each portrait, I suggested that we schedule a meeting within 3-4 weeks, and similar to other interviews in this study, that meeting was scheduled to take place using Zoom videoconferencing

software. All three conversations took place over Zoom, and in each conversation, I engaged each participant in a semi-structured interview about their portrait (See Appendix F). Then, I used their responses to revise their respective portraits and draft an additional section which captured their initial response to the unveiled portrait[14]. Consistent with the participant wishes at Santa María Metro, I provided an aggregate unveiling section in Chapter 5, identifying neither participant in the study. I followed each unveiling section, in Chapters 4 and 5, with an analysis that explored how the unveiling affirmed or challenged findings in the study, aligned with portraiture methodology, and provided new or deeper insights related to the research questions.

My hope for this unveiling process was that it be empowering for participants not only because of the potential for affirmation, as they saw the goodness of their practice reflected in their portraits (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020), but also by guaranteeing them a chance to react to the portraits and to record that reaction, and any necessary amendments they pointed out, within the final report. Accordingly, I incorporated these revisions and amendments into the final draft of the two findings chapters, a choice intended to enhance the overall trustworthiness of the work.

Portraiture culminates "in the unveiling of the portrait to the participant. This unveiling is one dimension of a portraitist's work that distinguishes it from that of other qualitative researchers" (Liu, 2020, p. 102), who rarely incorporate the responses of participants "to their efforts as a deliberate part of the research enterprise" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983, p. 337). Pei Pei Liu (2020) notes that this unveiling, and especially the choice to incorporate the participant's response into the written report, has typically served three purposes – "methodological, ethical, and interventionist" (p. 104). Methodologically, this unveiling functions like a member check, and adds to the credibility of the portrait (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, incorporating participant response into the written report also expands on the traditional understanding of member checks because "the participant holds the unique authority to affirm the research report, not only factually or intellectually, but at a gut level" (Liu, 2020, p. 105). By sharing authority with participants, unveiling contributes to portraiture's critical alignment. Just as the critical pedagogue is both a teacher-learner, engaged in learning from their students (Freire, 1970/1993), so must the portraitist be committed to learning from their participants, not only for the creation of their portraits, but in their willingness to incorporate the participant's affirmation, or lack thereof, of what is unveiled in the portrait.

This points toward the second, and related, purpose which unveiling serves in portraiture: ethical commitment to relationship. As Bruhn and Jimenez (2020) noted, relationship is one of the defining tenets of portraiture. The quality of the relationship between the researcher and the participant contributes directly to the quality and trustworthiness of the research report (Kim, 2016), just as it is a component of that report. One way in which the "role of the *self* of the portraitist" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, p. 11) is revealed, is through the relationship they cultivate with their participant and reflect in their report. The researcher's role, however, is always ethically implicated in the research process, because of the inherent power differentials between researchers and participants (Liu, 2020). Voice and representation matter in this work (Fine & Weis, 2010; Tuck, 2009), and however I wished to portray my participants and our relationship, my judgment alone as insufficient to determine the trustworthiness of the research report; I needed the assessment of my participants to accomplish this (Chouinard, 2013;

[14] Pei Pei Liu (2020) suggests that this initial response may vary from longer-term responses, depending on factors such as researcher-participant relationship and the readiness of the participant to change. The time constraints of this study suggest that only initial participant responses will be able to be incorporated, though Liu's work suggests longer term responses are also relevant to portraiture's overall aims.

Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). "Soliciting participant response is one method a researcher can employ to confront the potentially uncomfortable truths about how she has represented the Other in the final research report" (Liu, 2020, p. 106). Incorporating such response into the written report reflects the researcher's ethical commitments both to their participants and the trustworthiness of the work overall. Likewise, in this report, honoring participant voice by modifying the presentation of the unveiling also reflects my ethical commitments to them.

This leads us to the third, and final, purpose of portraiture's unveiling: intervention. More than simply revealing new truths or complexities about a subject, which is typical of qualitative research generally (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Glesne, 2016), portraitists seek to accomplish change, an aim more typical of critical methodologies, like action research (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009). Specifically,

> The work of the portraitist is to look not only for "strength, resilience, and creativity" but also for "the weakness, imperfection, and vulnerability that inevitably compromise the goodness" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 158), in part because of an interventionist goal of catalyzing reflective change in the participant. (Liu, 2020, p. 107)

By viewing their portraits, I hope to have offered my participants an opportunity to see themselves in a new way, one that might simultaneously affirm and challenge their self-understanding, and thereby, encourage them to proceed differently.

In this sense, I understand unveiling to be aligned with the critical framing of this study, as it functions to cultivate the critical consciousness of my teacher participants (Freire, 1970/1993), through which they can proceed in their pedagogical work more responsibly (Freire, 1970/2005). Yet, just as the portrait offers an opportunity for change, if it is revealed in the context of an unhealthy researcher-participant relationship, or if the participant is simply not ready to receive the message within the portrait, this unveiling may prove risky both to the research relationship and to the participant's opportunity for change. As such, I have sought to build strong relationship with my participants throughout the study and set clear expectations for the unveiling process, in order to support this interventionist purpose and the overall trustworthiness of the work (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to make clear both why portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) was an appropriate methodology to respond to my research questions and how I used it in this study. I have explained that portraiture fit my theoretical framing, because it allowed for participant experience to shine through in their narratives and relied strongly on study context to make sense of those narratives. My research questions were inherently linked both to teacher experience, within a specific and complex institutional context and the critical and civic consciousness teachers expressed through their practice in that context. Portraiture allowed me to, and indeed required that I explore in detail, both the ecology of my study sites and the interior life of my participants as they chose to engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy in an institutional environment that, as I detail in subsequent chapters, simultaneously supported and obstructed their work. Unlike other forms of narrative inquiry, portraiture allowed me to draw on my own experiences of working in the SMN to enhance my inquiry and inform my intellectual framework (Kim, 2016; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Further, I tried to show in this chapter that because of the strong emphasis which portraiture places on participant-researcher relationship and goodness (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020), this study sought to provide a way to affirm the work of educators in the SMN, who may be particularly likely to facilitate

quality civic education for their students. Accordingly, portraiture allowed me to support the work of these educators and amplify their contributions to paying the civic debt which is owed the Students of Color in the SMN, and all schools in the U.S. (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Lo, 2019).

Chapter 4: Portrait and Analysis of Magdalena Santa María High School

Contextualizing Magdalena Santa María

Magdalena Santa María High School[15] lies in a neighborhood of one-story adobe houses, down the road from industrial parks and a military outpost. Mountains are visible in the distance, rising above the arid plain where the metropolitan region continues to expand. Despite scientists' warnings that water is running low in the region, for now, the desert continues to give way to wealthier residents' hunger for space. Even the skies, with their expanse of pale blue and soft clouds, show signs of overuse, as every few minutes, a plane roars overhead from the nearby airport. Around the school parking lot, mesquite trees stand watch, casting shade on a few vehicles and the dusty ground covering their roots. Images of La Virgen de Guadalupe and various fútbol clubs are visible in windows and on bumpers around the lot. When parents drop their kids off in the morning, Mariachi music grows louder and then fades away as students hop out of cars and close doors behind them. Across the street, a rooster crows its claim to a fenced-in yard.

When the Magdalenas,[16] an order of sisters dedicated to quality education, established Magdalena Santa María a decade and a half ago, "one of the reasons the location of the school was selected, was so that it could provide education to students living on the [local] Reservation, while also being able to serve students in the surrounding...city limits" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 40:19-40:38). Few of the Native American children, who completed elementary grades at Catholic mission schools on the reservation, ever enrolled, though. Today, most of its more than 300 enrolled students and 700 graduates come from Mexican families, with relatives on both sides of the border. Because of this, Mexican culture and traditions are ever-present in the school. For instance, on September 16th, a staff member brought in pan dulce for the whole faculty to celebrate Mexican Independence Day. Spanish can be heard in the hallways, between students and adults, including Mariana October, the teacher I was learning from. Around campus, signs of Mexican culture are visible from the architecture of the outdoor courtyard at the center of the school to the menu of foods served in the cafeteria. These same Mexican families fill the pews of Catholic churches in this diocese, which began as a Spanish mission to colonize and convert the indigenous communities long before the U.S. Constitution was written.[17]

Mission schools continue to exist in the diocese on reservation land (Field Notes, 14 September 2022). One such school had, for years, been less than five miles from Magdalena's campus. Outside the mission church, adjacent to that school, Tribe members would stand under the shade of ramadas, selling frybread to tourists and pilgrims. These residents had just lost their elementary school, though, when it was closed a few weeks into the 2022-2023 school year. This

---

[15] The name of this school, schoolteachers and staff, and various identifying details have been anonymized to protect the identity of the school and the teacher in this study.

[16] The name of the religious order has been changed to protect the anonymity of the school community.

[17] The first Catholic missionaries to the southern and western United States arrived with the start of the Spanish colonization in the 1500s, and it continued until 1821, when independence movements in Central America led to Spain's withdrawal from the region. U.S. borders continued to be contested, though, until 1848, when the last of the Spanish-colonized lands were ceded to the United States government in the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (NPS, n.d.). For a history of this colonial past, including the role of Catholic missions in the colonization process, see Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz's (2014) book, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*.

caused ripples of concern through Magdalena Santa María. As one teacher lamented in an angry tone, "It shouldn't have happened this way" (Field Notes, 14 September 2022). Though it was long known the mission school was struggling with enrollment, and funding was short, the diocese chose to close the school only *after* the school year started. Faculty weren't given a chance to look for jobs elsewhere. Native families had to scramble to enroll their children elsewhere, and only a few were able to get spots in other Catholic elementary schools. It did not escape Santa María faculty that the Catholic schools with the *least* availability for these displaced children were whiter and wealthier schools in the diocese. The faculty paid close attention to what affected their community.

In the past year, faculty and staff at Magdalena Santa María had created a committee to address diversity, equity, and inclusion issues at the school. Not only was the committee interested in creating more culturally inclusive practices at the school, it was also concerned that the bishop would soon try to impose exclusionary guidelines regarding the LGBTQ+ community, like other bishops had started doing around the country (Herron, 2020; Shine, 2022; Walton, 2022). At their very first meeting,

> a couple of months ago...the people on the committee were asking the President and the Principal directly, "What will you do when the bishop disagrees with us?" .... And both our principal and president said, "We're prepared to go to battle, because this is what's right for students." And because we're a Magdalena school, we're really being challenged by the Magdalenas to be inclusive, and that includes all LGBTQ inclusion. So, in some sense, maybe we have freedom because we're not diocesan. (Interview, 15 September 2022, Min. 31:07-31:17).

Magdalena Santa María has used its freedom to support an LGBTQ+ student group, which had been active prior to Covid, and hire several employees at the school in committed partnerships. During my visit, rainbow flags and trans pennants ere visible in classrooms and offices around the school. On the day Magdalena played its rivals in volleyball, a small, freshman cheerleader sporting ribbons in her hair, carried a small rainbow flag in her empty water bottle, looking perfectly at home spreading both school and LGBTQ+ pride on campus. This was a school where all people were welcome, and the DEI committee was working to keep it that way.

The students, too, showed deep care about members of the community. Student Life, Magdalena Santa María's name for both student government and school culture, hosted an annual celebration of Latinx heritage. Student teams spent months preparing choreographed dances from across Latin America, which they performed in a competitive showcase during Hispanic Heritage Month. "Mexico always wins," I was assured by several staff members. As the students representing Mexico ascended the stage during one afterschool rehearsal, the gym erupted with cheers from hundreds of students, who eagerly watched their heritage displayed. Indeed, even if it wasn't a competition, Mexico was the pride of Magdalena Santa María.

When I asked the faculty advisor of Student Life, Cristina Dominguez, about student service at the school, she immediately mentioned Mexican culture. She explained that the freshmen class t-shirt, which reads, "Enter to Learn…Leave to serve", isn't a cliché. People take care of each other in this community. Since students returned from the Covid school years, student service programming has been taking off. Students participate in community service on the weekends. They pray together as a school, in classrooms, in liturgies. Each day, students lead a litany prayer over morning announcement, choosing saints associated with the religious orders that teach at and sponsor the school. Faith was part of the culture, it seemed to Cristina, and went hand in hand with service, the commitment to which extended beyond school. "Families feel

comfortable reaching out to school for help when something is going wrong at home." Only a week before my visit, Cristina explained, a family called the school office to share that Grandma had been diagnosed with cancer and was getting chemo treatment, which they were struggling to afford. So, Student Life hosted a $2 dress-down day to raise money for the family. Cristina said the school is very supportive of such things, and families feel comfortable reaching out when they need help.

When I arrived at Magdalena Santa María early on September twelfth for my first day of observations, three administrators were standing in the front of the school welcoming each student into the building. As I approached them, they turned to me and smiled warmly, before reaching out hands to shake mine. After each introduced themselves, the interim principal, Sr. Martha, declared how glad she was I was there and wished me well in learning all I needed to. Mariana had told me about Sr. Martha during our first interview. In her time at Magdalena Santa María, Mariana "worked with five or six different administrators.... I think the longest we've ever had someone is three years" (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 53:47-53:54). When the previous principal left after their third year, and a principal search failed to generate a suitable candidate in the spring, Sr. Martha, a member of the religious order that sponsors the school, moved from a faculty position to an administrative one, temporarily.

Then, the school President, John Clark, walked with me into school to help me find Mariana, my teacher-participant. As we approached the front desk, which curved around several offices, he introduced the student worker at the desk and the school secretary sitting behind him, before requesting my visitor badge. Everyone seemed at ease with John, including the students in the hallways. At my old school, the president only met with influential people, like corporate partners or donors, and students and faculty alike often put on a calm reserve around her. Yet, no one seemed surprised but me that John was walking me personally around the school, answering my questions as he did. John explained that the religious artwork, visible on the walls around the courtyard, was made by students partnering with local organizations. Each year, senior classes designed their own contribution as a class gift leading to graduation.

Students filled the courtyard that morning, sitting on lunch tables and standing by lockers, all of which were outdoors, facing the courtyard. When we made it to the math classroom, the room was empty. So, John walked me back across the courtyard, this time toward the Corporate Work Study Program (CWSP) office, where Mariana had her desk. To the right of the CWSP door, I could see what looked like a garden, with short, brightly painted fencing. Inside, I would later learn, lived an endangered desert tortoise, named Mrs. Oogway, that was tended to by faculty and students. This vulnerable tortoise was as at home in the school as anyone else, reinforcing for me the welcome of this place. As we entered the CSWP office, staff greeted John, eyes crinkling with warmth, before turning to me with smiles. I was expected, and they seemed glad for my presence.

Mariana October

Mariana October was in her 13th year teaching mathematics at Magdalena Santa María, when I visited her on campus. We had spoken three times previously, in a screening interview and multiple extended interviews on Zoom, as well as several email exchanges. She had chin-length brown hair that fell in curls around her face. She stood a lithe, half a head taller than my 5' 4", which along with her white complexion and northern accent, made her stand out from most of her students. Mariana's stride seemed to match her voice, confident yet gentle. In all the

hours I would spend with her, Mariana never once raised her voice. Her presence was comforting.

Though well-established now, Magdalena Santa María was new when Mariana was sent there as a Magdalena Volunteer. Even from those early years, Mariana would explain to me later in the week, “We have always had a really good mix of strong veteran teachers and... new but super devoted teachers. We always have that mix, and a big part of that is just...good leadership” (Interview, 15 September 2022, min. 57:42-58:01). Mariana lived in community with other Magdalenas during her first two years at the school, and they served as a model of the kind of teacher she thought she needed to be. As a lay person, this created some difficult expectations because “the sisters basically lived at the school, evenings and weekends.... They didn’t have families. School was their life.” (Informal conversation, 15 September 2022). Mariana described her approach to teaching was similar in her early years. She rarely stopped working. In time, though, she learned she needed to carve out more time for herself outside of school, but after a significant relationship ended recently, Mariana shared that she was grateful to return to her old pace of teaching. Of late, keeping busy was keeping her spirits up.

Mariana had grown up in a blue-collar family in Idaho, where she took dual-credit courses in high school to save money on college tuition. She studied math education at a regional college, and during one summer, she interned in Chicago to learn about urban education. There, she met a Magdalena Volunteer for the first time, who inspired her to apply for the Magdalena Volunteer Corps after college. When she was accepted, Mariana decided to serve for two years as a Magdalena Volunteer at Magdalena Santa María. Though the Magdalenas are Catholic, and the Magdalena Volunteers are grounded in Catholic spirituality, Mariana wasn’t raised Catholic. But, she explained,

> When I started learning about Magdalena spirituality, I just remember having this... overwhelming feeling of like, “I've been Magdalena for my *whole* life, and I didn't know it!” I just feel... so fortunate that I found, I just really connected with ...our spirituality...We just have such a sense of like, “This is our *shared* journey.” This ...connects into social justice, where it's not like the problem exists *out there*, but like, the problem’s *ours*, and *together*...together, we're seeking a solution that is good for, like, both of us and for all of us, and, um, you know, the Magdalenas...it's like we *walk with* our students and others. (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 29:50-30:25, *emphasis* original).

I would come to learn that this sense of accompaniment suffused Mariana’s practice both as a teacher and an instructional leader. She walked with others, listening to students’ stories about life inside and outside the classroom, observing her colleagues’ practice to learn from them, and collaborating within and beyond her department to align best practices throughout the school.

Though she never described herself as a critical educator, Mariana’s practice reflected many of the characteristics of critical pedagogy outlined in Chapter 1, especially high levels of engagement, cross-curricular and multigrade-level alignment, and aimed at transforming oppression. Moreover, as an instructional leader she mentored her colleagues in pursuing these practices and contributed to decisions about new hires and community partnerships, which she sought to ensure would share a common vision for the direction of the school. Even when her colleagues did not express such alignment in their practice, and perhaps especially when they did not, Mariana always spoke about them using collective language (e.g., “we,” “our shared journey,” “together”), suggesting a collectivistic ethic where responsibility for change was shared. Consistent with Magdalena spirituality, Mariana perceived problems of practice for any colleague not as other people’s problems, but “the problem’s *ours*, and *together*...together, we’re

seeking a solution that is good for, like, both of us and for all of us" (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 30:10-30:25, *emphasis* original).

Within the classroom, everything she did as a teacher seemed intentional, from the tone of voice she used with students (calm, never raised) to the placement of materials around class (like dry erase boards interspersed on walls around the room and dry erase markers laid on pairs of desks, to facilitate maximum collaboration) to the way she graded papers (using equitable grading[18] practices with her department and school colleagues). She insisted, however, things didn't start out that way. She was ready to quit after her first year at Magdalena Santa María, but paying attention to her students and their learning needs changed her mind. As she recalled in our first interview,

> I remember, you know, after my first year teaching, I had been to summer school. And on the first day of summer school, I called my mom before. I'm like on my way to work for that first day, and I said, "You know mom if...I don't see students learning by the end of this summer, I'm going to stop teaching, because they deserve a teacher who can help them learn, and I want to be, I want to be that teacher." And I remember, you know, at the end of the summer...we had given a pre- and post-test, and I could see...the results of their learning, and I thought, "Oh my gosh! They learned!" And you know, that's ...what I wanted.... I never want to have a classroom environment where students are prevented to learn, and they told me [they learned]. I was really struggling with that my first year.
>
> And then, the Santa María Network at the time, they offered workshops called "High Impact Strategies," [pauses, then shakes head affirmatively] "High Impact Instructional Strategies," and I went to that, after my first year teaching. I went to that two years in a row, and it just fundamentally changed [paused thinking] Like, now I had all these instructional tools to help keep students engaged that were also fun, and that that was like the change that they needed. I just needed really strong instructional practices, because students want to learn. All students want to learn. They just need, like, avenues in which it feels fun. In which it feels safe, and which is not monotonous. And so, I really think that like *that* PD, [short pause] I wouldn't still be teaching without that. And I *learned* all of those. Like, I was an *education* major. So, I did *learn* all those, but um, it's like one thing to learn it when you're not, like, practicing it. And it's, like, a whole other thing to be living this out, *every* single day. And [pauses thoughtfully. Shakes head left to right, as though gesturing "no" to herself] it's just kind of like, I wasn't able to, like, use what I had learned in university. I don't know. So, it just helped to have it that year, after my first year of teaching. [Stops speaking and rests head on chin, looking off to side contemplatively.] (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 8:05-10:25, *emphasis* original)

Mariana's commitment to her students' learning has persisted ever since, shining through especially during the pandemic months of 2020. While the school went remote and chose to engage in asynchronous instruction in the fall of 2020, Mariana researched what would best serve her students' learning needs. What she read indicated that synchronous instruction would better serve her students than asynchronous instruction, and the wider SMN advised the same. So, she asked her school's administrators to allow her to return to synchronous remote instruction, though none of her colleagues joined her. Her administrators supported this request, and her classes, alone, returned to synchronous instruction in the fall of 2020.

---

[18] Equitable grading is a collaborative approach to grading that aims to vertically and horizontally aligned grading practices within schools and learning communities. For more information see Joe Feldman's (2018) book, *Grading for Equity*.

That same school year, Mariana started a new form of professional development, the Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative (SVMI). SVMI worked on the cohort model, training entire math departments over two consecutive years. Many of their teaching methods come from the Japanese Lesson Studies, which involves collaborative planning and analysis of lessons (Doig & Groves, 2011). Her school was chosen in 2020, along with my former SMN school, to join SVMI. And while nearly the whole department at my former school left the SMN, after completing the two-year training sequence, Mariana's department requested to add a third year of training, to support them as they began to integrate more of what they learned and also scale it across the faculty. This training reinforced Mariana's commitment to collaboration, both with colleagues and among her students. The week after I visited campus, the math department was scheduled to fly to a SMN school in the Midwest, where they would observe other math teachers in action, per the SVMI training program.

On numbers of occasions during my week on campus, math faculty brought up this training program, often mentioning how excited they were to see water. "Let's go on a walk around a lake!" suggested Mariana to her junior colleague. Her face lit with joy as she voiced this desire, and I found myself surprised by the request. Only later did I realize it was probably because lakes didn't exist here in the desert. In a place of scarcity, one couldn't take even the most basic necessities of life for granted.

Power

At the start of seventh bell on Monday, the sun was shining bright outside as Mariana walked from her shared math classroom, where she had just been tutoring students, to her Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meeting. This was Mariana's fifth year serving on the ILT, and her first leading the team without a principal. The interim principal had asked Mariana to lead the team this year, giving her class releases and providing the entire ILT aligned planning periods for collaborations. They scheduled meetings together most days of the week, and assigned daily "homework" to themselves, like observing classes or emailing colleagues. The week I visited, they were working to complete at least 35 observations, visiting every teacher at least once, to identify a problem of practice to address collectively as a faculty during upcoming professional development (PD) sessions, which the ILT would lead.

> Our Instructional Leadership Team has worked really hard to make sure that observations are a norm.... Four years ago, when students were not used to observations at all and the team would walk into a room... all instruction would stop sometimes. The teachers would...introduce us when we came in, and it was like we really just want to create this culture of observation, where learning and teaching just continues to happen, no matter who walks in the room. Now, it's very much like that, where ...the Instructional Leadership Team will be up there [in] classes and kids are doing all kinds of stuff, but like, we're just flies in the room. (Interview, 20 July 2022, min. 24:07-25:00)

As we entered the visual arts classroom, the lights were off, leaving natural light to shine from windows that stretched across the far wall. Student art hung floor to ceiling on nearly every vertical surface in the room. Four women were sitting together at a table to the right of the door, Alissa, a member of the math department there to debrief an ILT initiative from the week prior, and three faculty members of the ILT, one of which was responsible for arranging this beautiful display of color and light. Before taking her seat, Mariana placed a box of cookies in the middle of the teachers, who reached over open laptops and notecards to grab a sweet. Once Mariana was

settled, a short-haired woman in an RBG t-shirt began facilitating the meeting. She followed an agenda familiar to the teachers gathered.

Each item of business was addressed with efficiency and candor. The ILT first reflected on group observations all faculty had engaged in the week prior, meant to normalize faculty to the style of non-judgmental observations that the ILT was engaged in. Non-ILT faculty practice making observations of their colleagues, using the same framework as the ILT, and then written feedback was provided to those observed. The ILT discussed both the response faculty had to observing and being observed, as well as the written feedback that followed. "Glows" and "grows" were named separately, as ways to emphasize what worked well and could work better. The group agreed to create a "cognitive closure" (reflection) google form to use in the future as a way to gather written feedback from colleagues about what they gleaned from such ILT initiatives? At this point, a timer went off, signaling the need to transition soon to the next agenda item. Before doing so, Mariana brought up the role of the principal in future all-faculty observations, and the group agreed that Sr. Martha might serve as "a roamer," moving between groups, rather than staying in one location or with one group.

At this point, having given her report, Kate excused herself from room, and the conversation shifted topics. The light was also growing darker, and thunder could be heard in the distance. Within a few minutes, heavy rain could be heard on the roof and seen through the windows pouring outside. The ILT, unfazed by the weather, continued their conversation, this time discussing developing a webpage to support faculty PD, and they discussed the type of content needed and who would create it. Concern was voiced about keeping the page succinct, so faculty wouldn't be overwhelmed with reading. This led into a conversation about that future PD, and the need for more time to prepare appropriately. They hadn't yet identified a clear problem of practice affecting the entire faculty. If they were going to lead a PD, they needed to be clear about this, and at present, no one in the room felt they had enough data to name such a problem of practice. So, they weren't ready to lead the half-day PD session scheduled for October, and they didn't want to waste anyone's time with an ill-prepared PD. Mariana volunteered to relay this news to administration and suggest to them the DEI committee use the scheduled PD time instead. The three other women agreed with this action plan, before voicing the need to be prepared for the PD after, in November, when they were scheduled to lead a full day of activities with faculty. The conversation paused for a moment here, as the group facilitator worked to articulate a question. "If we aren't judging, how do we get to a problem?" All heads turned to Marianna, then, who explained, that to name a problem of practice, they would have to shift from non-judgmental observations to making a judgment. "We have to decide eventually what 'good' teaching is and then evaluate if it is seen, where or not, and how to change that" (Field Notes, 12 September 2022). To accomplish this, she continued, they needed more observations, with more data recorded in their joint data collection document. So, they discussed and then, agreed to cancel tomorrow's ILT meeting to allow more time for faculty observations. At this, the timer went off again, signaling the end of the meeting. As the ILT packed up, the facilitator reminded them their homework was to read "stages of group development."

Analysis. Though neither Mariana nor the ILT members called it such, they were clearly leading the faculty in a form of action research (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009), directed at improving the quality of teaching. Action research is often concerned with social justice and is grounded in the critical theoretical tradition (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). Teacher-practitioners engage in action research by collaborating in the study their own practice to

generate theories grounded in their local realities. Because this form of research is driven by practitioners, it "is more likely to facilitate change based on the knowledge they create" (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009, p. 5). Through an iterative process of data collection, analysis, action, and reflection the ILT was working to develop faculty skills in teaching practice.

This action research process began as a direct response to a problem posed to Magdalena Santa María by the SMN, which regularly evaluates the mission effectiveness of each network school. A key part of mission effectiveness is preparing all students "to enter and graduate from college" (SMN, 2022a). "Our Mission Effectiveness Review came back last year, and one of the things that they said is that...the quality of instruction is different in a variety of classrooms" (Interview, 15 September 2022, min. 54:15-54:33). A strict reading of this evaluation would indicate that to better fulfill its mission, as indicated by the SMN, Magdalena needed to standardize the quality of instruction across classrooms. One strategy for accomplishing this would be to improve the practice of the worst-performing teachers. However, Mariana seemed to understand the goal differently. As she explained,

> We talk about a mission here all the time.... There's definitely...the type of students we serve, the types of families we serve... like we want to get them to college. You know? ...But there's also a really important part of the mission that I think...it's about...training and raising up *very* effective teachers. (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 48:46-48:53, 49:26-49:55, *emphasis* original)

More than simply raising the floor for the lowest-performing teachers, Mariana suggested the ILT take a more holistic approach, first deciding "what 'good' teaching is, and then" evaluating where it is expressed by faculty at Magdalena Santa María, in order to "[raise] up *very* effective teachers." This was a more critical approach insomuch as it did not assume power hierarchies by problematizing a few teachers and ignoring others deemed effective. Rather, this process looked systemically at *all* faculty practice to identify teachers' strengths and help them *all* grow collectively.

This work was personal for Mariana, who understands good teaching as a "vocation," which in the Catholic lexicon, indicates a kind of divine calling or purpose for one's life.

> I think, over time, my vocation was really, ebbed into that [story of the Magdalena founder, who was dedicated to good teaching], where I just see like, we *have* to have really effective teaching in our teachers, *in* our classrooms, *for* students, and that's really one of the most important parts of our mission. (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 50:46-51:07, *emphasis* original)

To do right *for* students, required teaching well in classrooms and equipping teachers with the skills to do so.

As the leader of the ILT, reporting to the school President and Principal, Mariana recognized that she had a powerful role in fulfilling this mission and calling. "I know that I get to share my voice and my ideas with the President and the principal all of the time. It's sort of built into my job" (Interview, 15 September 2022, min 47:11-26). Her ILT colleagues recognized this too, turning to her during Monday's meeting, both to clarify best practice and to communicate directly with administrators. Though she was confident in working with administrators and competent in her knowledge of teaching practice, Mariana seemed reserved about assuming such a powerful, pseudo-administrative role. In a later conversation, she explained to me that she wanted to remain on faculty, rather than transition into administration, a shift she sometimes felt pressured to make.

This tension between faculty and administrative identity may have been especially prescient this school year, as it was the first that Mariana was leading the ILT, rather than an administrator.

> Through the Instructional Leadership Team, we, as the team, decide what's important, and we have full reign to implement that at our school. Um, and that is partly because the principals are on, or at least have been on our team in the past, and so they are part of the decision making as well. So, we implement it together. This is the only year that we don't have that principal on my team, and so, I guess there might be a time when something we implement, they say, "Oh! We don't want to do that." Um, but that hasn't happened yet, and hopefully it won't happen. (Interview, 15 September 2022, min 18:52-19:34)

This role came about largely because of administrative turnover. After three years in leadership, the former principal resigned at the end of last school year, leaving Magdalena Sr. Martha to serve as interim principal. Sr. Martha knew Mariana well, having worked alongside her for years, and she trusted Mariana to lead the ILT, leaving Sr. Martha to focus on other responsibilities, like the burgeoning DEI committee and hiring a permanent principal.

Yet, despite such high levels of trust and personal empowerment, Mariana clearly frames her leadership role as a form of power-with other members of the ILT: "*we*, *as the team*, decide what's important", "*we* have full reign", and "*we* implement it *together*." At the same time, Mariana also values the autonomy her role allows. "I would personally find it really hard to go to school where I didn't have as much autonomy, because now I'm used to working in a place where we can try it. And if they work great, and if they don't work and say, we tried it and it didn't work and it's okay. It's like research" (Interview, 15 September 2022, min. 59:21-59:40). While we still see her use of collective nouns – "*We* can try it" "*we* tried" – Mariana acknowledges that she values autonomy because it lets her experiment, to learn what works best, "like research." More than seeing her faculty as empty vessels to fill with knowledge, Mariana's approach to instructional leadership reflects a belief that her team can and should learn together how to facilitate learning from and with the wider faculty. They are all teacher-learners, and the power she has, she shares with others, for the sake of their students.

Citizenship

Tuesday, Class Color Day, began with freshmen Integrated Math. As I walked toward Mariana's classroom, I passed a small pond that had formed in the middle of the courtyard, following yesterday's storm. The ground was too parched to absorb the water overnight, and someone had filled the pond with a collection of multi-colored rubber duckies. I appreciated the humor and was laughing to myself when I entered Mariana's classroom.

The desks were arranged facing forward in three rows, each two desks wide. Guided by the best practices learned in SVMI, the Math Department was in its first year of de-tracked instruction.[19] This made every lesson fresh for Mariana, and she seemed to be particularly energized this morning. Perhaps she appreciated the rubber duckies at well. I didn't ask. No students had yet arrived to class, and so, as I booted up my laptop in the corner of the room, I asked about the ILT meeting yesterday and her comment about needing to decide what good

---

[19] De-tracking is the intentional, classroom-level integration of mixed-ability students with the aim of providing quality curriculum to all students, rather than students deemed high-ability. It is a response to historic segregation of students by ability and identity (e.g., honors, college prep, vocational), leading to differential life outcomes. For a short history of de-/tracking, see Marueen T. Hallihan (2006).

teaching is. Mariana's energy downshifted as she explained "that it is hard to coach veteran teachers. She wished she could coach teachers one on one. Sometimes seeing a veteran teacher, or any teacher, teaching in a way that could be better makes her sad. This was said with feeling" (Field notes, Informal conversation before class, 13 September 2022). Following this comment, she opened the door to class, and the kids entered, matching her in red t-shirts and jeans. The students grabbed binders and markers from a shelf in the back of class, then sat in assigned seats around the room. As the students took their places, it became clear they were seated with partners. Mariana stood at the door greeting them by name, with murmured "Hello" and "Welcome!" that grew more animated as more arrived.

The class began with a student-led prayer and continued into a series of critical thinking exercises. Students practiced old skills and new, working in pairs and small groups as Mariana walked the room observing student work, periodically whispering small affirmations or feedback to students. After each problem, she asked the class for insights or questions. After a particularly tricky problem, Mariana asked one girl, Lisa, in a pair she had been observing, to write the equation on the board, so the class could see. "She then hands [Lisa] the Smart Board marker. They ask for affirmation, gesturing uncertainty like 'You sure about this?,' and [Mariana] shakes her head ['yes'] and sends them. [Lisa] goes to the board and writes two different equations to symbolize the data" (Field notes, First Bell, 13 September 2022). Her equations represented the data, as Mariana had seen it would, and Lisa returned to her seat smiling to herself, after she explained her reasoning to the class. The lesson continued like this, sharing knowledge, analyzing each other's work, practicing skills, and affirming students. "Oh my gosh! You all make me so happy. Look what else I saw from two students!" (Field Notes, First Bell, 13 September 2022). Never once did Mariana repeat what a student said, even when they responded to a prompt with quiet voices. This was consistent with what Mariana had explained to me earlier, "We should never say what a kid can say.... I try to be very intentional about not repeating what a kid can say." (Informal Discussion Before School, 13 September 2022). As the bell rung and students were cleaning up, Mariana approached a girl in the front of the classroom, "You did so *well*! *So* well." The girl was standing straighter as she left the room.

A few minutes later, class was empty, and Mariana handed me a packet of violet worksheets titled "ILT Observation Tool (Practice Rounds)." Space was given on each worksheet to write the class, learning objectives, teacher actions, student actions, and task. Without any fanfare, Mariana asked if I was comfortable going on observation rounds with her. We then walked across the yard, where the duckies still held court, to observe a faculty member, as they were instructing a group of students Mariana knew well.

Mariana and I took up places standing in the back of the room, behind the students. The teacher stood lecturing at the front of class by a dry erase board, around which rows of student desks curled in a semicircle. The instructor startled and then stiffened briefly, when we entered, before returning to their lecture. Occasionally, the teacher wrote key concepts on the board. Students had notebooks out, though few wrote many notes as they listened to this instructor talk. Several had glazed looks. Two students whispered to each other.

Mariana skimmed her eyes back and forth, slowly taking notes on her own worksheet. I could see her paper filling up. Every few minutes, the teacher posed a rhetorical question, moving on before anyone responded. Sometimes, the teacher assured them an answer was already in their notes. A few students reacted by skimming their notebooks for answers, but most remained silent, avoiding eye contact with the teacher. After fifteen minutes, Mariana moved to leave. When she did, the teacher called on a boy directly, "Josué, what do you have?" I was

startled. This was the first time the teacher had called a student by name since we walked in the room. The boy clamored for a response, finding first one wrong answer, then another, as Mariana continued moving deliberately toward the door.

As soon as we are both outside and the door clicked shut behind me, Mariana declared in an angry whisper, "That wasn't even the boy's name!" She moved across the courtyard in long brisk strides, as though wanting to get away from the room. After she reached the far side of the yard, beyond the pond, where damp edges showed signs the water had started to recede, her pace slowed. "They've been very receptive to coaching so far. They seem eager to learn." Mariana opened the door for me, and then, turned to a fresh page in her packet. It was time for a new observation.

A few hours later, Mariana and I were sitting in the CWSP office chatting about the day. She never mentioned the class again. When the bell rang, a mass of students passed by in two directions, some flowing from the cafeteria, through the CWSP office, outside toward the courtyard, and others flowing from class inward toward the cafeteria. A few students split from the crowd, walking into the CWSP office looking for staff. When a short boy walked in, glancing into a series of office doors, Mariana stood up abruptly and walked toward him. She stopped in front of him and crouched down to his level to address him face to face.

Mariana: "Josué, did you ever tell [teacher] your name?"

Josué: [shakes head and murmurs quietly] no

Mariana: [looking directly at him, in a firm tone] "It's okay to tell *any* adult your actual name."

Mariana continued talking with Josué for a few moments, making sure he understood her meaning, before standing up and walking back to her desk. (Field Notes, 13 September 2022)

Analysis. As I discussed in Chapter 1, citizenship is about action, not status; citizens engage in civic behaviors. Yet civic learning (Lee, White, & Dong, 2021), aimed at preparing citizens for civic life (Stitzlein, 2021), often attributes citizenship to an unspecified marker of adulthood and in so doing limits the urgency civic educators may feel to prepare youth for civic life (DeCesare, Forthcoming). Conversely, more critical civic educators may feel greater urgency to prepare their students for civic action today. In this vignette from Mariana's classroom, I suggest we see this anticipatory frame is born out.

The teacher we observed engaged in banking pedagogies (Freire, 1970/1993), which left their students disconnected from the learning process. Rather than inviting students to participate in dialogue or practice skills connected to their own experience, they talk at them and asks them to recite rote facts which they had previously provided. The teacher fails even to name a single student, let alone the wider world that Freire (1970/1993) asserts is essential to critical praxis. As the ILT leader, who knows Josué, Mariana is understandably troubled by what she observes. Magdalena Santa María has been in session for a month and a half, yet the teacher does not show evidence of knowing their students' names. This shows a lack of value for who their students are (Cooper et al., 2017) and, given their white identity, functions as a racialized microaggression toward their students (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). Further, their banking pedagogy reinforces oppressive power dynamics (Freire, 1970/1993) which function to silence students. Even when

Josué is called by the wrong name, he chooses not to correct the teacher but comply, albeit unsuccessfully, with their request for regurgitated content.

Given her critical orientation, it makes sense that Mariana's first intervention is to affirm Josué and his power. As noted in Chapter 1, criticality is fundamentally concerned with power, because power wielded over, rather than with others is oppressive. Accordingly, critical pedagogy seeks to transform oppression by naming and resisting oppressive uses of power and fostering humanizing relationships (Freire, 1970/1993; Sepulveda, 2011) that recognize students and teachers are all citizens, with the capacity for and responsibility to take action that serves the common good (DeCesare, Forthcoming). By telling Josué "It's okay to tell *any* adult your actual name" she acknowledges his positionality is distinct from adults, particularly a white teacher. Though he is no less a citizen than his teacher, Josué is perhaps more susceptible to silencing by such a figure, who has historically been ascribed more cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 2016; Yosso, 2005) due to hegemonic whiteness. Mariana further resists this cultural hegemony by naming an explicit strategy for how to reclaim his power in a situation where he may feel a teacher, or other white and/or adult figure exercises power-over him. By helping Josué learn to assert himself, Mariana affirms his status as a full citizen, who deserves to be acknowledged and included in the community. And more, she reveals that Magdalena Santa María is a community that cares about more than rote content. Relationships, identity, power-sharing, and student agency matter too.

This is further evidenced in the way Mariana conducts her own class – welcoming students by name, fostering collaboration between learners, providing repeated opportunities for students to learn from each other, and illustrating through students' own work multiple ways to solve problems. In our first extended interview, Mariana explained that this approach to teaching was aligned with her understanding of social justice.

Mariana: I think I have so much [pauses] space for movement forward in *that* within my classroom, and some of it might just be like, for me, adjusting my idea my definition of what social justice is for my own self. Because a lot of times, I think, "Oh my gosh! It's like a super awesome, project-based class, where, you know, my students are doing math, but they're also, like, I don't know, you know, creating a water system for someone," you know? Um, and so there's really like project-based classrooms that are very far like from, I'm not even close. *But* there are other areas that ...I think, also define social justice, which are at the heart of why I do what I do. And it's, you know, mathematics right now is a gateway. Mathematics, the way that it's used in colleges, um, it's very much an injustice that prevents some people from reaching that dream. [shakes head affirmatively emphatically]

Kathleen Sellers: Hmm

Mariana: And so, working toward, you know, I want all of my students to be able to *pass* those math classes...in college and then, also... [pauses thinking] Other work about mindset happens within the classroom, in regard to social justice. Um, being able to find value in *all* ideas, we do that when, you know, anytime that we're *really*, really focused on this in my department, allowing students opportunities to *analyze* each other's

work and to *see* how *this* student solves *this* problem differently; *this* student solves *this* problem differently. [gestures back and forth, as though to specific students sitting in different places in front of her] And being able to have students *find value* in different ideas. And that *is* part of social justice, valuing other people's ideas, and not just in a phone. So, those are all things that are *very* big pieces of social justice.

Kathleen Sellers: Mm-hmm [shakes head yes]

Mariana: I think sometimes I have to, like, convince myself, that those are *just* as important as those other...project-based classes, where there's, like, visible action or something visibly being created. [hand is resting on her cheek, looking thoughtful, while nodding head gently in affirmation] (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 1:06:03-1:09:07, *emphasis* original)

Mariana named project-based learning as a means to address felt needs in the community, like water scarcity, and recognized this as a form of social justice education that *could* fit in her class. Indeed, she seemed to long for this kind of practice. Yet, she also acknowledged the dispositional qualities of social justice education that *already were* practiced by her department and were incorporated into her instruction: helping students to learn from each other, seeing that there are many pathways to learning and problem-solving, and helping students to value different ideas.

These habits of mind extended beyond modern technology (i.e., smartphones), that allow us to find answers at our fingertips. Rather, in Mariana's reconning, social justice demanded we socialize students to particular ways of learning and seeing the world that are receptive to learning from and with others. This wouldn't generate "visible action or something...created" in the short term, like would project-based learning, but would allow students to achieve measurable outcomes in the longer-term, like passing "gateway" courses in college. This longer view recognizes the systemic, longitudinal nature of schooling and the critical role that mathematics plays in opening and closing doors to students, especially from marginalized communities, to higher-paying careers. As such, the very relational, collaborative, engaged learning environment that Mariana fosters in her classroom, and desires for other teachers to practice at Magdalena, reflects a fundamentally critical approach pedagogy.

Aimed at Transforming Oppression

Thursday was Mariana's light day, which, like most Santa María teachers, meant her calendar was filled with meetings. The first on the docket was with Susie, the junior member of the school's development office, and Kate, a fellow math department instructor. While Kate and Mariana had taught together for over a decade, Susie was new to Magdalena, and all three had learned earlier in the week that Susie's boss, the head of development, had tendered her resignation. Mariana called her "irreplaceable" because of how effective she was at fundraising, and this news put everyone on edge.

The purpose of their meeting was to discuss a $10K grant and professional development partnership between the Magdalena math department and their state's flagship university. The school needed to decide whether to apply for the grant and if so, toward what end. The application was due in a month, and the three women gathered for this meeting were integral to that decision. Mariana had recently completed her master's degree at the university partner for

this grant and knew the faculty well. "We get some of our best [professional] development from them." (Field Notes, 15 September 2022). Both Kate and Mariana recognized the potential of this collaboration. As soon as Mariana sat down to the meeting, she informed Susie, "I have like a million questions." She then went on to explain that "This idea feels like it is being imposed on us," because of the many strictures of the grant, relative to the high levels of skills and recent innovations of the department (Field Notes, 15 September 2022).

Susie was ready to engage these concerns and responded that the purpose of the grant was to prepare college-going Latina/o/x students for college-level math. At first, she asserted it's a "$10K grant to use as you want," but then, Susie revised her claim. "Some money can be used as the school wants." She named a freshman calculator program as one possible use and continued "Other monies are specifically for faculty support. Part of the grant program prepares a staff member to teach dual-enrollment pre-calc." Kate and Mariana leaned into the conversation energetically, peppering Susie with questions about the program requirements. She shared that the grant would require at least twenty students to enroll in the dual-enrollment course, and if completed successfully, students wouldn't receive credit at the flagship school but rather, a regional community college.

Mariana looked concerned at this and shared about her own experiencing taking dual-enrollment courses in high school. She explained how her local college in Idaho wouldn't accept her credits, making her choice to attend a different school, further from home, more appealing for its greater affordability. Mariana voiced her concern that this partnership would place their students at risk of similar restricted credits, which prompted the group of women to wonder about the enrollment rates of Magdalena students at *all* regional colleges. Susie didn't know the answer but promised to make inquiries with the college counseling department right away, a department, she reminded Kate and Mariana, that would partner in the grant with the math department if they decided to move the application forward.

Susie went on to share that other stipulations of the grant would include Magdalena designating a "site coordinator" to help manage the program, and a faculty member from the university having to participate in on-site instruction with other faculty of Magdalena. Some Magdalena faculty would also *have* to participate in specific professional development activities identified by the university. These strictures raised more questions. "Could they have two sections of students?" "Could they have more than twenty students be enrolled?" Both Kate and Mariana voiced the possibility of incorporating this program into their revised integrated math sequence, making it possible for all Magdalena students to graduate with college math credit, if the partnership allowed enough students to participate. It would require, though, that rising juniors take the class as a summer credit, at least until they could align their full course sequence a few years from now. After voicing this potential, the questions continued for several more minutes. "Who would serve as a 'site coordinator'?" "Could the grant be used to provide a stipend and release time to the participating faculty?" "What kind of teacher do they send us?" Mariana punctuated this last question casually but firmly, as though her statement was self-evident, "We do not do 'non-woke' here."

Susie responded to each question she could with a cheerfulness and aplomb that surprised me. Those questions for which she didn't have a response she wrote down in a Moleskine to share in her next meeting with the university grant coordinator. As the questions got more detailed and discipline specific, Mariana asked, "Can Kate and I join you in this meeting?" She suggested it would be more clarifying for everyone if they heard directly from the university about the program and the kind of faculty they might want to provide. Susie agreed that getting

their direct input would be best. Mariana and Kate said they would also plan a math department meeting to solicit further questions from their colleagues. Mariana started listing the kinds of questions they anticipated from their colleagues, "Can students arrive at solutions in multiple ways? Does the teacher use math talks? How often can students work collaboratively?" At this, Kate interjected, "The answer better be 'every day.'" After listing a further few questions, and realizing Susie was looking a bit flummoxed, they offered, "We'll help you with the language." Susie offered her thanks, and as she began packing up her notebook, Mariana reflected, "We've spent two years revolutionizing our department with SVMI. We don't want to be held back" (Field Notes, 15 September 2022).

Analysis. This meeting revealed the critical consciousness (Freire, 1970/1993) of Mariana and her department colleague, Kate. These veteran faculty members shared a vision for the kind of pedagogy they wanted to foster in their department—collaborative, engaging, student-centered, and equitable. They also understood that their faculty, shaped by their joint training by the Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative, were skilled, knowledgeable, and committed to maintaining the de-tracked instruction which they had initiated that year. Bringing anyone into their department that did not share these values and practices, including bringing in anyone that was not "woke," was perceived as an obstacle to the revolution underway in their department. That revolution, shaped by SVMI, included de-tracking all classes, increasing opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, fostering growth mindsets (Dweck, 2008) in all students, and engaging in "equitable grading" practices (Feldman, 2018). This revolution was so significant to the mission of the school, and the means by which it was advanced so effective, as to lead the school's administrators to invite Mariana to lead the ILT, the first time a faculty member had done so in the school's history. Beyond revealing their critical consciousness, this meeting also revealed the systemic factors that Mariana perceived as aiding or obstructing her practice. Specifically, funding, time, culture, identity, knowledge, and collaboration were identified implicitly or explicitly as impacting teacher practice.

Each of these factors aligns with a form of capital – social, economic, intellectual (Bourdieu, 2016), and/or cultural (Yosso, 2005)—which has particular value for social re/production vis-à-vis teacher practice (Bourdieu, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 2016). While Mariana and her colleagues sought to leverage these forms of capital to interrupt systems of oppression (e.g., barriers to accessing humanizing, college-level mathematics education and college credits), the concerns they voiced suggested that they were consciously resisting systems designed to exclude their students from elite schooling. Specifically, they recognized college-level mathematics instruction, eligibility for college credits at bachelor's degree-granting institutions, and culturally competent instructors (vis-à-vis "woke" faculty) as desirable features of a school-university partnership likely to be resisted by the grant-funder. As such, they used this meeting to strategize ways to ensure capital would accrue toward their students' and their students' educational goals, rather than reproduce social norms that privilege communities from which their students would be excluded.

It's notable that this meeting took place on the cusp of a financially destabilizing change in the organization. The longtime head of development, an "irreplaceable" colleague, was leaving, and her replacement had not been identified. Given the distinct skills and professional networks of this staff member, coupled with the dependence of the Santa María business model on philanthropy, this news impacted the entire organization. The women at this meeting, given how well they understood the financial workings of the school as veteran educators or fundraisers, may have felt particularly vulnerable. Certainly, a tension was openly expressed

between the need for department funding and the onerous and potentially threatening requirements of the grant. “This idea feels like it is being imposed on us,” (Field Notes, 15 September 2022). Perhaps because of this, both Kate and Mariana came to the conversation with clear expectations about their pedagogical commitments and non-negotiables (i.e., students can arrive at solutions in multiple ways; any university faculty member will use math talks; students can work collaboratively *every day*; faculty partners from the university will be ‘woke.’), as well as ideas for how to make this funding serve their community’s long-term interests (e.g., offer two sections of pre-calculus, not one; include enough students to allow all students currently not on track to graduate with college math credit to become eligible for college math credit; ensure earned credits transfer to *all* colleges Magdalena students are likely to attend; provide material supports to the faculty and staff tasked with facilitating this program; and ensure professional development serves the needs of the department). These expectations and ideas were shared by Kate and Mariana, who posed questions and interjections with a fluidity and consistency that is only bourn of communal trust and common cause.

Mariana’s particular commitment to this cause was directly related to her experience as a student from a working-class family, like her students. She faced obstacles to receiving college credit for dual-credit courses she took in high school, and though it had been nearly two decades since that experience, Mariana remembered how that obstacle shaped her educational opportunities. This made her immediately conscious of a similar risk posed to her own students if this grant was not crafted in a way to safeguard against such systemic obstacles. By sharing this educational struggle with her students, Mariana was more conscious of and responsive to their needs. Likewise, when educators act in solidarity with their students, whether that solidarity is born out of common identity and/or authentic relationship, they are better positioned to recognize both how to advocate and for what to advocate, to transform systems of oppression.

While the intensity of their common cause might have contributed to antagonism or division in situations of differential power or mistrust, the consistent tenor of the conversation remained engaged, energized, and positive. Susie was treated as a co-conspirator[20], trusted with advancing the vision of the math department. When she didn’t have answers, she expressed her ignorance, and when it became clear that seeking answers would require an expertise she lacked, Susie welcomed Mariana and Kate more deeply into the conversation with the university partners, rather than seeking to maintain control of this communicative function. And Mariana and Kate responded by declaring their intent to involve the wider math department, a choice to which Susie was receptive. This illustrated an organizational expression of power-with, rather than power-over. The culture of collaboration, shared “woke” (i.e., critical) vision and pedagogical practices, high levels of trust (within and beyond the department), and long-term view placed the math department generally, and Mariana’s practice specifically, in a stronger position to sustain and build on the changes that had revolutionized their department over the previous two years.

---

[20] Coconspiracy is a concept that is common in intersectional social justice spaces. According to Bettina Love (2019), a coconspirator leverages their power to support the aims of others who lack their privilege. This is distinct from ally-ship, which “is working toward something that is mutually beneficial and supportive to all parties involved” (Love, 2019, p. 117). The coconspirator puts their own interests aside in order to advance the interests of marginalized people.

Conclusion

This portrait of Mariana reveals that her practice is fundamentally animated by a commitment to social justice, and her conception of social justice is characterized by a collectivistic ethic consistent with her formation in Magdalena, Catholic spirituality. She doesn't define or suggest solutions to problems of teaching practice individually. Rather, "the problem's *ours*, and *together*...together, we're seeking a solution that is good for... both of us and for all of us." As Magdalenas, "we *walk with* our students and others" (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 10:10-30:25, *emphasis* original). This collectivist ethic is consistent with Enrique Sepulveda's critical pedagogical notion of *acompañamiento* (Sepulveda, 2011), which emphasizes solidarity with and responsiveness to students, especially youth with transnational identities, like those attending Magdalena Santa María. The vignettes in this portrait illustrate how Mariana empowers her students and colleagues, affirms the citizen-identity of her students, and transforms oppression through her work as a teacher and instructional leader.

In her interactions with the ILT, Mariana embodies power-with others. When the Santa María Network observed that not all teachers were equally effective, Mariana resisted the temptation to problematize the worst-performing teachers, a choice that would have created hierarchies among faculty and reinforced differential power dynamics. Rather, she encouraged the ILT to resist judgment in their observations and look, instead, for faculty strengths, so that together, they could leverage these strengths to help the entire faculty grow. This positioned the entire faculty as a potential source for solutions, and therefore, contributing to power-with each other. Faculty were empowered to pursue good teaching, and innovative pathways toward it, by virtue of the school's missional commitment to good teaching and high levels of trust between administrators and faculty, particularly trust to attempt and learn from curricular innovations. The high levels of administrator turnover, relative to the low levels of turnover among faculty, may also have resulted in faculty empowerment, as they accrued greater social, intellectual, and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2016; Yosso, 2005) relative to administration. This was particularly clear with Mariana, who was one of the most experienced faculty on campus and was implicitly trusted by her school President, John Clark, and interim principal, Sr. Martha.

Mariana used her power to empower others, both faculty and students, to engage in citizenship behaviors. This was not an easy process, though, particularly when Mariana was confronted with examples of teachers exercising power-over students, like happened with Josué. When she observed her colleague's banking pedagogies (Freire, 1970/1993) and racial microaggression (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012) toward Josué, Mariana was visibly upset. She recognized that such teaching practices did not serve students' best interests. Yet, she restrained herself from outright condemning her colleague, emphasizing instead their willingness to learn. Later on, when she encountered Josué on campus, Mariana immediately took action to empower him to respond decisively to such teacher-behaviors in the future. She framed this intervention in terms of responding to "adults," indicating that citizenship behaviors, like affirmatively asserting one's cultural identity, are appropriate, regardless of age. By doing so, she also affirms that Magdalena is a community that cares about relationships, identity, power-sharing, and student agency. The ideal Magdalena student should act like the full citizen they are. Just as the ideal Magdalena teacher should recognize the full citizenship of their students and support their full participation in society, a particularly challenging task, given the systemic nature of oppression.

As illustrated in the final vignette, regarding her meeting about a school-university partnership grant, Mariana is conscious of systemic oppression unfolding through financial scarcity, elite forms of schooling, access to advanced coursework, the financial advantages of

earning advanced college credit at elite institutions, and access to pedagogically skilled and culturally relevant (i.e., “woke”) instructors. She was able to resist and potentially even transform oppression (vis-à-vis the conditions of the grant) because she and her colleagues were able to name this reality and respond proactively to it. This placed them in a more powerful position to use the grant to serve the interests of their students rather than the interests of the elites sponsoring the grant and proposing school-university partnership. Mariana’s personal experience of growing up in a working-class family and benefiting from dual-credit coursework enhanced her critical consciousness about the obstacles and opportunities associated with this grant application and helped her identify strategic actions with her colleagues to maximize the chances that this grant would serve her students’ needs. Further, because she shared a common, critical pedagogical vision with her colleague Kate, and because Susie, her colleague in the development office, was willing to serve this vision, rather than prioritize the financial scarcity of the school, Mariana was more powerfully positioned to advocate for her students’ needs by laying the foundation for a school-university partnership that would advance systemic changes to mathematics education at Magdalena and seek to advantage her students for years to come.

Unveiling

I emailed Mariana a draft of her portrait the week before Christmas, while she was entering her winter break. A few weeks later, after she returned to school in January, we met one afternoon to discuss her reaction to the portrait. We used the questions from the Unveiling Protocol to guide our conversation (See Appendix F).

Like each of our prior Zoom meetings, Mariana logged in from her school cubicle in the CWSP office. More than in prior conversations, we took a while checking in before starting our formal conversation. It had been nearly four months since we had seen each other, and it felt like I was seeing an old colleague. Periodically, familiar staff would walk by in the background, sometimes distracting me from the conversation. Mariana used earbuds, making our conversation more private. Though, her coworkers could still hear what she said, if they were listening.

Once we started recording, I asked Mariana how she felt reading the portrait. “It's very strange to read about oneself in research” (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 0:38-0:48), she observed. She went on to explain that she experienced some discomfort reading the text, especially the quotes, which made her self-conscious right now, during the unveiling interview, as she was particularly conscious of her “thinking words or ... pausing words” (min. 1:20-1:25). Reading her own speech had made her more aware of her verbal mannerisms. Yet, after mentioning her present state of mind, she dismissed her response as “shallow,” then on to explain, “I felt sort of nervous that I was presented in a rosy way.... I guess I would hope that that is something that is true of me, but knowing oneself, ...I think sometimes you feel the places where you miss the mark a little bit stronger than the places where you hit the mark” (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 1:49-2:23). Despite this misgiving, she expressed gratitude to me for having put words to things that she wouldn’t have noticed in her own practice.

We continued to discuss the positive tenor of this chapter, and portraiture more generally, for a few more minutes, before I asked if the chapter felt true to her experience. Immediately, Mariana began reflecting on the opening paragraphs of the chapter.

> I think something that really fascinated me is that reading...about my school, as it was described, especially in the first couple of paragraphs. As I was reading it, images...arrived in my brain, and those images were very different than...how I actually perceive and live out and experience my school...It made me feel as if, I guess, maybe I

> just recognize the power of prejudices that are formed based on...different words that are used. (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 4:29-5:18)

She went on to mention some descriptors of Mexican culture that were visible and audible in the school parking lot, from fútbol club symbols to traditional music. Mariana linked her concern to stereotypes, and the way that stereotypes had been leveraged in the past to describe deficit narratives about her students and community. While she acknowledged, “I don't think any of the descriptions are wrong” ((Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 5:50-5:53), she explained that her concern was partly shaped by portrayals she seen previously about her students.

> Something that is tricky, that I can't get away from, is that all schools like ours, we have to make money to remain in school. And a lot of ways in which we make money... [include] a variety of videos and things like that made about our school. And you know, they videotape the community in which our school is in and ... downplay the community or ... look at the community, like the houses and the neighborhoods where these students are coming from, with this impression, and give people who have money to say, “Oh, gosh! Like, yeah, like they *do* need to give to this school. Like, Look where they're living at.” But I live in this community with my students, and so, I guess I just, I see it as *our* neighborhood, not as something poor that needs...to be fixed. (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 7:20-8:31, emphasis original)

Mariana further explained that she didn’t think this chapter was doing that, but in reading it, she was painfully reminded of “all of those other ways in which our school are portrayed to...make people feel sorry for our students and get money” (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 8:55-9:01).

This concern resonated with me strongly, prompting me to share my own experience of such fundraising videos at my former SMN school. One video so insulted students and families, that they organized and successfully pressured the school to take it down. After the school complied, they created a committee of students and family members to guide the creation of future videos and fundraising narratives. As I shared this story, Mariana interjected affirmative comments, especially after describing the video as “tokenizing” and “poverty tourism.” These ideas seemed to resonate with her too. Once I had shared my story, I explicitly asked Mariana if there were places I should change language or descriptions, “because I don't mean to reproduce that same thing (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 11:29-11:37).

“This is very different than that,” (min 12:03-12:05) Mariana assured me, “and different in a good way, and if I had never had those previous images, I don't know that I would have had to make any connections, or even have to think that hard through it” (min. 12:05-12:18). We discussed this cultural dynamic for a few more minutes, and I invited her to let me know if, after the interview, something else occurred to her to improve the quality of the portrait, I welcomed her suggestions. Later in the interview, I repeated this invitation and explained that it was a standing offer, as long as I was still working on the draft and had the ability to make the revision, which would last for at least a few more weeks.

Our conversation then turned to what surprised her in the chapter, my choice of which moments to highlight. She specifically mentioned the teacher observation vignette and raised a concern about that teacher’s consent to be portrayed. “I feel protective over that particular teacher” (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 14:33-14:37), because they did not give permission to be in the study as Mariana had. Further, the way I had originally written the vignette made it possible to identify this teacher, and so, Mariana worried how her colleagues might receive this portrait. “What we did observe was as you had it written” (Unveiling

Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 15:14-15:22), Mariana acknowledged, but she recognized that this truth ethically compromised her relationship with this teacher and other colleagues, because it violated the practices "that we, as a team, have committed to our faculty...trying to create a safe space" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 25:48-25:56). Those commitments respected the fact that "Teaching is so vulnerable, and...it is hard, hard work to build that culture where you can be observed in your classroom" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min.24:55-25:18). Further, she explained that this teacher's background was more complex than I had portrayed. In their life and work, this teacher, Mariana asserted, is "trying to break so many things that went wrong like between...white religious power" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 29:48-29:52) and racially marginalized communities. So, while this vignette illustrated a moment for the teacher's growth, it did not capture the wider truth or goodness of their practice. Further, Mariana suggested that

> If that student had felt empowered to just tell the teacher, like, "You used my wrong name." Like [they] would have 100% been like, "Oh, my God, I'm so sorry, you know, like, Thank you for telling me." And so, there's a lot to write about there in the fact that...the students didn't feel empowered to do that, and all the reasons that that would happen. (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 30:25-30:50)

Accordingly, the text could cause particular harm to this teacher and to the wider community of Magdalena educators, who trust Mariana and depend on her to engage in professional observations without judgment. Further, by emphasizing the student's choice to stay silent, the vignette could better surface relevant questions about student voice.

I responded to this feedback by sharing, first, why I had chosen that vignette and how we might move forward together. I named features of the vignette, which I could recall, off the top of my head, were particularly important for the wider narrative: Mariana's reaction after the observation, her intervention with the student, and the teacher's differing racial identity from Josué. I explained that the identity of the teacher, beyond their whiteness, was not essential to the portrait. As such, I asked if I might revise the vignette to anonymize the class and further anonymize the teacher, making it harder to identify either. After thinking on this for a few moments, Mariana suggested that, instead, I remove any content that would describe the subject or the teacher, save their racial identity, essentially glossing the observation in order to emphasize *her* reaction and interaction with Josué. I agreed to this strategy and added that I would like to write about how we made this choice here, in the unveiling section. Further, I committed to providing her the revised chapter, including the unveiling section, to evaluate in the week ahead. I explained that I wanted her to be comfortable with any revisions, and I would wait on her approval to move forward with a final draft. If she was not comfortable with the revised draft, I explained that we could continue working together to problem solve this further. After we agreed to this plan, I raised the final question in the interview protocol, regarding ways to enhance the accuracy of this work.

Mariana shared that there was one area that could be more accurate. She realized, when she read the chapter, that she had "incorrectly communicated....one of the reasons the location of the school was selected" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 39:47-40:23). In response, she had brainstormed, prior to our conversation, a way to rephrase one sentence to improve the accuracy of the work. She shared that sentence during our interview, and I later incorporated it into the introduction of this chapter. After sharing this correction, she further emphasized that the founders chose to locate Magdalena at the border of the city and the reservation(s) in order "to provide access to both communities" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 40:50-40:54).

Our conversation wondered for a few minutes about the difficulties of writing about culture, given our respective identities as white women. I shared how I discussed this with my advisor, a Latina, who had encouraged me to be more explicit, especially in Chapter Five, when I talked about race and cultural identity. Mariana admitted that she was very sensitive when speaking about culture, a sentiment echoed earlier in the interview, when she reflected on deficit narratives told about her students, and "in a narrative like this one [details about culture] matter a lot" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 42:50-42:53). Further, she acknowledge that writing about a Catholic school like Magdalena, that provides a private "Catholic education to students who couldn't otherwise afford it...that is going to touch on this community of people....We can't really get around it" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 43:17-43:31). Mariana then suggested she was inclined to defer to the expertise of others, particularly those from the cultural community being discussed. Even so, it was here that I repeated my invitation to her to provide further feedback, should she later think of ways I might enhance how I write about culture in this narrative.

Our conversation then took a turn toward a final narrative choice that surprised Mariana: the grant meeting. She explained how she recalled that being such a small part of the week, but it was surprising to see it be made into such a large part of the narrative. I acknowledge this, and explained that in this study, I was really interested in how this moment showed a constructive response to what were often unequal power dynamics between the revenue generating side of school, CWSP, and the academic side of school.

> What was so really fascinating about that meeting was that you guys collaboratively, were like, this interdisciplinary... team that were like, "We're gonna leverage this to our *absolute* advantage." ...And you were...leaning into community partnership at the same time you were resisting it...You were *totally* using your teamwork and knowledge to synchronize a response to serve your students, and it was *so* powerful. (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 51:26-52:06, emphasis original)

I further explained that this topic added to wider conversations about funding Catholic schools and philanthropy generally. I mentioned how Mackenzie Scott was in the news recently, because she gave a large grant without strings attached, a choice that disrupted philanthropic norms and may have ripple effects in the academy. I tied this together by explaining, "when people approach philanthropy differently, even if they're not necessarily in a position of power, but they *make* themselves in a position of power, like, that is *so cool*.... that's why I wrote about that" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 54:40-54:56, emphasis). Mariana smiled at this, and responded, "Okay, yeah. Well, that's...really fun" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 54:57-55:06). I then asked directly if her colleagues would mind their portrayal in this vignette, to which she responded immediately, "100 percent okay!" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 55:12-55:18)

A few moments later, I asked Mariana "What happened with that?" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 55:41-55:42) referring to the grant she had discussed with her colleagues. She explained that she wasn't totally sure. A new Development Director had been hired, about a month earlier, and was still learning the ropes. After my campus visit, Mariana and her colleagues, including her interim principal, had their meeting with the grant partner, who admitted, rather transparently, that so far, the program "has not been going well in any of the schools" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 56:59-57:02). Mariana explained that this conversation left her with the impression that the choice to move forward was up to Magdalena,

and that the grant funder was interested in them but would understand if they didn't move forward, given how it had not yet been successful.

The biggest issue, the funder shared, was that families were upset, when their child didn't do as well in the dual-credit course as they normally did in class. "How does that...jive with like your equitable grading system?" I asked (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 58:26-58:37).

"I think I have an inkling that the answer is 'no,'" Mariana admitted. "We just can't do it because of those reasons...with equitable grading and [the requirement] to...follow the grading practices of the universities, rather than your own" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 58:38-59:00). As soon as Mariana asserted this, she began verbalized an opposing view.

> But then another part of my brain is like, "We try new stuff here all of the time! And we're kind of a great place to pilot things because we're used to things not working out, and we're used to being flexible." And I think that we're the kind of people that can really brainstorm and find really good solutions to problems. And so, sometimes it's like...maybe we *are* the right school to help...pave a way that this could look like, just because we also don't have so many district rules that...a lot of public schools have. And so, yeah. This is always what I do. I think about both sides, and then never come to a great conclusion, because I can argue something...good for each. But I think ultimately, I would have to be that teacher and there's just so many unknowns...about that. But it's hard to say yes. Yeah, because it...doesn't just affect my work life. It... affects my free time, because I would have to get this other master's degree. (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 59:11-1:00:28, emphasis original)

I asked her to clarify her claim that she would need to get another master's degree because I recalled that, in the meeting I had observed, they had discussed strategically directing that education requirement "at a future hire, to get them trained" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 1:00:45-1:00:49). Mariana confirmed my recollection, but explained that "it feels very daunting to like hire for that right now," because "we have likely 3 or 4 hires in our department for next year" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 1:00:57-1:01:22). This number surprised me. I knew Christina Dominguez would be ending her term of service and might not stay. I'd talked with her about that, when I was on campus, but I didn't realize other teachers were also planning to leave, most of the department, in fact. That Mariana conveyed this news with seeming equanimity was even more surprising. I asked about Christina, specifically, and Mariana admitted she hadn't heard from her one way or another. However, she explained that the tradeoff between hiring temporary teachers, like TFA or Jesuit Volunteers, was that you "get really great teachers for the length of their service here, which is helpful" (Unveiling Interview, 12 January 2023, min. 1:02:10-1:02:19).

Our conversation began to wrap up here. Mariana was in a liminal phase, likely to change substantially in years to come. Yet, she continued to approach her practice reflectively, wondering about and planning for the future. I reminded her that she would hear from me again soon, with revisions to the draft. And after exchanging our thanks and goodbyes, we signed off.

Unveiling Analysis

More than prior interviews, this conversation included mutual stories and problem solving. Mariana became a co-creator of this portrait through the course of this unveiling. She affirmed many of the core findings and analysis from this chapter, particularly those regarding power and criticality. Further, she provided new insights about the context of the study and the

complexity of Magdalena faculty and raised questions about the ethical implications of portraiture methodology and narrative, more generally. Finally, she provided feedback to enhance the overall accuracy of this work by clarifying the founding history of the school and helping me to refine the portrayal of one of Mariana's teacher-colleagues.

Mariana's critical consciousness, and her commitment to critical pedagogical practices, was evident through her reflections about cultural representation, her relationships with colleagues, and her pursuit (or lack thereof) of grant funding. These, in turn, reflected Mariana's sensitivity to power asymmetries and her desire to share power-with colleagues rather than power-over them, a disposition consistent with critical consciousness.

Early in our conversation, Mariana shared how she struggled reading early parts of this portrait, because she could not help but read through the lens of prior, deficit narratives that had been told about her students. Those narratives regularly drew on negative stereotypes about the Mexican community in order to elicit donations from wealthy donors to the school. She recognized "the power of prejudices" to shape imagination yet resisted conceptualizing the community in such ways, a community she identified with strongly. As she explained, "I live in this community with my students, and so, I guess I just, I see it as *our* neighborhood, not as something poor that needs...to be fixed." Despite such deep solidarity with the Magdalena community, later in the interview, Mariana acknowledged that she struggles with how to talk about cultural identity and related power relationships because of her own identity as a white woman. While she recognizes her own power, vis-à-vis this positionality, through the course of our conversation, she seemed inclined to defer to cultural insiders to determine the most appropriate language to talk about that power and its relationship with the wider culture. Such deference recognizes the co-creative potential of sharing power-with others across cultures, but it also raises questions about the ability of white educators, like Mariana, to speak knowledgeably about matters of race, culture, and privilege.

Mariana's struggle reflected her critical consciousness about hegemonic whiteness, economic and cultural capital. Further, consistent with critical theory, she saw this as an issue of power asymmetry. White, wealthy donors, her critique implied, tended to have more power than the Mexican community that she works with, and that power, she recognized, had been sustained through storytelling that drew on and reinforced prejudices. Through that lens of hegemonic whiteness, everyday features of Mexican culture, like Mariachi music or appreciation for fútbol, had been constructed as pejoratives, that characterized a people that need "to be fixed." As such, Mariana was particularly conscious of the sensate language that I used to talk about the Magdalena community and acknowledge that my portrait challenged her to grow by leveraging culturally substantive imagery but in a positive way. This suggests that portraiture's emphasis on the good (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020) can provide a counternarrative that challenges hegemonic whiteness and wealth privilege by affirming the cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) of racially and economically marginalized communities.

Mariana further demonstrated her critical consciousness through her concern about the consent of her colleague and their anonymization in this portrait. This topic took up nearly half of our unveiling conversation and involved collective brainstorming about how to revise the relevant vignette. Through the course of this conversation, Mariana revealed that until this point, she had been uncertain about how much power she had to influence the final shape of the portrait, and she was comforted to know that I viewed her as a co-creator, whose professional safety and final affirmation were of paramount concern to me. Further, I suggest Mariana's

action-orientation is suggestive of her criticality, in so much as she contributes to knowledge production through this co-creative endeavor.

Her concern about this vignette revealed Mariana's priority for relationship, collegiality, and her colleagues' sense of safety in teacher observations. Consistent with critical approaches to pedagogy which ground good pedagogy on strong relationships between learners and teachers (Behizadeh et al., 2019), Mariana's critique of the vignette, as I originally wrote it, was that it could harm the relationship she had with one teacher-colleague, because identity would not be anonymous if the vignette were read by anyone within the Magdalena community. Further, that harm could cause spillover effects for the wider Instructional Leadership Team, who had made ethical commitments to the whole faculty that could be violated through this portrayal.

Mariana felt "protective" of this colleague because she was aware of their complex life experience and willingness to learn from students. That is, she understood the sociohistorical context of this educator, and this educator, informed by that context, had a critical disposition that was not reflected in this vignette. Reducing this educator to a monolithic foil of Mariana's critical practice, undermined their developing pedagogical practice, a practice that Mariana valued strongly and felt responsible for nurturing. Further, given the ways that Mariana described this educator—wanting to learn from students, trying to transform historical wrongdoings—it may be the case that Mariana recognized the critical pedagogical potential of this colleague, and so, my characterization rang as particularly untrue. Further, the judgment I suggested, denigrating the "banking pedagogy" expressed in this brief observation, was inconsistent with the ethical commitment Mariana and her ILT colleagues had made to the wider faculty to withhold judgment during observations in order to foster a safe, collegial learning environment. Accordingly, the remedy that Mariana suggested was to fully anonymize this teacher by streamlining the details about the observation. We reasoned together that this would allow me to maintain my narrative emphasis on her practice, while recognizing the importance of student voice in affecting systemic change and resisting racial microaggressions. Further, this would support her practice by maintaining the ethical commitments she has made to her colleagues and mitigating the risk of harm to per professional relationships Accordingly, this co-creative effort, consistent with the aims of critical pedagogy, sought to support her ongoing ability to effect systemic change at Magdalena through her contributions to professional development.

The third, and final way in which Mariana demonstrated her critical consciousness was through her reflection on school funding, which surfaced repeatedly during our unveiling conversation. This surfaced first, as I noted above, when she described her resistance to deficit narratives that had been told about her students for fundraising purposes and second, when Mariana noted her surprise that I had chosen to highlight the grant meeting with her colleagues. Mariana's initial admission that school funding narratives powerfully shaped her emotional response to this portrait seems to affirm my choice to highlight the grant meeting, as an illustration of how she contributes to transforming oppression. That is, as noted above, Mariana is critically conscious of how school funding needs create power asymmetries between donors and the predominantly Mexican community served by Magdalena. These power asymmetries, and the cultural differences they align with, have been portrayed in fundraising videos in ways that encourage donors to view Magdalena as serving a community that "needs...to be fixed." As I shared with Mariana, I strongly resonated with this analysis as it aligned directly with my own experience teaching in the Santa María Network. That experience included watching students and families ultimately resist these deficit narratives and successfully implement new approaches

to storytelling that empowered families and students more and focused on student assets and community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). Mariana seemed energized by my story, in ways that echo the concern for power realignment illustrated in the vignette about the grant meeting.

In that vignette, I emphasized how Mariana and her colleagues in the math department and development office were able to transform potentially oppressive power dynamics between a grand funder and the school by working in concert toward a clear vision for mathematics education at Magdalena. Their solidarity and shared aims contributed to this empowered positionality. Likewise, the solidarity and shared aims of the families and students at my prior Santa María school empowered them to change the narrative told to funders. As we discussed both experiences, Mariana seemed to resonate with the transformative ethos at the heart of these stories, which is consistent with critical consciousness and pedagogy (Behizadeh et al., 2019).

However, while this vignette illustrated empowerment aimed at transforming oppression, Mariana shared new details in our unveiling conversation which illustrated the contingency of that empowerment, related to teacher experience and ethical commitments. First, Mariana explained that she had learned, after my visit to campus, that the grant required aligning the dual-credit course with the grading policies of the university partner, grading policies that were inconsistent with the equitable grading (Feldman, 2018) system they had worked to implement as a department. As such, the grant would compromise the transformative work that the department had pursued in recent work. For this reason, Mariana suggested that they would not move forward with the grant, even though the grant funder was interested in partnership.

Further, when Mariana reflected on the implications of the opposing path, accepting the grant and its terms, she admitted that this would create significant pressures on her, because she anticipated that her department would need to hire 3-4 teachers next year. This changed her calculation, reflected in the vignette, that the grant requirement to train a faculty member could be strategically directed at a single future hire, not Mariana or Kate. With so much faculty change anticipated in the year ahead, Mariana seemed resigned to the fact that if they accepted the grant, she would have to be the one to fulfill this grant requirement. This change disinclined Mariana from pursuing the grant, because, as she explained, "it...doesn't just affect my work life. It... affects my free time."

This conclusion is one of the few times in our unveiling interview, and the only time during our discussion of the grant vignette, when Mariana used first person singular (i.e., I, my, etc.) to discuss actions at school. As I noted in my introduction to Mariana at the beginning of this chapter, her use of collectivistic, first-person plural language (i.e., we, our, etc.) sets her apart and reflects an ethic, consistent with Magdalena spirituality, where responsibility for change is shared. This shared responsibility, in turn, was shown through this portrait, to be supported by teacher length of service which fostered solidaristic actions between colleagues and empowered critical practice at Magdalena. Accordingly, by pivoting to first-person singular, to explain why this grant won't work out, Mariana seems to be unconsciously suggesting that professional isolation undermines her ability to resist economic systems, like highly structured grants and dependence on outside funding, that obstruct critical pedagogical practices. Indeed, within this new, more isolated context, Mariana's choice to forego the grant, in the interest of personal wellness, may be understood as its own act of resistance to that same system. Nonetheless, when contrasted with the possibilities illustrated in the vignette, such an act of resistance is less far reaching.

Chapter 5: Portrait and Analysis of Northside

Contextualizing Santa María Northside

The morning I arrived at Santa María Northside[21] it was drizzling. I had left my apartment long before sunrise to catch the bus to College Plains, the neighborhood where Santa María Northside had its campus. This was the second of two Santa María schools to be established in the Metropolis area. The first, Santa María Metro, served predominantly Latinx students. Metro was legendary in the Network for its high achieving students and low logistical costs. Living in a city with reliable public transit saved the school from having to transport students to their work study placements, an expense that weighed on the budgets of many other SMN schools. Metro had a rigorous curriculum for its students, with regular classroom assessments, multiple mandatory research papers for juniors, and ample opportunities for AP courses. Its students did well on standardized tests, and ninety eight percent enrolled in college. Metro was perceived as the gold standard of Santa María schools. Northside, however, was different, and faculty knew it.

Santa María Northside took pride in serving the largely Caribbean diaspora of College Plains and the surrounding neighborhoods. Students came largely from first, second, and third generation families with Haitian and Dominican roots, and many siblings and cousins attended the school, adding to the community's tight-knit feel. Approximately 15 years ago, Northside was established as a provisional member of the Network by the joint efforts of several religious orders, and since they were fully incorporated into the Network a decade ago, they had obtained 100 percent college acceptance for all graduating students. When seventy percent of the Class of 2017 enrolled in colleges and universities rated 'selective or higher,' a school milestone, it became a fixture in their annual report. While that exceeded the national average enrollment that same year, particularly for Students of Color (BLS, 2022), it was a far cry from Metro's higher college enrollment.

Northside's Principal, Mary Francois, and Director of School Culture, Tina Bernard, were part of the Haitian diaspora served by the school. They understood the community's culture and had worked at Northside for years, alongside many alumni, five of which were presently on staff. Ms. Francois grew up in College Plains and had taught in the English Department before moving into administration, eventually becoming Principal in July 2020. Ms. Bernard joined the school in August 2015 through the Corporate Work Study Program, where she had been

[21] The name of this school, schoolteachers and staff, and various identifying details have been changed to protect the identity of the school and the teachers in this study.

Assistant Director. When I asked Mary Francois how she would describe the Northside community, she immediately responded, "resilient." She had led during the pandemic years, when there was high faculty turnover and difficulty recruiting teachers. The teachers they did recruit were often novice and according to Julia Friedman, one of the veteran teachers at Northside, needed professional development in pedagogical skills. While enrollment remained above 300 students, many corporate partners withdrew from the work study program during the pandemic, creating financial difficulties for the school. Students and faculty also struggled through long periods of remote instruction, social isolation, and reacclimating to classroom life. During my visit to Northside, faculty and staff raised concerns about student behavior, classroom engagement, academic rigor, and student voice. This was a community that seemed quick to name problems, was proud of its culture and protective of its autonomy.

When I stepped off the bus into College Plains, as far as I could see, small shops lined the street, each with a flat sign affixed to a multi-story brick building. All were closed this early, save for a corner deli selling breakfast sandwiches and a bustling grocer with mounds of fruit on display outside. The tropical colors of the fruit contrasted oddly with the drab grey of the street. I crossed the street to grab a hot sandwich, and then made my way from the main street into the neighborhood behind. I walked loops around the neighborhood, eating one bite after another as I caught glances from several grandparents and parents getting young children on the bus. I continued onward, past some low-income high rises, and one smaller apartment building with a crisp coat of grey paint, where a resident, the only other white person I had yet seen in College Plains, came outside to walk their dog.

A few blocks further, at the end of a tree-lined street of family homes, I found Santa María Northside. It was three stories of sandy brick, with unruly evergreens brushing the second story windows and a tall wooden post, painted with "pax" and "peace garden" standing guard near the front entrance. The building was built by the Sisters of St. Jude,[22] who operated an all-girls high school on the site from WWII until the early 2000s. They built their convent adjacent to the school. Today, Santa María Northside owned the school and the convent building, which it leased to Hope House, a non-profit organization serving immigrant families and youth. I arrived near the end of first bell, at the request of my host teacher Julia Friedman, but the door to school was locked. No one was waiting to welcome me, just a buzzer with typed instructions to "push for entry." I did, then waited for the telltale click of a mechanical latch retracting before I opened the door.

Inside, the school looked like something out of a 1950s movie. A single hall divided the floor lengthwise. Boxy classrooms with built-in chalkboards and hardwood shelving lined both sides of the hallway. The school motto was painted on one hallway wall, and next to it hung hundreds of Black and Brown students' graduation photos. As I made my way toward the front office, a small square room shut away behind a heavy wood door, the combination of floor to ceiling tile and hardwood caused my dress shoes to echo down the hall. In the office, I found a student worker and secretary, like in Southwest, but here, there was no warm welcome. The secretary seemed to be expecting me, though, and after I added my name to the visitor binder, she directed the student to escort me to Miss Friedman's room.

We walked in silence down the first-floor hall, past an auditorium full of folding wooden stadium seats, and up a flight of stairs to the second story landing, where a pale statue of Mary and photos of white women religious stood like icons beside a vase of flowers. Two women in the hallways stopped talking when they saw me, and extended their hands in greeting to me,

[22] The name of the order has been changed, as well as certain identifying details, to mask the identity of the school.

before explaining to the student, “Miss Friedman just stepped out. She’ll be back in a minute. You can put her in the library.” The student then walked me a few paces down the hallway, to the middle of the floor. We passed a well-dressed man with light hair looking very out of place while sitting at a student desk, bent over a laptop. He ignored me as I glanced at and then behind him, into an empty, wood-lined office. Beyond the man, further down the hall, the student gestured to a door on the left. ‘That’s Miss Friedman’s room.” He then opened the door opposite it and walked me into the library. Built-in wooden shelves lined the walls, full of books, floor to ceiling. Solid wood desks sat heavy around the room, each with four matching chairs. “You can stay here until Miss Friedman gets back.” With that, the student made their exit, leaving me alone in the room. I walked up to a shelf and ran my fingers along the books. The walls were too thick for sound to carry, and in the silence, I began to imagine women in black habits at home in this place. “If fresh flowers were still kept by their photographs, what kind of connection did the Sisters of St. Jude have to Santa María Northside?” I wondered.

The Sisters were the religious endorser of the school, and while their members didn’t serve on faculty or in administration, they volunteered in a variety of roles around school. The library was one of their domains. On Tuesday, Liz Sullivan, the most junior teacher in my study, would introduce me to her “little buddy,” Sister Ruth, who was teaching two students how to catalog books, when we found her in the library. Ruth, I would learn, was responsible for the flowers at the end of the hall. She wanted to make sure the Sisters were visible. All around the school, it was hard to miss the signs of their presence. On the first floor, the atrium had their seal inlaid in tile outside the auditorium. A large statue of the Virgin Mary stood outside the office, near a portrait of their foundress painted larger than life on the wall. Images of saintly women appeared on the second floor, and in the upper level was a chapel with symbols of their order. In Miss Sullivan’s classroom, a banner of five charisms hung on the wall, each an area of ministry to which the Sisters were committed. Liz explained to me that “I've had her speak in my classes about Sisters of St. Jude and the characteristics that they emphasize.... she like, brought a whole slideshow about like all the things that the Sisters...do...in the Community and things that our students can be involved in through the Sisters of St. Jude” (Interview, 9 August 2022, min. 26:54-27:11, 28:21-32). Every student was required to complete at least twenty hours of community service a year to graduate from Santa María Northside, and the Sisters were a partner helping facilitate student involvement in their community projects, ranging from anti-racism activism to women’s empowerment and environmental sustainability. Though such engagement had been interrupted because of Covid, the Sisters didn’t stop reminding students of this responsibility or the opportunities for community engagement available through their order.

Liz Sullivan

I was introduced to Liz Sullivan in an email from her school President, Chris Dillon, at the end of her first-year teaching. Liz was both a theology teacher and Campus Ministry Associate at Santa María Northside. A few weeks later, we met virtually for the first time. She had been teaching summer school and logged in to our meeting from her classroom, where her straight, blonde-brown hair and black blazer seemed to match the vintage chalkboard and maple ledge behind her.

Liz, a white woman, had grown up near the dairy capital of the Midwest and moved to Texas to attend college at a Christian university. She completed her bachelor’s in biblical studies, with a concentration in youth ministry. During her undergraduate years, Liz spent time doing service work in Haiti. “My really good friend owned an orphanage in Haiti, and so I have been to

Haiti multiple times" (Screening Interview, 12 July 2022, Min. 13:16-25). At first, she was reluctant to visit the country, but her parents encouraged her to go.

> The only reason I went is because I knew... that I was in safe hands, because of my friends. And I, like, immediately fell in love with the mission, the kids over there, and I [pause] After that trip, I was like, "What more can I do? Can I be a part of your board, or how can I be involved in your organization?" So, for a few years... after that, I was—I don't know what my title was, like PR Coordinator or something of this orphanage—like, running things from the U.S. trying to get more donors...for the orphanage. So, I just had a heart for that city...and the orphanage. And I went back, like, three more times, and there was one time I stayed for almost a month. (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 16:07-17:02)

This work also motivated Liz to become certified in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), like Haitian Creole. "After my time in Haiti, I wanted... to move to Haiti for like the long haul to teach, to teach Bible, literally" (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 17:35-17:45). During those classes, Liz was introduced to the concept of "banking pedagogy" (Freire, 1970/1993), which she was cautioned to avoid in her instruction. "When I took those classes, I learned about the 'banking model' and all that. So, that's only reason I know that, but that was like way back in college. And it's funny to, like, put a name to it because that's how I thought. I mean, that's how I liked to learn as a student... the banking model" (Interview, 9 August 2022, min. 6:03-6:34). Liz's stated preference for banking pedagogies is consistent with research indicating women are socialized at an early age to behave passively (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007). She had learned to conform to social constructs placed on her, a pattern which Freire (1970/1993) also recognized as a form of social oppression that teachers are particularly susceptible to perpetuating.

By naming and casting doubt on these methods, Liz's TESOL teachers helped begin her conscientization process (Freire, 1970/1993), a process which took deeper root when she was introduced to liberation theology in her senior year of college. Rather than approaching theological inquiry from an abstract notion of God and descending from that to practical insights about the world, a very traditional approach to Christian theology, liberation theology is a form of spiritual inquiry that begins from concrete human experience and moves toward abstract theological insights (Gutiérrez, 1971/1988). Paulo Freire was deeply influential in the development and dissemination of liberation theology around the world (Morales-Franceschini, 2018). Liberation theology was inspired by Catholic social movements and developed through the work of Catholic theologians, especially in Latin America, and though it has informed the work of many Protestant theologians in recent decades, including Cornell West and James Cone (Cone, 2011; West, 1988), it was a new and inspiring idea for Liz.

When she began college, Liz explained in our first extended conversation,

> I never intended to become a teacher that was never anything I wanted to do. But it was actually [a] good teacher who influenced me to become a teacher.... I wanted to work at a church and do youth ministry in that capacity, but my senior year one of the required courses was...a theology course. And that teacher changed the way I looked at theology, and my own faith, um, completely. It kind of like took me off course, a little bit. And... it was because of his teaching and the way that I learned in that class specifically that I, I decided "Oh, my goodness, like, if I can learn and grow in my faith academically through, like, this logical route, um how many kids, who are also kind of wired that way are missing out on their faith or spiritual journey, because they need this kind of

> academic route to get to this understanding of their faith?" So honestly that Professor specifically changed the way, and I talked to him about it, and he was like "Oh, you should go to Grad school," (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 0:22-2:00)

Liz took this advice and enrolled directly into a master's program in theology at a nearby Christian university, with the new goal of continuing on to doctoral studies. "Originally, I want[ed] to become a professor. That was my ultimate goal, but I kind of fell in love with teaching.... I love it so much that I just want to stay and teach high school" (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 2:00-2:18). This was helped by her deepening love of Catholicism.

This mix of ministry experience in Haiti and theological longing to learn more about Catholicism, combined with a lifelong dream of moving to Metropolis, led Liz to apply for a job at Santa María Northside. She didn't know about the Santa María Network at the time, but when she was interviewed by Mary Francois, the Haitian-American leader of the school, she felt called to work at Northside. In describing her choice to work there, Liz said that through prayer and discernment, the desire to work at Northside was

> "placed on my heart ...and... just a bunch of things kind of lined up.... I didn't grow up Catholic at all. And during my studies in my master's program, I became...enamored with Catholicism, and I'm, like, trying to convert now. So, it's like a bunch of different things....the cultural aspects and that it was specifically...an urban context, also when I was talking to who is now my boss, [Mary] my principal, just the way that they were going about, like, administering the school, like, they are very much about restorative justice. That's how we function here. And so, I love that about the school and just kind of the autonomy that I get in my teaching and being able to incorporate things like liberation theology in a, in a Catholic school, like, that's just, that's awesome to me. You know? (Screening Interview, 12 July 2022, Min. 13:25-15:34)

Liz Sullivan joined Northside's faculty in the 2021-2022 school year, a particularly difficult school year for faculty and students alike. At the beginning of the school year, she was given a brief orientation, where she was introduced to the Santa María style of lesson and annual planning and provided with her list of learning objectives for the freshmen and junior courses she would be teaching. Though this was her first-year teaching and she was not trained in education, Liz was not assigned a mentor teacher. Rather, she was directed to seek academic support from Mary Francois, her principal. Further, her department colleagues did not collaborate with her in horizontal or vertical planning.[23] Even when she asked a colleague to collaborate, who shared responsibility with her for teaching half the junior classes, he refused to work with her. Nonetheless, Liz seemed upbeat about her colleagues. Two took an active role in mentoring her that first year. Mary, the principal, would suggest specific teaching strategies to Liz, while Romero, a Spanish teacher, was a very empathetic colleague, who let her observe his classes and offered a kind ear to listen, when she needed it. Liz felt "the Community at Northside...has really been helpful, as a whole. Like, I would feel comfortable asking... a more seasoned teacher for advice here" (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 12:21-12:37). This experience, coupled with a very

[23] Horizontal and vertical planning relates to curriculum design. While horizontal planning concerns curriculum alignment across the same grade or difficulty level (e.g., teaching reading skills across the curriculum in different subject areas), vertical planning relates to the intentional scaffolding of curriculum so that it builds logically from one grade or skill level to the next (e.g., teaching algebra as a foundation for calculus). Within a school, vertical and horizontal curricular planning are enhanced by faculty collaboration within and across departments/subject areas. See CSAI (2018).

close connection with her first-year freshman class, left her feeling optimistic about the upcoming school year.

Julia Friedman

Julia Friedman grew up in a neighborhood near College Plains. Her fast cadence and clipped r's underscored how local she was. Julia stood average height. Her small frame and thick dark curls looked almost dainty, yet when she spoke, Julia had a presence that commanded attention. She came from a family of educators. "I grew up with teachers... My mom is a retired public-school teacher. My aunt was a principal at a school for the Deaf. My uncle worked in schools; my grandad taught at medical school" (Interview, 5 October 2022, min. 4:11-32).

Though she was surrounded by educators, and she was a good student on paper, she hated school. "I went to Catholic school, and I was like. 'No, that was a horrific experience. Couldn't be me.'" (Interview, 14 September 2022, min. 21:00-08). She didn't want to be an educator, at first. She explained that when she was young, she

> didn't find the adults trustworthy or worthy of respect. Usually, I had a lot of like personal issues growing up, and it always struck me that no one in my school ever, like, noticed anything was going on. So, I was automatically skeptical of adults. I didn't see the purpose in [state] exams and Y = MX + B. No one ever told me why we were learning calculus. Like, I tell you the quadratic equation, but I never knew I would use it, or why. (Interview, 14 September 2022, min. 10:02-39).

For Julia, learning was intimately tied to relationship and purpose. Because she didn't feel seen by her teachers, she didn't find them trustworthy, and by extension, she didn't value their instruction. Likewise, she didn't see the purpose of what she was taught, and no one bothered to explain that to her, further fueling her skepticism.

Julia went on to explain that part of her dislike of school was rooted in an internalized narrative that she was the source of the problem.

> I had never questioned my own education, or why I had hated school. Why, I still hated school. Like, what was wrong with me? I... was always like, "Oh, I'm just a bad student... I just don't fit into this." Like... I had really good grades, but I hated being in school... In high school my senior year, I would just like leave after eleven, and I'd be like, "I'm out! I don't want to be here anymore." Um, I didn't enjoy listening to teachers. I didn't enjoy...filling in worksheets or... anything like that. (Interview, 5 October 2022, min. 39:43-40:28)

What she did not "fit into," she would later find the language to describe, was a banking style of pedagogy, which provided rigid curricular constructs and rewarded intellectual passivity (Freire, 1970/1993). Though she was willing to follow the rules to obtain good grades and eventually matriculated into an elite Catholic university, she exercised her agency to extricate herself from her high school campus as soon as possible. After finishing a bachelor's in English, Julia enrolled in law school and eventually found a job as a corporate attorney working on "finance, mergers and acquisition" (Screening Interview, 4 August 2022, min. 14:12-25). She found this grueling pace unfulfilling, though, and she was frustrated that her work primarily functioned to get "rich white men richer" (Field notes, 24 October 2022). After a few years, she quit and moved to the West Coast, where she started working as a tutor. After a few months, she realized she both enjoyed such work and was good at it. So, she applied for an urban teaching fellowship back home and returned with the intent to become a public-school teacher.

Julia enrolled in a graduate education program, where she met the second teacher in her life who she really admired and after whom, she eventually modeled her teaching. She described him as a "hippie white man" (Interview, 14 September 2022, min 14:49-15:00), a statement reflecting her critical consciousness as a white woman teaching predominantly Students of Color.

> Julia Friedman: When he was teaching high school, he taught at like some super progressive schools..., schools that were full of teachers who had, like, gone on strike in other schools, or schools, where, like the parents formed a cooperative .... We read a lot of, you know, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, and you know, bell hooks and all the like, really radical teaching books. And when we had assignments to, you know, bring in a lesson plan, he'd be like, "okay, like, So what? [draws out dramatically] What is it? What is someone going to do with these multiple-choice questions? Like, where does it go? Where does it need to?" And like, he had us going to museums and thinking about how we would use field trips, and how we would, you know, talk about people from, I guess, he didn't call it "culturally responsive pedagogy or teaching," ...because this was 2014. I don't know if the term was as out there as it is now, but that's what he was getting at. Like the first day of class, he got this group of... Teaching Fellows, who obviously the majority twenties, white women, but he gave us this paper, and on it was a, it was like "Name, ten Native American ...artists." and we were all looking at like "Name, fifteen Latino authors," and like, he wanted to embarrass people basically and be like, "Why? Don't you know this? Your students are going to know this."
>
> Kathleen Sellers: Mh-hmm
>
> Julia Friedman: And then he had a list of people's names, and it was like, "How many of these names do you know?" And it's like Assata Shakur and like all these activists, and he's like, "okay, like, why don't you know these people?" Just making sure that we weren't just going out there with that charter school mentality, and that we were ready to, you know, teach the students that we are going to teach.
>
> Kathleen Sellers: Yeah. Would you today, then, consider yourself a culturally responsive educator or a critical educator?
>
> Julia Friedman: I would say, I try my best. Like with World History and American History, like the goal, would be yes. Um, that goal is quite difficult when you are talking about like history, like World History. Like, I can talk about the Arawak all I want, but I do have to mention Columbus. You know? Like, I can complicate things, but yeah, um. So, I did skip the Renaissance last year. That felt great to me. Um, but yeah, So, trying to bring in, you know, narratives and sources and focus on places that relate to my students' backgrounds. Um, not just in like a gimmicky way. So, I would say, yes, but there's always room to do it better. (Interview, 14 September 2022, min 14:49-18:15).

Julia's response reflects the critical training that she received in her graduate program. She not only read critical theorists and practitioners, but she learned from the experience of her mentor that schools can, and *should*, be different than what she experienced. Being culturally responsive, learning about the cultural wealth her students would bring to the classroom, and being mindful of the systems that operated to prioritize certain kinds of knowledge in/outside of schools were central to good teaching practice.

Julia understood critical pedagogy as a set of skills to be learned and developed, not a vocation to live out. Growing up with a lot of educators, she saw two ways of approaching work: seeing teaching as a profession or seeing it as a vocation. People who "made it their vocation...it was too much for them. [P]eople who were able to, you know, be the professional...still [had] time to go out and have a life, and, you know, reflect their values and ethics in their entire holistic experience, not tie it up to a job" (Interview, 5 October 2022, min. 4:11-5:03). Julia saw teaching as a profession, just like law had been a profession. Her work had value and reflected an ethical commitment, but it wasn't her entire life. She set boundaries on her time, limiting the hours she stayed at school, and protecting her summers from extraneous labor. She even delayed setting up interviews with me until after her school year resumed. Such healthy boundaries helped her to stay focused on her students when she was present at school.

Julia joined Santa María Northside as a student teacher in the English Department. Her favored professor had personal friends who worked on faculty at the time, and he thought she would fit well at the school, even though it wasn't a public school, like she had anticipated. To her surprise, she enjoyed the school culture. She found strong mentors, who shared her critical commitments, and at the end of the spring semester, though a position wasn't yet available, she submitted her application. Near the end of the summer, a position opened, and she was hired to teach history, where she has taught ever since. Today, in her seventh-year teaching, she is the Chair of the Humanities Department. This role came with no added frills, like a fancy office, just extra responsibilities pursued from the same classroom she was assigned when she was hired.

That classroom was full of tidy rows of individual desks and blue industrial chairs. A floor to ceiling bookshelf was built into one wall, and bright windows spanned another. In the remaining two walls, the historic chalk boards were covered with an eclectic mix of student art, instructional tools, and posters blazoned with anticapitalistic and anticolonial wisdom like "We do this 'til we free us", "General strike!", "My favorite season is the fall of colonialism", "Il faut choisir entre le champaigne pour quelques-un ou l'eau potable pour tous",[24] and "We live in capitalism / Its power seems inescapable / So did the divine right of kings." Student art incorporated sickles and hammers and breaking chains, among a variety of declarations of human rights. On a small bookshelf, directly to the side of Julia's even smaller desk, sat a row of well-worn books at eye level: *A People's History*, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, *Pedagogy of Hope*, *Experience and Education, Americah*, *Race and Membership in American History: The Eugenics Movement*. These books came mostly from her graduate studies, where she had trained in critical pedagogy, and their nearness to her desk juxtaposed the set of red and gold embossed legal textbooks that sat ignored on a shelf on the other side of the room. Their standardized covers seemed to match the rigid structure of the hardwood shelves, both markers of anachronistic, banking pedagogies.

[24] "You have to choose between champagne for some and drinking water for all"

Power

The experiences that shaped Liz and Julia's teaching practice also shaped the ways that they perceived and exercised their own power. As these vignettes will illustrate, having greater or lesser social and intellectual capital correlated with concomitant changes in assertive behaviors both with students and colleagues.

The Faculty Meeting. I spent my first day at Northside with Julia. Liz was not present on campus, because she was accompanying a group of students to an event in Washington, D.C. She'd be back the next day, but that was just long enough to miss the faculty meeting happening after school. Teachers had been emailed the agenda in advance, and Julia was visibly annoyed by one of the agenda items. When I asked what was on the agenda, she explained that she didn't want to attend one more meeting rehashing the school's bathroom policy. So, I asked if I could attend the meeting without her. "That should be fine, but I'll send an email to check" (Field Notes, 24 October 2022). In that email she communicated both my interest in attending and her sudden "scheduling conflict." At the end of the day, as we walked together down to a first-floor classroom, Julia conveyed that she would join me for the first half of the meeting but would leave me with the rest of the faculty to observe the last part on my own.

Within fifteen minutes of the school day ending, eighteen faculty were seated in the room with Julia and me. I noted that seven of them appeared to be People of Color, though I later wondered why none of them had been nominated by their school's president to participate in the study. Did none of them exemplify a commitment to social-justice and community-engaged pedagogy? Were they new hires? Or did Chris Dillon, a white man, pay more attention to the labor of white faculty when I asked him for teacher nominations? This latter possibility is consistent with literature on teacher retention, which suggests that one of the key challenges Faculty of Color face is feeling their labor is unwelcome and/or invisible, particularly to white administrators (Dixon, Griffin, & Teoh, 2019). Chris Dillon had since left his position as school president, because of an illness, and so, I would never have the chance to ask him directly.

As the room settled, Mary stood in front of the faculty next to the well-dressed man I'd seen in the hallway earlier. Over the course of the meeting, I learned his name was Paul Lewis, and he was the vice principal. He looked younger from this angle, somewhere near thirty. A thin scarf wrapped artfully around his neck made him stand out, especially in comparison to his colleagues in the room. Mary started the meeting, taking time to introduce me to the faculty before reminding faculty of a recent visit by the SMN to review Northside's mission effectiveness. As part of that formal review, a staff member from the Chicago office had been on campus that month interviewing students, staff, and faculty about the operations of the school. "Because we value student voice here, I want to share some of the students' feedback" (Field Notes, 24 October 2022). Mary went on to explain that a representative sample of students was chosen to meet with the SMN reviewer, not just high performing ones. She then began clicking through a collection of slides with what were meant to be representative quotes from student interviews. Many of the students wrote about finding it hard to stay sitting and focused during the longer classes, a reference to the change to block scheduling, a permanent remnant of the pandemic. Many students mentioned feeling disconnected, or only connecting to one teacher or staff member. Most students identified work study as their favorite part of school. I observed in my notes, "The kids' feedback places more emphasis on relationships than content and activities out of class than in class." As Mary proceeded through the slides, Paul handed out a worksheet titled "Student Feedback Review" with areas to write about trends, surprises, disappointments, and action steps.

Mary finished the slides, then directed us to work in pairs to discuss what we noticed. We were not given time to reflect individually or fill in the worksheet, only to pair off to discuss. Because of the odd number of faculty, I was partnered with a first-year Teacher of Color. Conversation simmered, until Mary redirected the room to share out their feedback. Faculty mentioned issues with student motivation. “They don’t want to learn.” “They were asking us to go easy on them” (Field Notes, 24 October 2022). Julia shared a story about a student who wanted to be entertained rather than seeing a deeper purpose to their time together in class. Shortly after this comment, she quietly left the room. After a few more faculty responded, Mary shared feedback from Northside alumni, who she asserted had been reporting since 2015 that they did not feel college-ready. “When alums return, they say ‘you baby us too much’” (Field Notes, 24 October 2022). Accordingly, she explained, students need to learn to “Be gritty! Be resilient!” No one on the faculty challenged this claim with the wider group. Soon after, Paul indicated it was time to move on to the second agenda item: the bathroom policy.

The new policy, he informed the faculty, would begin the following Monday. Students would be notified of this change throughout the week, during advisory, and families would be notified of the change in an email at the end of the week. The old policy, as I’d seen it play out during the day, involved students being permitted the freedom to sign themselves out of class to use the restroom. When they returned, they signed themselves back in. There were no instructional disruptions as students attended to their needs. Paul explained that the purpose of this policy had been to encourage students to “make mature choices.” He then shared a single slide on which he had recorded the number of students leaving class on the second floor, during one 90-minute period that day. This was the reason he’d been sitting in the hallway earlier; he was documenting students’ visits to the bathroom. More than thirty students had left class, a few for extended periods. This one period of documentation was used as empirical evidence validating the claim that “kids are abusing this privilege” (Field notes, 24 October 2022). Mary interjected momentarily to underscore that she didn’t blame the kids. “This wasn’t an issue when this policy didn’t exist” (Field notes, 24 October 2022). Their policy had created the problem. Accordingly, Paul continued, a new policy would be implemented whereby students could not leave class to use the restroom without teacher permission, and that permission should only be given for “legitimate, rare emergencies.” Time was then given for faculty to respond to this decision. A few male teachers voiced their discomfort at the prospect of telling female students they couldn’t use the restroom. As they said this, leaving out the reason *why* this would be uncomfortable, the men stumbled over their words and hunched their shoulders uncomfortably. Both Paul and Mary were unyielding, though. Instead, they offered strategies for teachers to respond to resistant students, including: Ask kids, “Can you wait?”, “Blame the admin”, “Buffer it” this week by talking through the policy in advisory, “If you think it will be a power struggle, don’t engage.” Mary concluded the conversation by explaining that the goal for the school is that “by December it doesn’t get really really bad.” Administrators didn’t elaborate on what “really really bad” meant before they moved on to the final topic of the meeting: scheduling reminders. First, they mentioned that coaching meetings would start this week, and second, that the quarter ended in three weeks, the same time as family conferences. If faculty didn’t want those family meetings to be “difficult,” they needed to put in new grades for students. More grades were better. As the meeting concluded a few minutes later, I found myself wondering who would share all these updates with Liz?

The Pep Talk. I learned the next day that no one had reached out to Liz with details from the faculty meeting. She only knew that the bathroom policy had been changed because of the

agenda that administrators had sent around. So, Liz returned to campus for her 8th consecutive day of work, and she immediately began implementing the new bathroom policy, during a mid-morning study hall. This didn't go over well with the students, as they had not been informed of the policy change, but they contained their feelings to grumbling. Liz recounted this event to Julia when they met for a thirty-minute coaching meeting later that morning.

This meeting was on their schedules because Julia, as the new chair of the Humanities Department, had been tasked at the start of the school year with observing and coaching *all* faculty in Theology, English, and History. This role required Julia, on top of her full teaching coarse load and an hour of academic support work after school each week, to allot fifty minutes every week for each of the faculty members of the department. This was equal to more than three periods, out of twenty each week, to engage in observations and meetings with faculty. This arrangement had lasted a little more than one month, before the administration had changed their policy. Coaching and mentoring would be distributed differently going forward. However, the week I was on campus, the new policy had not begun. So, Liz and Julia held their coaching meeting as previously scheduled.

Julia began the meeting with the disclaimer to Liz that this meeting would be casual and could continue beyond this week on a casual basis, even with the new mentoring assignments. Liz seemed at ease with Julia, and their conversation flowed steadily for the full thirty minutes of the meeting. "How was your trip?" asked Julia. Liz had led a group of five students to attend the Ignatian Family Teach-In, a gathering of 2,000 student and adults to learn and engage in advocacy together. Liz had already shared some upbeat stories with me earlier in the day, and so, I was surprised when she responded with a heavy sigh.

"The bus broke down, just as we were leaving the city" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022). They arrived late and, it turned out, unprepared. The boys in her group forgot their uniforms and didn't bring formal clothes. So, Liz shared that she and the female students with her were embarrassed and frustrated that they all had to meet with their U.S. Senators with the boys dressed in hoodies. The girls had followed directions and come prepared, and they let the boys know it, according to Liz. Later that day, they got together with other Santa María schools for dinner. Students gossiped in front of the adults, and the students from other SMN schools complained about how strict their schools were, leaving Liz with the impression that Northside was particularly lax. That two of her students were in hoodies, while the rest of the students ate in business jackets, seemed to underscore this for her. Some of the students and adults at dinner came from Santa María Metro. When they talked about their school, Liz shared while looking increasingly dejected, they emphasized how strict it was and that the students did well academically. Julia interjected, here, that Metro and Northside students "beef," meaning there was animosity between them. She tried to explain that their culture and priorities were different than Northside's' and not in a good way. Liz looked uncertain as Julia voiced her critique, and soon, they changed topics to the policy change.

Liz shared how her students had bristled earlier in the day when she applied the new bathroom policy. "I already put away the bathroom passes and clip board," (Field Notes, 25 October 2022) but she went on to lament not only that she had not been told to wait to do this, having missed yesterday's faculty meeting, but that she had to do so at all. "I've used that sign-out sheet in family meetings before, when a student told their parent they had been absent from class. They were *not* absent, and I could use their own signature to prove it" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022, emphasis original). As a novice teacher, who had struggled to develop skills in classroom management, the old bathroom policy, Liz explained, had allowed her to hold her

students accountable without creating opportunities for confrontation. Further, she valued the freedom it gave students. To take this away seemed to invite new opportunities for conflict.

Julia agreed, confessing that she had "no intention of telling a student they couldn't use the restroom" (Field notes, 25 October 2022). She then looked toward her classroom door, as though remembering that sound could carry down the hall to Paul's office. When she saw that her door was closed completely, she continued to explain and then critique the data that Paul had collected and shared yesterday as evidence for the necessity of the policy change. "Most kids were leaving class for a minute or two. Only a few kids left for longer. Like, I'm not gonna say, 'you don't need a few extra minutes to do your business'" (Field notes, 25 October 2022). They both laughed at this. "As soon as I left the meeting yesterday, I called my mom to ask about DOE regulations" regarding student bathroom policies. Julia "explained off-handedly that her mom used to be the head of the teachers' union at a public school. So, she wanted to know what was lawful in public schools. If this were a violation of students' rights, Julia wanted to know" (Field notes, 25 October 2022). This conversation with her mom was inconclusive, but Julia reiterated that she still planned to ignore the new policy. If administrators asked, she would say her students needed to use the restroom. She then declared, with sudden earnestness, "Maybe this will lead the students to rebellion" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022), then went on to insinuate that she would like to see the kids band together and demand they be given certain freedoms.

Julia then turned the conversation toward administration and the changes that had occurred since Paul was hired as assistant principal that summer. He had come from Santa María Metro, and he brought their habits with him. Julia continued, with some heat, "Students barely know him! Last week, Kyrie asked 'Who's Mr. Lewis?' when I told him to take him something." She continued, with clear resentment in her voice, "Last week, he left early on Friday, to visit his partner out of town. It's *Colors Week*, and he skipped the games! Kids don't even *know your name*!" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022). Her volume increased as Julia emphasized each word. Then, both women quieted briefly, glancing at the door again. It was still closed. Julia continued her screed, lamenting "His role is regulator.... setting rules, pushing for more numbers/data. He's trying to make Northside more like Metro, which is *all* about the numbers" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022, emphasis original). Liz seemed to resonate with this statement and jumped in to share that at her dinner over the weekend, Metro students and staff disclosed that they

"[kick] students out that don't line up.... a current class of students...at Metro started with 129 students and are now at 89. They kicked out forty kids from freshman year to upper classmen. If you don't conform, they don't keep you" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022). Liz's voice pitched upward as she said 89, hinting at her judgment. She disagreed with this practice.

"They used to do that at Northside...before your time. They don't do that anymore, though. They are trying to retain the kids they bring in" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022), Julia interjected quickly, as through trying to sooth Liz with this confirmation. This didn't achieve its desired effect, though. Liz began to sink in on herself, as she brought up an event that had happened in her social justice class, last Thursday.

"I have been struggling with transitions, especially with that class, so I invited Ms. Bernard to be there for the first ten minutes of class." Ms. Bernard was known as the disciplinarian. Several days during my visit, I heard students whisper, "She's coming!" warning their peers to get in line before Ms. Bernard could see them. Liz's juniors were familiar with Ms. Bernard and had been far more difficult this year than her first year. At this, Julia interjected,

"Yeah, Liz, but your students last year were, like, a once in five-year class, if that! That is *not* normal" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022).

Liz drooped noticeably at this, then continued her story. Administrators had pointed out she needed to manage transitions better, to keep control in her class. She had planned a new seating chart, and she anticipated her students would find it distracting when it was implemented during the first few minutes of class. After a few minutes, she expected the students would settle down. So, she thought she was doing what administrators would want by asking for help to manage that initial transition. Liz anticipated that having Ms. Bernard, particularly, in the room would keep the students on task for the ten minutes she was invited to stay, but "she stayed the *whole* class! .... and she just took over" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022). The students had bristled at Ms. Bernard's initial presence and continued to bristle throughout the class. They didn't know that this was not Liz's intention, and Liz worried aloud that this was a breach of trust with her students, which was now festering, because she had been away yesterday, leaving her students with a sub. She voiced dread about seeing class on Thursday, a class I had hoped to observe.

Then, Liz changed the topic to another administrative observation. Paul had recently visited her class. He was there to provide feedback to her about classroom management strategies which, Liz explained, was supposed to be his wheelhouse. After spending a few minutes in her classroom, observing the start of one period, and watching her students grow unruly, his sole feedback to her "was that the reason they acted out in her class was because she starts class with a bible joke" (Field notes, 25 October 2022). At this, Liz began crying softly, as she continued, "he could have said *anything* else, but I love those... and that's the only thing he said to change" (Field notes, 25 October 2022, emphasis original). She breathed deeply before explaining that she started every class with a bible joke, and always had. "I'm goofy like that." Students even asked for them if she ever missed one. Later in the week, I'd hear a student ask her to offer a second bible joke, because the first one was so corny. It was a joyful moment, one in tune with Liz's personality and her students' expectations for her. But this was what Paul said was the root of their misbehavior, and so, she should stop them. Liz began to cry silently, and Julia looked fierce, as she declared with more anger than I'd ever heard from her,

"That's *bullshit*! That's *who* you *are*, Liz" (Field notes, 25 October 2022). There was no equivocating about this for Julia. "If you are going to last in this profession, you have to be yourself." She then informed Liz that if she did cut out the bible jokes from her instruction, she would go and confront Paul for her. Liz seemed to perk up slightly at this promise before mumbling her acquiescence; she wouldn't stop the bible jokes. "Well, that's good!" Julia declared, before continuing her pep talk, sprinkled with more vitriolic promises. As Liz was getting her tears in check, the bell rang, and students began to enter Julia's classroom.

***Analysis*.** These vignettes illustrate the tension created when power is exercised *over*, rather than *with* members of a school community (Follett, 1924). In their respective roles as teachers, Liz has less social and intellectual capital (Bourdieu, 2016) than Julia, and their varying responses to their administration's policy changes and teacher-coaching bear this out. Yet, their stories reveal that Liz and Julia are both conscious of the way that administrators exercise power-over students and faculty at the school, and they would prefer a more equitable power-with dynamic, predicated on trusting relationships. This preference aligns with a critically conscious disposition, which is attuned to differences in power (McLaren, 2007) and prioritizes shared authority through relationship (Sepulveda, 2011). Such critical consciousness contributes to Julia's choice to disengage from the faculty meeting and disregard the bathroom policy, and it challenges Liz's authenticity and wellness as a teacher.

At the faculty meeting, the administrators' actions assert power-over others physically, discursively, intellectually, and operationally. Physically, Mary, the principal, and Paul, the

assistant principal, stand over faculty throughout the meeting, presenting together at the front of the room, while faculty remain seated and forward facing, as though ready to receive information from this dominant pair. No effort is made by those present to arrange chairs differently, into a more egalitarian shape (Kavenuke, 2021), though chairs are not affixed to the ground. This suggests such physical hierarchy is typical of faculty meetings.

Mary, then, introduces “student voice,” asserting that such discursive and intellectual contribution from students is valued at Northside. Yet, the way students’ interview data is used does not allow engagement with or responses from students. Student voice is abstracted from real people and the complexity of their reality. Further, the way faculty interpret this data, as students resisting hard work, functions to dismiss the concerns raised by students, concerns that from the outside seem quite valid: inability to sit still during prolonged classes, value for experiences outside of class, value for relationships with faculty yet conscious of the absence of them. These concerns seem aligned with recent student experiences and changes to school policy, including newly-blocked schedules, struggles to develop in-person habits after years of remote-learning, and social-emotional needs consistent with the experience of pandemic-induced trauma. No one names, let alone analyzes such possibilities.

Rather, Mary verbally introduces an alternative explanation, summarizing data from the past seven years in which alumni report feeling unprepared for college, because faculty “baby them too much.” Notably, this assertion was not provided in writing, like the student comments had been. Yet, this data, which conveniently aligned with the tenor of the teachers’ observations, was presented as superseding evidence for their conclusion: students need “more grit.” Further, this conclusion also aligns with a narrative common in the Network, that suggests students benefit from specific character traits, one of which is “persistence,” or grit. This conclusion places responsibility on students, and their lack of gritty character, rather than teachers or administrators. Critics of “grit” literature have suggested that emphasis on persistence is really a form of victim blaming that assumes that fostering the non-cognitive skill of persistence will lead to more engaged classroom behaviors and thus, better learning outcomes. However, this conclusion assumes that classroom activities are worthy of students’ time or interest, an assumption that researchers of culturally relevant curriculum contest (Ladson-Billings, Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, 1995; Paris, 2012). As Jal Mehta (2015) explained “in the long run, most people do not persevere at things because they are good at persevering, they persevere because they find things that are worth investing in.” Thus, students’ choice to show less gritty behavior is often a reflection of unengaging or culturally irrelevant curriculum (a staff problem) rather than a genuine lack of persistence (a student problem). This points to a second critique of grit: it is a privileged concept that research indicates is highly dependent on social class (Schreiner, 2017). Students from high-income families consistently score much higher on measures of grit than students from lower-income families (Schreiner, 2017), like those who send their children to Northside.

Accordingly, we might read this group reflection activity at the faculty meeting as a ritual enacted, un/consciously, to collectively affirm an existing organizational narrative about students’ need for gritty character development. If this is, indeed, the case, then Julia’s story at the faculty meeting, reifying this grit-narrative, may be the result of habituation to a dominant Network narrative,[25] rather than a critically-examined thought. Further, by offering a comment

---

[25] Dominant narrative refers to the normative account of reality that is perpetuated by a group or society. It achieves this status through repetition, recounting by authority figures (e.g., teachers or school administrators), and/or incorporation into official knowledge sources (e.g., state curriculum). It is a key concept in critical and social

that adds momentum to the group conversation, Liz's later absence may be overlooked by her peers. In either case, this meeting reveals that, collectively, the adults at Northside seem to view students *not* as partners in the educational enterprise, who might offer solutions.; rather, students are the problem because they lack grit. Likewise, the adults know the solution: stop empathizing with students' complaints, and focus on increasing academic rigor. This comes full circle at the end of the meeting when Mary reminds faculty of their need to input grades, increase graded activities, and prepare for the end of first quarter. Such behaviors, she implies, will provide armor against parents who may be "difficult" to conference with otherwise. This adversarial view of parents, though mentioned only in passing, further underscores the way in which school leadership exercises power-over others. Parents are not presented as partners but antagonists.

In the second part of the meeting, administrators again reveal their preference for power-over through the policy that they present (i.e., operational power) and the way they use data to validate their decision (i.e., intellectual). Interestingly, the purpose of the old policy was to foster character development, what Paul described as encouraging students to "make mature choices." The new policy is premised on the conclusion that students cannot make mature choices, and so, must be controlled physically by the adults around them. Moving forward, teachers should function as literal gatekeepers, preventing all students, save "rare" and "legitimate emergencies," from leaving their classrooms during instructional time. This creates distinct discomfort among the faculty, who voice concern for imposing this rule equally, when they know, for example, that female students have distinct biological needs from male students. Rather than engaging this concern, administrators discursively shift the topic to implementation strategies. That a key strategy is to "blame the admin" emphasizes the role that administrators play in controlling students and teachers, as it implies that teachers are, and should be perceived by students as less powerful than administrators. This aligns with traditional leadership scholarship which maintains this hierarchical view of leadership (Wasser, 2021). By such reasoning it would be better that students perceive this policy as autocratically imposed by administrators, rather than democratically agreed upon by teachers and administrators together. Yet, Mary suggests that if students should struggle to assert their power in this situation, teachers should not resist them. So, paradoxically, it would seem that teachers should both exercise power-over students *and* exercise no power at all, as relates this policy.

The way that evidence was collected and used to substantiate this policy change is also problematic. It is clear from Julia's immediate response, upon seeing the agenda, that this issue has been circulating for some time, and it has been discussed previously. However, the quantitative data that was collected and presented at the meeting, as validating the decision, had only been gathered on that single day, during one bell, on one floor. As an empirical measure, this was insufficient and inadequately analyzed data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) Yet, it was used decisively to validate what appeared to be a collection of preordained conclusions: students have "bad" character; that's why they are making choices to leave class; leaving class has academic consequences; therefore, we will correct their behavior, and thereby mitigate these academic consequences, by controlling their movement. Each of these claims is problematic on its own, particularly given the lack of data or critical engagement with the data available.

---

reproduction theories because dominant narratives help reproduce existing power relationships by focusing "on hegemonic discourse: official accounts which attempt to naturalize the current state of affairs, to make current power relations appear to be inalterable facts of nature (Linde, 2001, p. 531)" (Lynskey, 2015, p. 76). The notion of "counternarrative" is a contrasting concept, particularly important for critical race theory, whereby marginalized communities "talk back" to dominant narratives (Taliaferro Baszile, 2015).

However, together, it paints a picture of a school administration that operates from a serious deficit mindset and, responds to this perceived deficit by enacting power-over students and demanding faculty do the same.

This policy change also invites critical reflection on the racialized impact of this policy. In her critique of the "culture of poverty" Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006) explains that individualistic American culture is prone to narratives that problematize student psychology because "It is much easier to explain students' failure by looking at something internal to the students than endemic in this thing we call school culture" (p.106). Yet, Ladson-Billings (2006) observes that when student-teachers are asked to explain the behavior of "difficult" children, they often "use culture as a proxy for race" (p. 106), a practice that they learn from American culture that uses white, middle-class practices as the dominant norm from which deviation is measured. This makes Students of Color particularly susceptible to school discipline because they deviate from this dominant culture by virtue of their racial identity. As such, it becomes easier for teachers and administrators, most of whom are white, to identify these students as deviating from the norm. Deviating students are easier to label as "deviant" or, in Ladson-Billings' terms, "difficult." Such disciplinary habits are hard to break, even for Teachers and Administrators of Color, within a white-dominant framework. Thus, at a school like Northside, which tries to teach its predominantly Afro- and Latinx-Caribbean students the white, middle-class norms of American corporate culture, it's not surprising that the school leaders are disposed toward deficit mindsets and exercising power over student movement, even though multiple members of the administration are from the same Afro-Caribbean community as the students.

Some of the issues with this use of data are revealed in the second vignette, when Liz shares how useful she has found the current bathroom policy. She points to a specific family meeting where the student sign-out sheets provided evidence that helped her hold a student accountable to their family's expectations for academic achievement. As such, it functioned as a tool for working with families to meet common academic goals. Further, it minimized classroom disruptions and opportunities for interpersonal conflicts, while maximizing Liz's instructional time. None of these benefits were named at the faculty meeting, nor was Liz's perspective sought apart from that meeting. Accordingly, Liz's voice was particularly silenced in this policy decision, and she can expect to have her voice further silenced as she loses access to these multiple tools for engaging parents, holding students accountable, minimizing conflict, and maximizing instructional time. This is particularly troubling, as Liz is a novice teacher, and she is only building her skills as an educator. Thus, every tool at her disposal is more valuable because of it is drawn from a more limited toolbox. Likewise, every tool that is taken away by this policy will disproportionately impact Liz, and novice colleagues like her, relative to more experienced faculty. A national, cross-sectional study of teacher experience indicated that this may create a particularly stressful experience for novice teachers, who perceive problems of practice, especially related to classroom management and parent interactions, differently than veteran teachers (Melnick & Meister, 2008). Specifically, "Experienced teachers feel better prepared to communicate with parents when conflict arises" (p. 54). Given her administrators' concern for her classroom management skills, it seems likely this new policy, which removes key tools for both classroom management *and* family communication, will increase professional stress for Liz. Further, given that teacher stress is a factor impacting novice teachers' decision to stay in the profession (Handley, 2005), this policy may contribute negatively to teacher retention,

This policy is further concerning because the interventions that administrators have recently provided to help Liz improve her classroom management skills—Paul's suggestion to

stop using Bible jokes and Ms. Bernard's choice to take over her class—have not proven constructive. Quite the contrary, in the meeting with Julia, Liz was brought to tears sharing about Paul's advice, and her body language and tone of voice reflected both anger and shame about Ms. Bernard's behavior toward her junior social justice class. Liz visibly shrunk down, hunching her shoulders and averting her eyes, as she recounted these two events. It was like watching someone physically compressing her. Though these actions had taken place days, or even weeks before, the administrators' exercise of power-over Liz's professional actions still affected her so much as to cause her to physically diminish her stature at this meeting. It was as though the administrators were in the room with us, pressing down on her.

Only Julia's fierce rejection of Paul's advice and promise of confrontation with him, should Liz try to follow it, led Liz to recover somewhat. Julia's rejection of Paul's advice may have been easier because of her well-established identity as a critical educator, who recognized the important role of authenticity for building humanizing relationships with students, This show of unsolicited solidarity, of power-with her trusted, more experienced colleague, was necessary to buoy Liz. This suggests that more than simply acting as a foil to her administration's power-over style of leadership, Julia's offer of sharing power-with Liz functioned as a sort of antidote, helping Liz find her equilibrium and carry onward.

Julia's offer may have been particularly affecting, because of Liz and Julia's shared value for relationship with students, a value which is core to critical pedagogy (Sepulveda, 2011). Liz's most detailed critique of Paul, in the course of this meeting, was that he chose to leave campus early, rather than stay to support students during games at "Colors Week." This was a major event in the school calendar and fosters a great deal of inter-grade solidarity among students, who compete in mixed-grade teams. I was present on campus when the winners were announced, and the noise of students celebrating nearly rattled the doors it was so loud. Paul was not known by these students, and so, perhaps his absence from this event was not felt by them. But this was Julia's precise critique: had he stayed, his presence might have been noticed and his contributions appreciated. Had he stayed, students might know him better, and at minimum, he would know them better. Yet, his actions didn't reflect value for relationship with students, and his coaching of Liz suggested he might actually prefer mitigating student-teacher relationships, not just for himself but for Liz as well. And without such humanizing relationships between teachers and students and administrators, Paul would remain at the top of a hierarchy that allowed him to wield power over students and teachers, and Liz would be forced to cooperate in this hierarchy by employing oppressive pedagogical practices (Freire, 1970/1993) to which she was morally averse. Thus, Paul's choice to leave school and not participate in this annual community-building event functioned to maintain traditional power relations at Northside, rather than the more egalitarian power structures reinforced by critical pedagogy (Sellers & Abowitz, Populism, Classrooms, and Students: On becoming part of the 'we' of democracy, Forthcoming)(Sellers & Knight Abowitz, Forthcoming) and the authentic relationships it is built on (Behizadeh et al., 2019).

This would explain Liz's deep emotional distress. Paul's guidance implied that she should disregard her core value for relationship, a value she actively taught to students through her words and her actions. Further, within his traditional leadership frame, Paul could expect that his values would be prioritized over Liz's values, because of his higher position in the school hierarchy, even though Liz's role as a religion teacher and campus minister required she center Christian values as the animating goal and content of her practice and pedagogy. Liz's approach to education was grounded in her training as a youth minister, which emphasized building

relationships in the real world, similar to Freire's (1970/1993) "humanizing pedagogy." In our early conversations together, Liz explained to me that she struggles with the strict boundaries she's been told to create as a teacher, because as a "youth minister at a church... there are different criteria and things that they are allowed to do and not do versus...a teacher, and I feel as though I'm trying to, like, cross the two" (Interview 1, 25 July 2022, min. 55:32-52). Liz later explained,

> I think about this *all the time*.... the relational part of ministry sometimes is not even within the church building at all.... When I worked in youth ministry, I would be able to call up one of my youth and be like, "Hey! Do you and your group of friends want to go get ice cream with me later?" and then, we just have, like, those fruitful conversations outside of church, outside of youth group. And no one really bats an eye. Like that's just...kind of a normal thing. Or I show up to their...sporting events, just like making connections in real life, like outside of the building (Interview 2, 9 August 2022, min. 20:06-20:45, *emphasis* original).

This disposition aligns with Enrique Sepulveda's (2011) pedagogy of acompañamiento, which draws on liberation theology to develop a critical framework for relational pedagogy. Sepulveda suggests that critical educators should accompany their students as they journey "in the liminal spaces of the school" (p. 552). This means becoming involved in students' lives beyond the classroom, learning about their home life, families, attending games, and even jumping onto the soccer pitch in order to develop the relationships necessary to do more critical pedagogical work. Sepulveda acknowledges that this form of pedagogy, and the academic research that led to its development, faces resistance as being unobjective or too involved. Such notions reinforce traditional power dynamics between students and teachers, researchers and subjects, that allow the teacher/researcher to exercise power-over their student/subject. Yet, as Sepulveda's (2011) work shows, even within traditional school hierarchies, when teachers engage in pedagogy of acompañamiento, like Liz, they disrupt those power dynamics, empowering students to see value in their lived experiences, self-expression, and loving relationships.

This is consistent with a banking approach to pedagogy (Freire 1970/1993), which Liz has acknowledged she tries very hard to avoid. By contrast, within youth ministry, relationship with youth is a, if not *the* primary value. This is why Liz attends her students' games, moderates clubs after school, and starts every class she teaches with a bible joke. She wants to accompany her students, "cultivating this environment [where] questions are allowed.... questions to deepen your thinking (Interview 1, 25 July 2022, min. 3:27-3:49). And as she spent more time in the classroom, and built a relationship with another campus minister on campus, Liz acknowledged that she wants that thinking to lead toward action, incorporating service into the classroom curriculum. Yet, even as Liz has this strong grounding in ministry, and sees how this matters for her work and hope for teaching students, she is still a novice teacher, highly susceptible to her administrators' oversight (Bettini & Park, 2017). Thus, as a critically-minded yet novice teacher, being advised by multiple administrators' words (i.e., Paul) and actions (i.e., Ms. Bernard) to exercise power-over her students places Liz in a very vulnerable position. And on the day I attended her meeting with Julia, I saw as Liz was cracking under the pressure to submit to a less authentic way of teaching.

However, Julia was not so vulnerable, nor did she receive similar pressure to conform. Julia was in her second career. She had training in law and pedagogy and years of experience in the classroom, and she was viewed as an instructional leader at the school. She had immense social and intellectual capital, and she knew it, even joking several times during the week, "What

are they going to do? Fire me!?" This bolstered Julia's ability to resist what pressure she did receive from her administrators. Likewise, it strengthened the force of Julia's affirmation to Liz— "That's who you *are*!" —as well as her promise to confront Paul on her behalf. Consistent with research showing a positive relationship between novice, social justice teacher induction and quality mentorship within urban schools (Bettini & Park, 2017), Julia's support empowered Liz to be herself and engage in more critical pedagogical practices, at least for awhile.

Citizenship

Both Liz and Julia exhibited active and community-oriented teacher practices. This was consistent with two provisional codes I identified in Chapter Three, as part of my anticipatory framework (Friedman-Lightfoot and Davis, 1997), "action-orientation" and "Aimed at Common Good" (See Appendix G). The vignettes I present below illustrate dimensions of both codes. By labeling these practice "citizenship," I mean to suggest that these pedagogical choices have civic implications, both for students and people beyond the school.

Law Elective. One of the earliest donors to Northside was a retired lawyer, Michael Hayward. He had connections to law firms all over Metropolis and was very involved in the school. When the first class of students became upperclassmen and needed a history elective to fulfill state curriculum requirements, Michael volunteered to teach a course on law. He taught this for several years, developing a lasting curricular partnership with Mark Stein, a corporate law firm in Metropolis that also employs Northside work-study students, and an international NGO, Hood Rules, which specializes in teaching law and civics education to secondary school students.

From the outset, this class was unlike others at Santa María Northside. As Julia explained in our first conversation, "We do not do a lot of, like, going out into the [community], like, we just simply don't.... I wish it could be, but it's not something that we've done so much as a school. Our leadership and everything are really focused on rigor and academics and you know." (Screening Interview, 4 August 2022, min. 24:33-25:13). However, because the law class, both in terms of the founder of the class and the career-orientation of the curriculum, fits the Santa María brand of professionalism so well that it's afforded more flexibility than other classes.

> Kathleen Sellers: Then in in respect to the law class, versus other classes you've taught in the history department or in the English department, is this the class, because it has such a clear professional alignment, that there's that wiggle room?
>
> Julia Friedman: Yes.
>
> Kathleen Sellers: So, like other classes look a little more traditional?
>
> Julia Friedman: Yes. If I sat around in my world history class, and I was like, "I'd love to get a Holocaust speaker to come," like...That...wouldn't happen probably. (Screening Interview, 4 August 2022, min. 25:24-52)

Given her background in the law, Julia was asked to teach this class when she was hired as fulltime faculty, and she's been teaching the class ever since. Today, she teaches two sections a year to seniors, once in the fall and again in the spring.

> In the fall class, the Hood Rules people come in. We do simulations. We talk about different topics in law, and then, Mark Stein lawyers and other professionals come in and talk about careers and really get into, you know, different pathways for the kids. And it all culminates in, pre-COVID, a field trip; Post-COVID, a zoom, with like a mock trial, mock negotiation, and they call it Career Day....And I also, around that, teach how to write a research paper and practical legal skills, like how to write a will, landlord tenant stuff, immigration, things like that. (Interview, 4 August 2022, min. 20:46-21:29)

Students have the freedom to choose a research topic of their liking, as long as it is at least tangentially related to the law. While students often choose topics like police brutality, mass incarceration, or de/criminalization of marijuana, Julia shared that

> Julia Friedman: There's always a few outliers. Like, every year someone does animal rights, or someone did one on the copyright issues of dances in Fortnight, and so I had to go teach myself copyright law [laughs brightly] I'm saying, "okay!"
>
> Kathleen Sellers: *That's awesome*!
>
> Julia Friedman: Yeah, I had a girl last year who did one on the Geneva Convention and torture, and I was, like "All right! Let's learn about Al Qaeda! Let's do it!" (Interview, 4 August 2022, min. 22:46-23:11, emphasis original)

Learning new areas of law requires a significant investment of time, but Julia is eager to do so to support her students. Indeed, the many experiential features of this class each require additional time planning and coordinating with curricular partners.

> Julia Friedman: I would not call them... "a neighborhood organization." They are not in our neighborhood, and they are in our city, but I wouldn't call them in our *community*.
>
> Kathleen Sellers: Hmm, that's an interesting distinction. Can you explain a bit why you wouldn't consider them a part of your community?
>
> Julia Friedman: So...Mark Stein is pretty big. But like, the people who we work with, are not from here... a lot of them come in, and they're from, not even from Metropolis. They're from *out of town*. They are not familiar with College Plains. They are not familiar with the backgrounds of our students. Like, I go there beforehand and like, walk them through contextually what they will experience in an urban high school, because they did not do that *in their life*. So....there's a lot of places in Metropolis where a lot of people from Metropolis are working. And like, there is a shorthand, um like, "Oh, where did you go to high school? Where did you hang out?" Like, there is a common language for people who grew up in Metropolis. Um, *This* isn't *that*. (Interview, 28 September 2022, min. 11:58-13:35, *emphasis* original)

Because Mark Stein lawyers lack the community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) of the community and students of Northside, Julia must invest even more time and energy preparing

attorneys and staff to be responsible partners with her students. This is especially important because lawyers spend so much time with students, the equivalent of a week of face-to-face time in class, plus the full day field trip/Career Day to the law firm. When I asked her directly how much time this requires, beyond her regular planning, Julia admitted,

> A *pretty* decent amount. So, there's meetings over the summer that I have with the lawyers in Hood Rules to sort of plan out the year. Um, I've already had like a couple Zooms with them this fall. I'm going to the law firm next Tuesday, and then we, you know, frequently talk via email, like, before and after the different sessions when the lawyers come in, to sort of talk about like what they're going to say, and what they're going to do, and what the kids already know, and things like that. And then, after the.... sessions there's like a field trip. We go to them. And so, there's a lot of prep work before then, like permission slips and talking about how to get the kids in and out of building, and who are they going to meet. And then there's a like debriefing afterwards. (Interview, 28 September 2022, min. 13:49-15:02, *emphasis* original)

The week I visited campus was ten days before the fall field trip to Mark Stein's law office. Students normally saw Julia twice a week for their blocked 90-minute law class, but this week, the seniors attended a mandatory college field trip on Monday. So, they missed the first class of the week. Students in the law class had been informed that they could either wear their uniforms to the law office or a business professional outfit. Julia had explained to Liz and I, during their mentoring meeting earlier in the week, that she required all students to show her in advance what they would wear. If she didn't approve the outfit she saw, students were required to bring in a new outfit that matched her guidelines, prior to the time of the field trip. At surface level, this may appear a clear use of power-over students, a choice in conflict with her critical pedagogical aims. Yet, given the visibility of this learning experience—visibility to both the school's administration and corporate partners— this was a high-stakes curricular experience, and the students were not provided similar experiential learning opportunities regarding corporate, cultural dress practice in other classes or even in the corporate work study program. Thus, this pre-approval process functioned more as a practical assessment of student skills, skills that when mastered could enhance students' ability to navigate corporate cultural context for this class field trip and life beyond Northside,

On the Thursday I met her law students, one of the first students in the door asked about what to wear. Julia engaged this briefly before directing students to hold their questions until the planned discussion in the second half of class. At 2:15, Julia launched into the discussion by placing a slide on the smartboard that read: "'Professionalism is just a synonym for obedience. The less social capital you have, the more you are tethered to professionalism….' (Chika Ekemezie, Professionalism Is a Relic of White Supremacist Work Culture, 2020)" (Field Notes, 27 October 2022). When students were invited to respond to this quote, they were quick to volunteer connections:

- A student makes critical observations about class/wealth and how it functions around "professional" attire. "If you are wealthy you can wear what you want." She talks about hair coloring and locs.
- "I agree with [name]; where you stand in society matters…"
- Black kids police each other around their clothing in ways that white kids don't have to process. So, a white student can wear the same single brand name item again and again. A Black kid will be pressured by Black peers. (Field Notes, 27 October 2022)

After several students responded, Julia transitioned the discussion. "We are talking about professionalism today because we are going to Mark Stein. Their house. Their rules" (Field Notes, 27 October 2022). She then explained that to prepare for this visit, they were going to each make a Google Slide to show their understanding of professionalism. Julia provided a few guidelines for what she expected to see on these slides, then she told them to get working individually. Slides were due by end of class.

While students worked on this assignment, Julia walked the classroom, conferring with each student individually about their plans for what to wear to Mark Stein as well as their plans for their research paper. The class buzzes quietly, while they work. It was clear from their relaxed demeanor that they are used to working independently and talking one-on-one with Julia. Every so often, Julia interjected a comment to the whole class. When she saw two girls bent over their binder doing research together, backlit by the afternoon light, she declared, "This looks like an Admissions picture. Look at these STU-dee-ous children" (Field Notes, 27 October 2022). Julia drew out each syllable of studious, underscoring how pleased she was by her students' focus. Yet, after several minutes of focused work, she decided to interject a comment about the bathroom policy. "You know, I'm surprised none of you came in hot to talk about bathroom revolutions" (Field Notes, 27 October 2022).

A student immediately responded, "Oh, my mom has already emailed Ms. Francois about it. I didn't even tell her to do it." Eager chatter followed for several minutes, before students gradually returned to their work.

Julia continued walking the classroom, getting closer to me as she did. A boy sitting nearby explained to her that he plans to wear the uniform. "Do you have a little blazer? You can spice up the uniform." The boy seemed buoyed by Julia's suggestion. He smiled and sat up a bit taller as he responded, "I might get a new bowtie, and yeah, I do have a blazer." He remained smiling after Julia affirmed this choice and walked onward. Each student got similar treatment—personal inquiry and encouraging advice—before the end of the bell. Only when Julia wished them a nice weekend did I realize with surprise that this was the last bell of the day.

Community Service. Since long before Liz Sullivan joined Northside's faculty, the school mandated students participate in service. This had been obstructed by public health concerns, during Liz's first year teaching. Students hadn't been permitted to volunteer in person in most parts of Metropolis and College Plains. So, when I first met her, much of Liz's experience with Northside's service requirement was by word of mouth rather than practice. What she had gleaned from that experience was that in order to graduate, students must document at least twenty hours of community service each school year. This requirement was generally monitored by Campus Ministry, where Liz also worked as an assistant, and it took place outside of classroom instruction. The previous Director of Campus Ministry fostered this approach to service. As Liz explained,

> his way of going about service came from this idea that it is the student's responsibility. So, having this responsibility for, value to to serve, like, and not necessarily giving information as to why, but just "Here is something that we are telling you, you need to do. It is your responsibility to complete it, or else X, Y, and Z." (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 54:03-54:36)

This approach did not acknowledge the curricular potential of community service but kept campus ministry separate from instruction and critical reflection.

In our conversations together, Liz consistently expressed excitement about service with students and resisted this bifurcation between service and classroom instruction, even inviting Sr.

Ruth to be a guest speaker in her class the previous year, to share about the various ways students could get involved with service through the Sisters of St. Jude. But beyond this guest presentation, Liz had not yet been able to engage the students with service-learning in class. "I don't think that they [the religion department and Campus Ministry service hours] relate as much as we would like" (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 50:51-51:06).

However, this was starting to change this year with a new Director of Campus ministry. As Liz explained, "She has a lot of great new ideas about service and how to implement that in like classrooms, which I love. And that's what I... would like to do with my students... implement that service aspect" (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 51:519-51:40). Part of the disconnect, which Liz identified, was that students were never invited to reflect on why the service requirement matters.

> [A] lot of our kids like aren't connecting the "why." Like why, why do we have to do service hours? .... last year at least, there wasn't...any conversation to [sic] the students as to why they had to get service hours. That was just a requirement, or else they can't get their diploma, type thing. (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 52:05-52:36)

Rather than approaching service as a form of *praxis*, with both action and reflection, the original Northside approach to service was as a banking project (Freire, 1970/1993), something students had to comply with rather than relate to personally or engage as a liberating project.

With the support of a new Director of Campus Ministry, however, Liz saw potential for reinventing the service requirement. In a conversation together over the summer, Liz explained to me her hopes for the new school year.

> Liz Sullivan: So this year, I'm excited, because the Director of Campus Ministry really wants to say something in the beginning of the year, like why service importance [sic], and she wants that to be in the theology classes as well. Um, so we've been trying to brainstorm ways in which we could serve as classes, especially like, as someone who's in the theology department, I would love to do service with my students, and...
>
> Kathleen Sellers: Mm-hmm
>
> Liz Sullivan: ...have that be a tangible act that we do together. So... right now they're separate. Our goal and plan is that in the fall there is definitely overlap, and so that students can see, I don't know.... why do we need to do service? (Interview, 25 July 2022, min. 52:37-53:27)

This new approach would integrate service into classroom practice, lay out a vision for service for the entire school, and emphasize the purpose of service along with its practice. Theology was identified as a primary location for this work, given both Liz's location as a bridge between this department and Campus Ministry as well as the role of the department in the mission of the school. Theology departments are a distinct feature of Catholic schools, generally, and at Santa María schools, the instructional benchmarks for theological instruction include skills that emphasize critical praxis. These include "Speaking Prophetically,"[26] "Reflection,"[27] "Love for

---

[26] "Critique existing political, economic, and social structures, and formulate arguments against injustice and sinfulness in the world and in one's own community"

[27] "Reflect in sophisticated ways on one's own experience in the light of faith"

the Poor,"[28] "Discernment,"[29] "Service-Learning,"[30] and "Advocating for Justice"[31] (Anonymized, 2018). During our conversations together, though, Liz did not link these benchmarks to community service. Indeed, near the end of my visit to campus, she acted surprised when I pointed them out to her. Instead, she described service as logically connected to theology and the charisms of the school's founders, the Sisters of St. Jude. Because of who they were called to be as Christians, service was part of who they should be as a community.

The morning I met Liz in person, one of the first things she said to me was that "I have an idea for a service project!" (Field Notes, 25 October 2022). This was the first bell of the day, one of Liz's planning periods, and her voice was bright with excitement. She went on to explain that while she was in Washington, D.C. at the Ignatian Family Teach-In, she attended a presentation by a school in the Midwest that had implemented an innovative service-learning project, the culmination of which involved replacing school sweatshirts and sportwear with fairtrade brands. The project aligned with principles of Catholic Social Teaching, and it was something Liz felt she could get support to implement in the semester ahead. This would be how she would start integrating service into her instruction. When asked, she didn't share many details about the project, only saying she needed to think about it more. Yet her excitement persisted as later that morning, during her mentoring meeting with Julia, she brought this up again, explaining it was one of the highlights of her time in D.C.

***Analysis*.** As I noted above, these vignettes illustrate dimensions of Liz and Julia's pedagogy which have particular civic implications for students and community beyond the school. Community service, like that which Liz seeks to incorporate into her instruction, has long been identified with democracy and civic learning (Cipolle, 2010; Cipolle, 2004; Lee, White, & Dong, 2021; Winans-Solis, 2014), and volunteerism beyond graduation has often been identified as a measure of the lasting effects of such civic pedagogy (Sikkink & Schwartz, 2017). Likewise, developing legal skills may empower Julia's students in the future as they interact with the wider community of lawyers, law enforcement officers, landlords, and other legal agents. Both Liz and Julia express a desire for active pedagogy, which is engaged in the community beyond the classroom, yet as these vignettes illustrate, their practice is shaped, and often constrained, by the culture, norms, and community in which they teach.

Santa María schools are characterized by their corporate culture. As I explained in Chapters Two and Three, these schools train students to enter into elite, white professional spaces and operate there effectively. Northside is no different. This is particularly apparent in the history of Julia's Law Elective. Though this class leverages experiential pedagogy unlike any other course at Northside, Julia believes she is allowed to do this only because of the professional orientation of the class. Students are developing skills and networks that will serve them in the legal profession, a profession that requires a college degree. As such, it fits not only the culture but also the mission of the school, to get students "to and through college" (Anonymized, 2020). Further, the founder of the class was a donor to the school, who helped connect the school to corporate partners in the legal community. Indeed, this class might be understood as an extension of the school's corporate work study program, insomuch it strengthened the relationship with a corporate partner that also employed Northside's students.

[28] "Encounter Jesus in the face of the poor"
[29] "Utilize prayer and gospel values to make daily and long-term decisions"
[30] "Apply gospel values through service to others"
[31] "Organize and advocate against patterns of systemic injustice based in gospel values"

The need to maintain the professional demeanor of this relationship was reflected in Julia's extensive efforts to prepare students for their field trip to the law office. "Their house. Their rules," she reminded the students, as she prepared to discuss students' attempt at business attire. Not only did she ask students to define "professionalism," but she considered each student's planned outfit and provided personalized fashion coaching. This would be followed by in-person reviews of the outfits, prior to the field trip. Such coaching functioned not only to ensure that students dressed in a way befitting the corporate culture of Mark Stein, but it also functioned to sustain Northside's brand of young professionalism.

While this operated superficially to maintain the SMN's efforts at social reproduction (Bowles & Gintis, 2016), I suggest that by leaning so visibly into corporate culture and practice, Julia actually carved out space for her students to become more critically conscious and skilled citizens. Her desire to foster critical consciousness was evident from the conversations she facilitated in class and the text, by Chika Ekemezie, that she presented to students about professionalism. "Professionalism is just a synonym for obedience. The less social capital you have, the more you are tethered to professionalism." Julia actively created the context whereby students could, and *did*, name their reality in more critical terms. Students described how class and race worked together to influence the kinds of clothes they felt comfortable wearing in particular settings, including around their peers. This became the foundation for their written work defining "professionalism" in text and images, which in turn, would be used to craft their professional attire for Mark Stein. Thus, despite her claim that students were simply obeying the expectations of legal professionals – "Their house. Their rules."—Julia was actually encouraging her students to see clothes as an expression of culture, class, and power. With this critical consciousness, students would be empowered longer-term to use their clothing choices as a means to define themselves as they negotiated distinct professional and social environments in the future; though, during the course of the class, and especially during the high-visibility field trip, students were only empowered to become more critically conscious observers of and participants in corporate culture, vis-à-vis "professional" attire, rather than deliberate interrupters of it (e.g., by wearing clothes deemed unprofessional),

Aligning her curriculum with the corporate culture of the Network was, in practice, a strategic choice that masked Julia's more critical agenda, whereby students were empowered to read the corporate world and the word differently. While they might not be taking action in this class to transform that world yet, they were building the consciousness, cultural knowledge, legal reasoning, and writing skills that would empower them to be more effective change agents, and citizens, in the future. Given the emphasis that Northside's administrators put on traditional notions of pedagogy and, especially given how thinly stretched she and her colleagues were because of the school's financial constraints, Julia felt that this was as far as she, or any teacher at Northside could push their curriculum to reflect social justice commitments (Interview, 14 September 2022).

Though Liz was less developed in her practice, she too favored a similar strategy of aligning with the culture of the school in order to carve out space for more experiential learning. Rather than leaning into the corporate culture, though, as a Theology teacher and Campus Minister, Liz leaned into the mission and religious identity of the school as a means to obtain support for integrating service learning into her curriculum. The Sisters of St. Jude, who sponsored the school, were deeply committed to service and social change, and they were eager to invite students to work with them in the wider community. As sponsors, the Sisters had more social capital than Liz, a novice teacher, and so, not only could they help her and her students

understand the culture of the school more deeply, but they could act as bridges between her class, the wider community, and school leaders. Additionally, when a new Director of Campus Ministry was hired that shared Liz's interest in integrating service with the curriculum, Liz eagerly explored this possibility together—having multiple meetings before the start of her second school year, reading literature together about service-learning, and naming their mutual goal emphasizing with students the "why" of service. Beyond the school, Liz also invested time and energy exploring what other Catholic schools were doing by way of service-learning. Though Liz had yet to make this curricular shift toward integrated service-learning, by building these strategic relationships with multiple mission-critical actors Liz was consciously or unconsciously positioning herself well to transform the Theology curriculum in the interest of the school's mission. Given the banking-orientation of the school's leadership, noted above, Liz will likely need these allies and their missional support to make and sustain such a curricular transformation.

An additional norm at Northside that impacts both Liz and Julia's practice concerns the use of time. Teachers at Northside are expected to take on responsibilities far beyond instructional planning and delivery. All teachers and staff are expected to accommodate the college-going culture and norms of the school. This means adjusting to mandatory schedule changes, like when Julia's seniors were absent from class on Monday because of an all-class college campus visit. This is a typical feature of all SMN schools and academic calendars, as this practice is implemented to equip all students with intellectual and social capital about college-choice. While in more affluent communities, with multiple generations of college-goers, these students would likely be taken on campus visits by their families and aided in the college application/choice process by parents, most SMN students are first-generation college-goers, and so SMN schools assume responsibility for transmitting this knowledge to students through mandatory college visits, extensive college counseling, and family engagement in the application process. For instructors like Julia and Liz, though, this translates into lost instructional time and, often, invitations to volunteer as chaperones.

Another way in which Northside normalizes greater demands on Liz and Julia's time concerns the multiple roles played by each teacher. Liz holds two roles, as a fulltime teacher and Assistant Campus Minister, as well as an afterschool role as Drama Club Moderator. It was for this reason that she was absent from school on the Monday of my campus visit. In her capacity as Campus Minister, she chaperoned five students on a trip to D.C. to attend the Ignatian Family Teach-In. This required she work through the weekend, twelve consecutive days. Further, because of her absence during instructional time and Northside's internal-subbing policies, Liz had to prepare sub plans for her colleagues, who were tasked with covering her classes during their planning bells. This created a cascade effect, demanding extra time from a variety of instructors, on top of Liz's extra labor outside of school hours. Likewise, Julia held multiple roles, as a fulltime teacher and Humanities Chair. This latter role required she spend as much as a quarter of her school hours, five out of twenty periods, observing and coaching colleagues in her department. This left her only four periods a week to plan, and during the week I observed, one of those periods was taken by subbing duty, which Julia explained was a common occurrence. These significant demands on time are typical in resource-scarce schools (Sepulveda, 2011) and align with my own experience teaching in the SMN. Indeed, in a voice memo I recorded after my first day on campus, I reflected,

> As far as obstacles to teaching and doing your job, it's having a million other commitments and never having the opportunity to... just *do* your job. You always have to

> do your job *and* have snacks, *and* have band aids, *and* accompany kids on field trips, *and* go to extra meetings, *and* do coaching, *and* do [pauses] it's this *and* everything else. (Voice Memo, 24 October 2022, *emphasis* original)

Despite these significant demands, Julia chose to engage in a form of experiential pedagogy, through her Law class that placed significant additional demands on her time far beyond what traditional instructional methods would require.

As noted above, she held planning meetings in the summer and throughout the school year with her instructional partners, Mark Stein and Hood Rules. These meetings covered not only pedagogical content and logistical needs, but also required significant time compensating for the attorneys' lack of community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). Because they didn't understand the norms of urban education, or Metropolis schooling culture, she had to train them in what to expect and how to be culturally responsive partners when they came to her classroom. This mirrored, in some ways, the extracurricular labor Julia invested in preparing her students to visit Mark Stein's office. However, it differed, importantly, in the power and privilege afforded each group. Julia prepared the attorneys so they could talk with students more effectively; Julia prepared the students so they would be seen as more human. These are *not* equivalent aims. While the former empowered already powerful attorneys with cultural knowledge relevant to less-powerful students, the latter equipped less-powerful students with the skills to modify their behaviors and appearance to fit the normative expectations of privileged, professional spaces that had been designed to exclude them. Yet both aims required significant time and labor from Julia, far beyond what was typical of banking pedagogies. Further, it provides students and partners opportunity to practice civic skills like group deliberation, active listening, and inquiry. Accordingly, if Liz should prove successful in the future in implementing service-learning into her curriculum, this will also require additional investments in time and labor, beyond what she is currently doing and what is Northside's banking pedagogical norms.

Bringing these two groups together, students and Mark Stein attorneys and staff, for pedagogical aims may have generated particular civic value as well, as it widened the scope of the "we" of democracy. The more privileged lawyers and legal staff may have seen Julia's students as citizens capable of engaging in civic life, while the students may have understood these professionals as experts with particular civic skills worth learning from. Indeed, Julia suggested as much in an interview, when she explained that the students,

> They're *not* afraid. They're able to just talk to them as adults. And you know, the lawyers are coming in as the experts, but they're also like just there to get to know the kids, too. Like, they're not just lecturing at them about contracts. It's, you know, "Oh, I had this case! Blah blah blah." Like, they... make it interesting. And the kids are valuing like, "Okay. This expert came to... work with us on this topic." (Interview, 28 September 2022, min. 16:00-16:32).

This further suggests that by interacting with the attorney "experts," students may have perceived themselves "as adults," unafraid to direct their own learning and inquiry. As such, this way of learning together moves both students and community partners toward a more robust notion of citizenship, the "we" responsible for action in a democracy.

Aimed at Transforming Oppression

The third and final theme evident in Liz and Julia's practice was that they were "aimed at transforming oppression." Consistent with the provisional code by the same name, described in Chapter 3, the vignettes below illustrate ways in which "certain voices and knowledge are

represented in society and curriculum, while other voices are silenced" (see Appendix G). However, beyond my anticipatory framework, which emphasized classroom practices, these vignettes concern events both inside and outside the classroom.

Teaching for Critical Consciousness. I observed Julia on the last day of the colonialism unit. As her 11th grade American History students walked into class, there was a Do Now on the board.

> Think back all the way to last year…so long ago! - Describe what you know/remember about France's colonization of Haiti. - Describe what you know/remember about Spain's colonization of the Americas (DR, Mexico, Central and South America…). - Describe what you know/remember about African kingdoms and their responses to the slave trade. (Field Notes, 27 October 2022)

The bell began at 8:00 a.m., and most students present got to work quietly, pulling out notebooks and looseleaf paper to write their responses. A few students, mostly boys, continued to trickle in over the next few minutes. They looked at the board and also got to work. This was a routine they know well. As students entered, Julia stood at a podium near the door, where she had a laptop propped open, taking attendance. The few boys who entered late handed her white slips of paper before going to their assigned seats. Around 8:07 a.m. Julia encouraged the class with a little morning humor, "Those of you who had me last year, remember. 'It's all coming back to me now,' like Celine Dion said." Julia had taught most of these students the year before in World History, though a handful had dropped down from the honors track, where they studied AP Geography. Had they stayed, they would have been taking AP U.S. History with another faculty member. Instead, that morning some laughed, and others groaned at Ms. Friedman's cheesy jokes. The volume in class got gradually louder, hinting some kids were ready to move on, but most appeared to continue writing. So, Julia continued to let them write for another few minutes, before changing slides to a new self-directed task, a text analysis.

At 8:13 a.m. another girl walked in. "If they come for you, they come for you." Julia said to this student when it became clear she didn't have a tardy slip. The girl smiled to herself as she sat her things at her desk. It was like this was an inside joke between Ms. Friedman and her, as though they were gaming the system together, but she knows Ms. Friedman can't stop administrators if they choose to assert their power over her and her tardiness.

Julia began walking the room, checking on students' work. The students had been asked to read a text on the slide and identify three phrases in the text that were important. After she has looked at most students' work, she asks for volunteers to share the texts they chose and why. "Creole - it's a secret language which makes it easier to organize rebellion" explains the first student. Another student then reads a statement about Christianity and describes how it's "insincere to enslave" and continue calling oneself a Christian.

Then, Julia calls on a boy with his hand raised in the back of the room. "Yes, Louis?"

"Cultural hegemony! Ms. Friedman" Louis then went on to explain that what the French were doing in Haiti was cultural hegemony, controlling what was privileged culture and not. This phrase was written nowhere on the board. Louis had recalled this from last year. I was so surprised by this students' use of language, that I made a note to ask Julia about him later.

"Is Louis an exceptional student or is this recall typical?"

"The recall is typical for these kids" asserted Julia.

After reviewing the characteristics of the French and then Spanish colonizers of Hispaniola, the conversation turned to the English colonizers of the American mainland. Each conversation addressed dimensions of enslavement, and the conditions by which class, race, and

birth contributed to hierarchies of power and opportunities for freedom. Students were engaged in this conversation. Hands were raised and students leaned toward each speaker, following closely what was said about the lands their families came from. After each case had been thoroughly examined, Julia explained to the class, "Ms. Friedman is not going to rank slave systems. Not my place." At this, she put one hand on her chest and gestured with the other toward the text about French colonizers on the board. She then continued on, "This system was designed to kill people." She explained that the French system of enslavement didn't allow for a multi-generational society to form but simply replaced people, when they died after a few years. She drew contrasts between the French system and American one, which allowed enslaved people to reproduce. Students react to this claim for a few minutes, before Julia changed the slide from France to Spain.

While students got to work analyzing the text, Marcus, a chatty boy sitting near me pulled out his phone. This was the second time that morning he had done this. Earlier, he had explained to Ms. Friedman that his computer had died. They laughed together about this, but then, she reminded him that he could not have his phone out, even for notes. This was a school rule beyond her control. He seemed to understand, and the phone had disappeared for a few minutes. But now, the phone was out again. Julia came over and took his phone from him. She put the phone in a plastic box, which was designed to lock away the phone, and then, she placed the phone in the locked box on his desk, along with a Rubik's cube. The boy didn't resist at all, only reached quickly for the cube and started twisting it quietly, while his classmates continued to work identifying statements about Spanish colonization from the text on the board. The boy even started smiling to himself as Julia began walking away to continue class.

Louis was one of the first to volunteer his analysis about Spain. This time, he suggested that the way the Spanish managed Santo Domingo was like the Indian Caste system and the system of social class in Spain, which depended on the "blood system" and "phenotype." This response connected content on the board to a different unit and region of the world. Julia affirmed this connection, and little by little, teased out from various responses the ways in which this history European colonization fomented rebellion and resistance in the Caribbean and United States. This was where she was taking the class in the next unit, studies of revolution and struggles for liberation.

"What's the word when we are discriminating based not on race but color?" Julia asked the class, after a few minutes.

"Colorism!" several shouted out.

"I'm going to say something and then leave it there because it's not my place. Do you understand?"

"Yes"

She then asked, "Have we ever encountered a Black person who denies they're Black?"

"Yes"

"I'm going to suggest these are related." As she said this, Julia pointed to the slide of Spanish colonial caste system, indicating their emphasis on parentage *and* phenotype is related to the denial of Black identity. Some kids chuckle at this, sardonically. Clearly, this connection resonates with them. Julia then continues, "I don't want anyone to go home and say 'Ms. Friedman said slavery was good.'" This was the second or third time she made this request, each time after she'd pointed out that there were various types of slavery, some harsher than others.

After a few more minutes of conversation, and introducing one last term, "diaspora," to the class, Julia transitioned to a new activity: "Research Bingo." To win Bingo, students were

asked to analyze a series of claims and find evidence to support them, if possible. She explained they were doing this task to practice skills. They might learn some of these claims were impossible to prove, but whatever they cited, or didn't, they must be able to validate their choice. The kids didn't grumble, just got to work. A few moved around the room, tossing things out in the trash or turned to chat quietly with their neighbors. One student signed out and left for the restroom. As students worked, Julia walked the room, having conversations with students. More than simply looking at their work, Julia asked about students' lives. She broke into peals of laughter with Louis over a question about sports. She started laughing with another girl, Nadine, when she noticed that across the room that Marcus was poking at his phone. As she walked across the room, she clarified the instructions for the whole class. Then, by Marcus's desk, she crouched down to talk with him.

Julia realized Marcus couldn't work on the bingo without access to his phone. She asked if she would see TikTok, or if Marcus was going to work, like she'd asked. He verbally assented to working like she asked. Julia added, "If I see TikTok the phone isn't even going into the box; it's going home with me." He acquiesces, and she unlocked the box and returned the phone to him. She mumbled about "freedom!" and continued on her way. I noted in my journal, "This exchange has no visible animosity," as though I was expecting Marcus to bristle. He Didn't. He got to work quietly with the rest of his classmates.

A few minutes later, Ms. Bernard, looked in the window, through the closed door. One boy, Ali, is visibly out of uniform, sitting near the classroom door. Ms. Bernard sees him and opened the door, walked in, and told him to take off his hoody. He did, and she left. The room immediately got louder after her exit. I could hear some of the chatter near me, which was about her entry. A moment later, Ms. Friedman came over. First, she asked Marcus, who was sitting just behind Ali, if she said something about his phone. He shook his head, "no." Then, she asked Ali, the boy in the hoodie, what Ms. Bernard had said. Ali admitted that she only said to take care of the hoodie. "That's a *you* problem" Julia responded, indicating that his choice to be out of uniform was not a choice she was responsible for, and as I learned later, his choice would lead to a lunch detention. But Julia's immediate concern for Marcus suggested that she felt otherwise about his use of the phone. I was beginning to see why Marcus didn't bristle around her. She was fair. For him, she would confront administrators.

SSA Meeting. After the American History class was dismissed, students were still packing up their bags when Liz Sullivan popped her head into Julia's room. "Are you still interested in coming to the SSA [Student Support Accountability] meeting with me?" SSA was a group of school staff who worked collectively to respond to students struggling academically, behaviorally, or social-emotionally. Liz was the sole faculty representative in the group and had been since last year.

"Yeah, absolutely." I tucked my things into my backpack, expecting to trek to a new floor. Instead, we walked across the hall to the Assistant Principal's office, where Paul Lewis sat amidst golden-hewed maple, ready to facilitate the meeting from behind his desk.

I took the seat nearest the door, acknowledging with brief eye contact and a nod, the five other adults in the room—Paul, looking sharp with a crisp shirt and sports jacket; the Director of School Culture, Tina Bernard; a social worker; basketball coach, who also works in the Admissions office; and the Student Support Coordinator, Ben, who had graduated from Northside years prior. The coach joked about how overdressed Paul looked. He glanced brightly around the room as he responded with confidence, "I think it was Oscar Wilde who said, 'You can never be overdressed or overeducated.' Well, it's true." His colleague huffed at this, and a

few others laughed quietly but said nothing. No one in the room was dressed in such finesse as Paul, and their silence suggested they all knew it. His clothes marked him apart, like the paragon of Santa María Metro professionalism that he was. In the silence that followed, I wondered if others felt put down by this. If staff felt pressure to be acting more like Metro, did they also fell pressure to be dressing like them, too?

A few moments later, Paul collects himself and beings the meeting. “Who would like to take notes?” Liz immediately volunteers. She is sitting in the corner to my right, next to Paul, and she has her laptop ready. This is a role she seemingly knew.

In our conversations over the summer, Liz talked extensively about SSA. This was a group Liz associated with Northside’s mission, which she explained in our first extended conversation was linked to school culture and practice. “So, in the past, Northside has been very punitive in the way that they go about, like, reprimanding kids, and um, just not equitable all around” (Interview, 15 July 2022, min. 36:28-36:42). As Liz shared this, her voice was tentative, considering each word carefully. Then, her voice changed, growing confident and faster-paced, as she looked at the camera and continued.

> Ms. Sullivan: You know? Unfair to our students. And this past year, we tried to put restorative practices, like, instead of having detention, we would do restorative circles. Have you heard of circles?
>
> Kathleen Sellers: Yeah
>
> Ms. Sullivan: So that's what we did all year. So, whenever there was a behavior issue, social issue, whatnot, even like academic issues, even like if kids were late, we had tardy circles.
>
> Kathleen Sellers: Oh wow!
>
> Ms. Sullivan: Yeah, yeah. So, we would talk about it, and it, I think it went fairly well for us being, like, a new practice for the school.
>
> Kathleen Sellers: Mm-hmm
>
> Ms. Sullivan: We're, we've been leaning more on like second chances, and what that looks like for students and their vulnerable age. Um, so yeah, I think, I don't know I, And I don't know if this is too simple, but I think we've become a school that actively listens to our students, which I guess hadn't been the case beforehand. Like, the kids have never had a say, really, and I know this because we have a lot of alumni that work here... that are my coworkers,
>
> Kathleen Sellers: aa-ha
>
> Ms. Sullivan: who went here, when they were in high school, which is a really cool perspective
>
> Kathleen Sellers: Seriously

Ms. Sullivan: to learn from them as well. And I love that! I love it *so* much, and I have learned a *lot* from those coworkers. But, um yeah. So, seeing that contrast, I think, from their perspective and what it used to be, I think we are we're *listening* to our students and hearing their voices. And we've made changes based off of that kind of data that we've like gained. So, we so we've done like focus groups, a lot throughout the year, as well to like gain the sort of data, like how to how to make our school more...restorative, and what are some practices we can do, like, from the students perspective? ...

So, I've gotten to be a part of that firsthand because I'm on the SSA Committee, which is, I honestly, we've changed the title so many times. students support students support admin or something like. And so, we are the first...whenever there is an issue with a student. So, any of the faculty or staff can send us a name and what kind of issue it is, whether it's, like, a behavioral, academic, social emotional. And we kind of go through, and we do like case-by-case studies on all these students, and we try to meet them where they're at and how can we best help them. And, it's like a committee of, there's like six of us, and I, and I am the only teacher on the committee, which is like a cool perspective. Like, everyone else is like a staff member who works in different departments, and so, I think that's something that is newer to the school, as well as having that committee that looks at students uniquely, case-by-case, as well....and then, we've had the Assistant Principal pop in a few times as well, to gain their perspective. (Interview, 15 July 2022, min. 36:43-40:52, *emphasis* original)

SSA was the group that drove cultural change at Northside, and in Liz's first year on faculty, she saw that change moving in the direction of restorative justice and student voice. This was a collaborative group, trusted by administration with listening to and learning from students. Neither the Principal nor Assistant Principal were part of the group in Liz's first year. Ms. Bernard had been, under her old title of Dean of Students. Now, she was joined by Paul, the Assistant Principal.

He was a member of SSA when I observed their meeting. Not only did he host the meeting in his office, but he facilitated the conversation, which was dominated by Ms. Bernard. The first item on their agenda was new referrals.

"Only one new referral, and it's an attendance concern" Paul announced brightly. A few adults in the room offer comments. A boy is consistently showing up late to school on days he had math first bell. It had happened enough times as to merit a call home. Ben offered to make the call and ask for the family's support in changing this behavior. Once this intervention was noted, Paul moved on to the next agenda item: updates on existing concerns.

Several issues were raised about boys acting out in the locker room. This was especially serious for a few students because they were on contracts. Contacts were a disciplinary document created only for students who had multiple infractions of behavior and/or academic standing. The document laid out the school's expectations for that student, as well as the consequences for falling short of those expectations. Ms. Bernard had uninvited two students to the school dance, happening the next day, as a consequence of their choice to mouth off in the locker room, "because they're fourteen, but really nine" (Field Notes, 27 October 2022). The implication

seemed to be that the boys were not acting their age, and so, they did not deserve the privilege of being together with other students their age.

The coach described another incident that happened in the locker room after school hours, which led him to issue his first detention in his years of working at the school. Ms. Bernard interjected again, with a tone of annoyance, “The solution is to have an adult there in the locker room, but we’re being asked to cut back duties on non-teaching staff” (Field Notes, 27 October 2022). Since this was not an option, they agreed to lock the room indefinitely to deter boys from congregating there. The girls’ locker room as brought up, and someone asked if they would also be locked out. Ms. Bernard explained that this won’t be necessary, since the girls were behaving themselves. She then continued, “The theme for 2022-2023 is ‘time and place.’ I’m gonna have them write a one-page paper on this during lunch detention” (Field Notes, 27 October 2022). She went on to explain that the student contracts weren’t simply concerned with behavior in class, but how the students conducted themselves all the time. Because the students always represented the school, they should always behave in ways that reflect well on Northside. While behavior may change depending on time or place, it couldn’t violate those expectations.

When students were under contract, those expectations are enforced even more stringently, and failure to comply could result in suspension or expulsion, practices that had returned to Northside this year. Indeed, earlier that week, two students were expelled, one for behavior at school and one for behavior outside of it. This seemed a far cry from the restorative model Liz described in the summer.

> I think like that [restorative practice] also informs my teaching as well because we're kind of in this area that we're kind of evolving into a school that we want to be and the kind of school culture we want. And so, I feel like that's been helpful for me in my teaching, especially for my first year trying to create that, as well kind of based off of what I have been seeing from the top down, I guess. So like, these things [a dress code policy] were brought to our attention because of students’ voices, and we like held focus groups, and we... talked to students, and we got their feedback. And then, we brought it to SSA. And we've just we've discussed it, since then... and we just sent out like an email to all the parents and students saying like, “If you want to be a part of this, like you can sign up.” I think... it's next week, honestly. We're having like an open forum type thing where parents and students will come to talk about it. (Interview, 9 August 2022, min. 37:45-38:47)

Encouraging student and family voice was a dimension of school culture that Liz supported strongly. Indeed, it led Liz to one of the first and only disagreements with a school administrator in her first-year teaching. Liz explained in our second extended conversation,

> I did butt heads this past year, and it had to do with hair. And I think that's why it kind of like evolved into this big thing because I actually butted heads with the Dean of Students, because one of my students had long hair that was covering his eyes, kind of. But it was curly, and so, I don't know. It was like a part of his personality, and like he...liked his hair like that, and it didn't interfere with his learning. He was a good student. He did all the things but, like my dean was just like *so* fixated on the fact that she couldn't see his eyes at all times...because, like we were wearing masks. So, masks and then the hair was like down here. (Interview, 9 August 2022, min. 40:41-41:23, *emphasis* original)

Liz gestured with her hands toward her eyebrows, covering part of her face, then continued.

> She was so fixated on like “Oh, I can't see his eyes. He needs to get a haircut.” ...she would like call his parents and tell them to get a haircut. I don't know. Just like the

> regulation of that just didn't seem right to me, and I...was caught. He like would ask me to come talk to her with him every time, because he was like called to her office *all* the time to like comb his hair back. I don't know. It's like a *whole* thing. (Interview, 9 August 2022, min. 41:24-41:50, *emphasis* original)

When a student asked Liz to help make their voice heard with Ms. Bernard, she was able and willing to do so in her first-year teaching. She valued these restorative practices, learning from her alumni-colleagues how valuable they were, particularly in contrast to the retributive culture they had experienced as students. Liz was even willing to butt heads with Ms. Bernard, the former Dean of Students, when the SSA discussed these policies.

This vocal woman was nowhere to be found in the meeting I attended. After volunteering to take notes, Liz didn't speak again until the very end of the meeting. Following Ms. Bernard's comment that she would have the students write one-page papers, the conversation turned toward freshmen's misuse of study hall time. This was a mandatory period in each student's schedule, when they were given time to work on schoolwork quietly, under the supervision of teachers. Some freshmen were arriving to study hall late, lingering in the locker room beyond the end of gym class. Ms. Bernard explained that new teachers were probably the source of the problem because they weren't marking these students late. So, the students never received consequences for lollygagging in the locker room. Paul and Ms. Bernard banter about this for several minutes, before Paul concludes, "I think it's unfair to punish the students when the teachers aren't complying" (Field Notes, 27 October 2022). This seemed to settle the matter. The first-year teachers would be brought in line. Imposing a mandatory seating chart was proposed as the intervention, and Paul turned to Liz to make sure she'd recorded this action item. Liz confirmed that she had, and then, as though speaking once gave her the courage to speak again, she added, looking directly at Ms. Bernard as she did,

"Can the student reflections at lunch detention get shared with the teachers? It would go a long way to reconciling with teachers" (Field Notes, 27 October 2022).

Ms. Bernard paused for a moment, looking confused. Then her eyes widened a bit, remembering. "Yes! Of course. That's why I share the contracts." Liz didn't respond to this, just looked at Ms. Bernard and then back at her computer, silent once more.

Paul broke the silence to start wrapping up the meeting. He asked Liz to affirm a few action items had been recorded in the notes. Liz only spoke when spoken to, and she responded with concise, ready answers. Her notes were complete, and so, it seemed, was the SSA meeting.

***Analysis*.** In these vignettes Julia and Liz demonstrate actions aimed at transforming oppression within and beyond their school communities. To be "aimed at transforming oppression" inheres two distinct and related components. First, they must be able to name their reality today, with its systemic injustices. Second, they must also have a vision of how that reality could and should be transformed for a freer tomorrow (Behizadeh et al., 2019). For Julia, curriculum becomes a vehicle for moving from the already reality of race and class-based oppression to the not-yet vision of a more equitable future. Likewise for Liz, service in the SSA provides a means to name and change the cultural norms of the entire school from its current practice of retributive justice to a future of restorative justice. Consistent with Freire's theorizing (1970/1993), how both teachers understand and respond to their reality (i.e., read their world and the word) is impacted by the experiences they bring to bear on their practice. As I will describe below, those experiences include but are not limited to formal education, relationships with students, laws and policies, and social hierarchies that privilege specific voices in the school.

Julia's instruction and her students' participation show evidence of the critical pedagogical training that she received as part of her teacher preparation. Her students use precise language, like "cultural hegemony," to describe colonialism in the group discussion. Students don't talk about "slaves" but the "*en*slaved," showing through their grammar the humanity of the people oppressed by colonization. They even describe how language, like Creole, can be a tool to fight for liberation. These are complex ideas yet core to a critical reading of American History, a reading which Julia's engaged during her graduate studies in education. That students can draw these ideas and humanizing practices from memory of the prior year's class shows how integral they are Julia's classroom and teaching practice across grade-levels.

The content that Julia uses to facilitate instruction is directly related to the students she teaches. Most of them of part of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora. They have ties to Haiti and the Dominican Republic's history of French and Spanish colonialism, and this content is particularly relevant to their family's history and cultural identity. Yet, this content is not part of the prescribed curriculum in the state where she teaches. Rather, the state benchmarks for social studies emphasize skill-building for historical inquiry. As such, Julia has substantial freedom to draw on features of history to which her students can relate, while disregarding or deemphasizing those features that are less relevant to her students' lives. In the lesson described above, Julia emphasized that relevance by linking history, namely the Spanish caste system's emphasis on phenotype, to students' experiences of colorism today. This resonated with students, leading one even to point out a further link between these phenomena in the Americas and that of the Indian caste system. This suggests that Julia's emphasis on culturally relevant curricula contributed to her students' awareness of how they, their ancestors, and others around the world participated in systems of oppression and liberation.

The relationships that Julia has with her students is also integral to pedagogy. Not only does she craft her curriculum around the cultural identity of her students, a choice which requires personal knowledge of her students and their families, but her actions in this American History class show that she values their voice and fairness toward them in classroom interactions. School-level policies directly impact these interactions. Julia clearly knows school dress code and tardy policies. When a student walks in a quarter hour late to school without a mandatory tardy slip from the front office, Julia casually declares, "If they come for you, they come for you," prompting a knowing smile from the student. Julia is actively taking attendance, and records this student's arrival. If administrators check, they are likely to notice the discrepancy between her digital attendance and front-office absence. Yet, Julia's grammar suggests a fault line exists between the front office (i.e., school administration) and students, a fault line which keeps Julia from sending the student back to the front office to check in. "They" are those who would enforce strict rules, seeking to exercise power-over students. Julia's statement functions to wash her hands of the consequences of this student's actions while also implicitly affirming their choice. It's not Julia who will punish this student or force them to return to the office for a tardy slip. Rather, it's the enforcers outside of the classroom, who "come for you." While she won't condemn the student's choice or force them to align their behavior with school rules, this statement also suggests she also won't come to their aid if their caught. She makes a similar declaration to another student caught out of uniform, after Ms. Bernard's intrusion near the end of class. "That's a you problem." This positioning, and her students' responses, makes clear that both Julia and her students understand school policies about tardiness and uniform, recognize that specific consequences can befall students that violate those policies, and are comfortable with students exercising choice to adhere to those policies or not. If students are caught violating

such a rule, it's fair that they live with the consequences. Julia is not to blame. Indeed, her student's knowing smile suggests that Julia is seen as their co-conspirator, willing to help them game the system.

While Julia's inaction about some policies may foster loyalty from her students, her willingness to act on behalf of other students may foster even more loyalty from them. When Marcus couldn't participate in class because he struggled to focus, she tried repeatedly to provide the tools he needed to succeed. First, she redirected him. Then, she removed the phone he was using as a distraction and replaced it with a fidget toy, the Rubik's Cube, to give him a means to reengage. Finally, when Julia realized Marcus couldn't participate in class, because he didn't have a charged computer, she gave him permission to break school rules and use his phone, because that was the tool that was likeliest to help him participate fully. This was a safe decision for Marcus, as long as Julia was in charge of her class, but when Ms. Bernard entered the room uninvited and unannounced, it placed Marcus at risk. The haste with which Julia raced to his side and questioned both him and his classmate, to verify that Marcus was not penalized, suggests that this was a matter of deep concern for Julia. Further, after class, when Julia responded to my direct question about this intrusion by physically hitting her head against the wall and repeating over and over "This shouldn't be!" it was clear that Julia perceived Ms. Bernard's behavior as a problem. In this instance, it not only distracted the entire class for an extending period, causing the loss of instructional time, but it also created an obstacle to Julia equipping her student with the tools he needed that day to participate in class.

This same administrator was quick to problematize new teachers at the SSA meeting and voice her desire and efforts to control the movement and actions of students. When the group discussed two boys on their list of concerns, Ms. Bernard declared she had already disinvited them from the school dance, because they violated their contracts. When freshmen students weren't getting to study hall on time, she was the one to suggest that first-year teachers were the problem because they weren't marking students late. If they had marked students late, then Ms. Bernard could take punitive action against the students, but since they hadn't, she didn't have the data she needed to punish them. By depriving her of this data, the first-year teachers became the problem. The solution she named—that Paul, her co-administrator in the SSA meeting, agreed with—was to mandate teachers create seating charts for study hall to impose more control over student movement. Ms. Bernard seemed to be in the habit of leveraging both faculty and staff to exercise power over student behavior, so much so that she lamented out loud that she was supposed to limit her solicitation of non-teaching staff for extra duties. She named this as a problem in the SSA meeting because she claimed the solution to students misusing the locker room was to post a staff member there to monitor behavior. Since she couldn't do this, though, the alternative would be lunch detention, where she would mandate students write papers about the "time and place" for certain behaviors, papers she equated with the contracts used to delineate the conditions for students' retention or expulsion from the school. In each of these examples, Ms. Bernard signals her commitment to retributive justice, where administrators wield power over students and teachers.

It's important to note that while Ms. Bernard was the more vocal of the two administrators in the SSA meeting, both Paul and Ms. Bernard seemed prone to retributive accountability practices, that emphasized punishment of less powerful students by more powerful adults rather than restorative accountability practices that sought to transform damaged relationships into healthy ones (Helmick & Petersen, 2001). They both expressed value for control of students and novice teachers. For the second time in one week of observations, the

first being at the faculty meeting, Paul expressed his desire to pressure teachers to control the physical movement of students. As such, Paul's presence seemed to support and even amplify Ms. Bernard's retributive disposition, a disposition that functioned to oppress students and teachers through exercising power-over rather than power-with them.

This retributive disposition contrasted starkly with the restorative trajectory of the SSA, which Liz described in our summer conversations. That restorative SSA animated Liz and helped her grow and learn as a first-year teacher. When I asked her about the mission of the school, a mission Liz felt called to serve, the first thing she mentioned after Northside's Catholic identity was the restorative work of the SSA. Liz recognized, with her colleagues, that moving toward restorative justice was a deliberate choice for cultural change, transforming an oppressive culture that had habitually severed relationships with students into a liberating one, that received community concerns with the intent to sustain relationships. Liz explained that as part of these restorative efforts, the SSA became a group that listened to student, family, and faculty voice. This was a major change for the school, as were the implementation of restorative circles to address disciplinary issues. Yet, such practices were consistent with the Christian values of the school (Helmick & Petersen, 2001).

Nonetheless, by the time I arrived on campus, the SSA seemed to have undergone a retributive regression. Paul and Ms. Bernard dominated the conversation. Liz was nearly silent throughout the meeting. She did not volunteer commentary, nor was she asked for her opinion, despite representing the voices of the majority of staff at the school, as the lone faculty member on the SSA. Given how many faculty were affected by the choices made in the meeting I observed, this seems like a significant oversight. Consciously or unconsciously, Paul and Ms. Bernard demonstrated their comfort with faculty silence.

The one time that Liz did speak up, it was in favor of restorative justice. Liz asked to shift the tenor of lunch detentions by sharing student reflections with teachers, creating the opportunity to repair relationships between students and teachers, when they were broken by student choices. Clearly, she had not lost track of the transformational goal laid out the year before but was still interested in building a school culture where restoring relationships took precedence over punishment. This request was even more notable given Liz's first year teaching experience.

Prior to visiting campus, I asked Liz directly about when she felt successful as a teacher. The experience that she shared was a day, near the end of her first school year, when her students wrote reflections about her class. The students wrote these reflections during an afterschool detention, which she asked them to participate in as a result of weeks of particularly chatty behavior in class. Liz had kept track of every minute that they were off task in class, and she wanted them to realize that this time was significant for them both. So, she invited them to a detention of the same length of time that they had chatted off task during the semester. Recounting the reflections they wrote that day brought Liz to tears because, she explained in our conversation, it revealed how students understood her class was relevant to their lives outside of school (Interview, 25 August 2022). These reflections solidified Liz's resolve to persist in the teaching profession, after her first-year teaching.

In light of this experience, Liz's request may be understood as both an effort to persist in the cultural change toward restorative justice begun the year before—or perhaps interrupt the retributive regression that had occurred this year—as well as sustain herself and her colleagues in their professional labors. Only moments before Liz suggested this action, Ms. Bernard had problematized the first-year teachers' behavior and declared a mandate for them to control their

students' more. Accordingly, it makes sense that Liz would feel empathy for her first-year colleagues and want to provide them and students a means to rebuild relationships, particularly when such a similar practice helped sustain her vocation after her first-year teaching. Liz understood acutely the risk of retributive practices perpetuating oppression and the possibility of restorative practices transforming oppression. Yet, given Ms. Bernard's response and the lack of common understanding it revealed, there may be significant obstacles to implementing this or other restorative practices in the future. Indeed, the wider pattern of administrators engaging in retributive practices, like Ms. Bernard entering classrooms unannounced to enforce dress code, suggests retributive justice is and will remain a hegemonic cultural force that disempowers teachers and students at Northside.

This is concerning because, as these vignettes illustrate, when school culture disempowers students and teachers, it can create a myopia that limits if not altogether obscures efforts to name and transform oppression. Julia is better equipped to resist this myopia, having both training and experience in critical pedagogy. She can facilitate dialogue that equips students with precise language to describe their reality and that of their ancestors. She is comfortable choosing content that builds skills without reproducing the Western white canon. This scaffolds towards her longer-term goal: to build the skills necessary to start and complete a full research paper senior year (Interview, 5 October 2022). Julia understands that meeting this goal is essential to prepare students for college, and as such, it is core to the mission of the school. Nonetheless, Julia works alone to fulfill this mission-critical goal.

This isolation is a key way that teachers are disempowered at Northside. "I've been trying for years to not be the only person doing it" she explained to me in our final conversation prior to my visit to campus. "But it just Hasn't really happened.... not everyone in the senior class leaves having written a college level research paper: (Interview, 5 October 2022, min. 30:31-30:49). While this doesn't happen until senior year in her Law elective, we see in this American History class that she is preparing her students through the Bingo game to analyze claims, use evidence, and cite sources. Further, because she is one of the only history teachers at the school, and she has most students three years in a row, this scaffolding is particularly effective at developing these essential writing skills. Yet, she knows this is all the more important because other faculty are not engaged in this process. Curricular isolation creates pressure on her to focus her instruction on developing these literacy skills rather than the critical-analytical skills or action-orientation that would lead her students from talking about systemic oppression in class to taking action aimed at transforming it. This strategic choice may increase students' chances of succeeding in college, but it postpones indefinitely the experience of becoming critical, civic agents. Accordingly, curricular isolation constrains the horizon of transformative possibility.

Retributive cultural norms are another way that students and teachers are disempowered at Northside. This is true of Julia's and Liz's experience. While teaching American history, Ms. Bernard simply intrudes on Julia's class without warning or invitation in order to mete out judgment on a student who is behaving in a way she does not approve. This communicates that Ms. Bernard's judgment (and power) supersedes Julia's, even in her own classroom, behind a closed door, and is an example of how school administration used its power to subordinate both teachers and students. Unsurprisingly, this creates a distraction for Julia and her students, whose attention is drawn to Ms. Bernard's entry and remains distracted after her departure. While Julia raced to her students' aid, once Ms. Bernard left the room, the rest of the class buzzed and stayed off task for several minutes. Such class disruptions were a normal phenomenon at Northside, and in my week of observations I saw them happen three times, once with Mary, the Principal, and

twice with Ms. Bernard. Each time this happened, instructional time was lost. Given the administration's noted concern about students missing instructional time, it seems counterproductive to engage in this retributive practice, which contributes to significant lost time for whole classes of students at once. This is further concerning, because of the emotional toll it takes. Long after her class ended, when I asked Julia about this event, she tensed up and started hitting her head against the chalkboard while muttering, "It shouldn't be! It shouldn't be!" (Field Notes, 27 October 2022). These are not the actions of an empowered teacher.

Likewise, Liz's silence in the SSA meeting signals her disempowerment. While she asserted this was a group that had helped her grow and was working to change the school's culture to be more restorative, the group I observed seemed habituated to retributive practices. Even when Liz found her voice enough to speak up for teachers, hoping to create an opportunity to restore relationships between students and teachers, Ms. Bernard equated an existing practice, sharing student contracts, to this request. By conflating the contracts with the student reflection paper, Ms. Barnard revealed an inability to differentiate between retributive and restorative practices. As noted above, contracts were created explicitly to lay out the conditions by which students may stay or be forced to leave the community. Relationship was not a feature of the contract. Yet, restorative justice is explicitly concerned with restoring good relationship between aggrieved parties. Liz's request was predicated on the assumption that students in detention, who were asked to write reflections, had harmed relationships with their teachers. As such, reengaging dialogue, viz. sharing students' written work, could aid in healing that relationship. That is, it is premised on restorative justice. That Liz fell silent after Ms. Bernard's response suggests that she found Ms. Bernard's statement disempowering. Certainly, without understanding restorative justice practices deeply, it would be hard to support teachers and students pursuing them. And without administrative support, teachers may be unable or unwilling to continue working to transform the school's retributive culture into one that is less oppressive.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented six vignettes from Liz and Julia's practice at Santa María Northside that illustrate the themes of power, citizenship, and aimed at transforming oppression. While only two vignettes, regarding the events of a faculty meeting and mentoring meeting directly address the issue of power, all six stories reveal organizational tensions created by inequalities of power and different approaches to the use of power. While Julia and Liz admit to a more relational, horizontal approach to power, including power-with students and colleagues, consistent with critical pedagogy, Northside's administrators demonstrate a commitment to more traditional notions of school hierarchy, where administrators exercise power-over teachers, who in turn exercise power-over students. This is complicated by the school's dependence on corporate partnership, which further subordinates student and teacher interests to the cultural norms of the school's corporate partners, including Mark Stein, the corporate law firm where Julia planned to take her class on a field trip. Such hierarchal power relationships functioned to reproduce oppressive norms within the school, controlling student movement within the building; student appearance/clothing within and beyond the building; and pressuring teachers, particularly those novice teachers, like Liz, with limited social capital, to conform to banking pedagogical practices. Nonetheless, both Liz and Julia find ways to resist the power structures that seek to constrain their social justice commitments and the critical pedagogical practices they inspire.

Julia's years of professional experience in law and teaching and training as a critical educator empower her with the social and intellectual capital necessary to teach critically and set firm boundaries in a school culture that places significant demands on teachers' time. This leads her to creatively exit the faculty meeting at the time of her choosing, rather than engaging a conversation that she finds distasteful. Liz, by contrast, has less social and intellectual capital as a novice teacher without formal teacher training. Not only does she expend extraordinary amounts of time working as a teacher and campus minister—she worked twelve consecutive days the week I visited campus, but she faces particular resistance to her practice from Paul, a new administrator from a nearby Santa María high school with a reputation for stringent accountability. Liz is deeply affected by Paul's resistance to her teaching style, and only the seasoned and confident support of Julia helps her regain her equanimity during their mentoring meeting.

Both Liz and Julia pursued curriculum that would enhance their students' abilities to participate in democracy and serve the good in common. That is, they cared about citizenship. This led to their shared desire for active, engaged curriculum. Both teachers wanted to get their students out into the community. Both teachers wanted to support their students working for justice. However, both teachers faced limitations in translating these goals into pedagogy. Those limitations included the corporate culture of the school, which equated professionalism with academic rigor, and time constraints—from the academic calendar to their multiple professional roles and responsibilities beyond regular instruction. Both teachers found their practice enhanced, though, by working with others and leaning strategically into the school's identity. Julia leveraged the school's corporate identity to mask some of the more critical, consciousness raising that she facilitated with her students. For example, because she insisted her students look and act like professionals in visible spaces, as her administrators and community partners would imagine they should, these same powerbrokers didn't pay attention when Julia simultaneously discussed in the privacy of her classroom the ways professionalism oppresses the marginalized. By teaching her students the rules of power and privilege, she empowers her students with the tools they can one day use to enter those halls of power and, eventually, break those rules. While Julia leverages Northside's corporate identity, Liz leverages its Catholic identity to pursue her plans to integrate community service to her curriculum. Though she has not yet attempted to do so, by aligning herself closely with the new Director of Campus Ministry, who shares Liz's interest in service-learning and who also is responsible for monitoring the school's service requirement, Liz is building the institutional support she will need to radically change her curriculum and do so in the name of the Catholic identity of the school. Further, by drawing on the experience of other Catholic schools, she strengthens the mission-alignment of this curricular choice.

In the final section of this chapter, I described how Julia and Liz engaged in practices that aimed to transform oppression. The events of one American History class illustrated how Julia used curriculum as a vehicle for naming systemic injustice in the past and analyzing how that connected to her students' lives today. Similarly, Liz's participation in the SSA meeting illustrated the challenge of transforming school culture from retribution-focused to restorative justice. Though Liz had expressed great hope for the work of the SSA, based on her first year working with the group, the meeting I observed showed strong signs of retributive regression. Though Liz clearly advocated for instantiating restorative practices, the response of her administrator, and the lack of understanding about restorative justice that their response revealed,

suggested that the road toward cultural change may be more difficult because of what appears to be a lack of administration support.

Unveiling

I emailed Liz and Julia a draft of the findings chapter between Christmas and New Year's, while Northside was on holiday break. We met the second week of January to discuss their reactions, using the questions from the Unveiling Protocol (See Appendix F) to guide our conversation. Similar to my unveiling interview with Mariana and unlike prior interviews, this conversation began with an extended period talking casually, as though I was seeing an old colleague. We discussed our holidays, family, and life outside of work, before finally turning our attention to the interview questions.

The first topic that emerged from these conversations was how much I discussed life outside the classroom.

> The major question I kept coming back to when I was reading it was like...Where is it going? Cause it feels like there's so many different threads and stuff that I was just like, okay, you've ...talked about like the Santa María stuff. You've talked about the discipline stuff. You're talking about this and talking about [*pauses thinking*] But like where? Where's the ultimate end? Like, where is it going? What is this in service of? I guess, was my major question as I was reading it. (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 2:24-2:59)

Questions surfaced around my decision to focus on outside of classroom context and pedagogy.

I admitted that their intuition was correct. I was trying to learn about something beyond the classroom, but I asked if I could share my answer after they responded to the other questions in the interview, in case my explanation would influence those responses. They agreed, then proceeded to give a concise assessment of the chapter.

> I think it's pretty, like, I don't want to say it's like totally authentic to *my* experience, but I think it's definitely authentic to *your* experience of us. I'll make that distinction... I think, based on what you saw during that week...I think the descriptions and the connotations, and... the connections you made, like that all makes sense to me. I think it was interesting. (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 3:50-4:20, emphasis original)

Where my experience differed, they suggested, is in my sensitivity to the suggested rivalry between Santa María Northeast and Santa María Metro.

> The Santa María Metro stuff is sort of something you noticed, but ....I will tell you you are the *only* person I've talked about Santa María Metro with this entire like [*paused*] .... I don't think there's a big rivalry so much. Like, I don't think the kids are thinking about Santa María Metro at all. *I* certainly don't think about Santa María Metro, or the Network at all when I'm doing my thing. I think it was something we talked about at that moment.... So again, from your experience coming in, there are Santa María to Santa María schools like, how do they interact? That makes sense. But for us we, I don't think any of us have like a chip on our shoulder or think about them like at all to be honest. (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 5:04-6:10, emphasis original)

I acknowledged that this was a narrative choice, partly informed by my own experience of previously working in the Network. This led them to observe, "having it all the way at the beginning makes it sort of permeate through like, 'Oh, this is something that's that they're thinking about' instead of making it clear that this is how your lens of understanding us" (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 6:33-6:46).

I agreed with her assessment and went on to explain why I was so receptive to this tension. When I was teaching in the Network, during beginning of year PD, we would be shown comparative Network data, and Santa María Metro was regularly lifted up as a paragon that we should be aiming for, from their test scores to business outcomes. They were the school to which we were encouraged to compare ourselves and strive to be like. When I finished this explanation, they acknowledged, “I will say, we don't have those meetings. We don't ... have Network data meetings or any like, we don't do that” (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 8:52-9:03). I then added that another reason I made this narrative choice was that I “was trying to figure out your assistant principal and the rest of the school” (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 9:17-9:30).

Immediately, they responded, “The focus on Paul did surprise me, like that he was even something that you were writing about” (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 9:30-9:49). However, they affirmed my portrayal of him. “His perspective on education...the things that he was saying, like absolutely... It made sense to me” (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 10:17-10:25). They explained that my portrayal of Paul was particularly interesting in light of what I wrote about the SSA meeting and what they knew about its history.

> It's interesting to me because I remember. So, you didn't get to meet Dr. B, who was our assistant principal last year ... And she's the one who initiated the SSA meetings. Like, she helped start those. And so, knowing her thoughts about—I was gonna say the justice system. That's not what I mean. I'm so tired. But I—her thought about like discipline. And yeah, things like that. I'm just like, okay, she's gone. And now, I see where we're going with this. (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 12:09 – 12:44)

They said this with a level tone, as though having accepted as inevitable the trajectory of this group, aligned with new power and relational dynamics.

In the rest of our time together, our conversation wound organically through small details that could improve the accuracy of the work – a word choice here, a time frame there—and eventually turned toward what things had happened at school, since my visit. Policies continued to change. Most notably, the Network

> told Mary specifically...that she and Paul needed to be instructional coaches, because so many teachers don't know how to teach. So, the department chair shouldn't just be like, ‘Oh, like I put a Do Now up and grade it.” Like, they have a specific curriculum that they are supposed to meet with people and literally teach them how to teach. Is that happening? No. But that role was taken from department chairs and given to Paul and Mary because the Network was like, “You've got a big problem.” (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 19:09-19:46)

This change was made shortly after my visit in October, which had taken place shortly after a visit from the Network to address how Northside was meeting the SMN’s Mission Effectiveness Standards. After discussing this situation for a few minutes, I went on to ask, “Do you have a sense of why they may not be in engaging in that consistently?” (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 21:03-21:08) to which they responded,

> I think their time. So, I think they *schedule* all these meetings. And then, you know, Mary is on the phone with a parent, or like, there's nonsense going on in the locker room. Or like on Friday, we had five teachers absent. And so, Mary and Paul were both covering classes. *All* of us were covering classes. (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 21:09-21:34, emphasis original)

While the intent to implement this policy change was acknowledged, logistical constraints made this unfeasible. While Mary and Paul struggled to implement this change, Department Chairs, like Julia, were leveraged less to support teacher development, allowing them slightly more time to pursue other professional responsibilities during the school day.

As the conversation wound to a close, we discussed two structural issues in the text: anonymity and theoretical framing. They were interested in the ways that readers might or might not recognize the location of the study. We discussed a few changes that had helped anonymize the work already, and actions were suggested, like changing a few pseudonyms, to help further anonymize the work. Then, I returned to her first question, "Where is it going?" I explained my interest in critical pedagogy and citizenship education, and the reason I was concerned with this language because of recent controversies in education about critical race theory and related topics. I asked them directly if this choice might have shaped this study, to which they responded,

> I would have had less imposter syndrome... But I understand, like why coming to a Santa María school and being like "I would love to study a critical educator." like how that wouldn't have gone so well everywhere. (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min.4:33-41:03)

They, too, recognized that context shapes educational discourses, including our own.

Unveiling Analysis

The unveiling process contributed to the co-creation of this chapter and wider discourse in four ways: factual, analytical, thematic, and theoretical. Further, consistent with the aims of portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) it helped the participant to see their practice in new ways. For example, when reflecting on the SSA meeting, and the written contrast between Dr. B's intent for the group and current practice, she observed "now, I see where we're going with this." This language suggests that through this unveiling, the participant has become more aware of their institution's trajectory, a trajectory of which, they acknowledge, they are a part.

The first way in which the unveiling process contributed to co-creation is through verifying facts. While the participant read the document, prior to our meeting, they observed a few small errors in the text. During the interview, they provide direct feedback about how to improve the accuracy of this text without compromising anonymity. Further, we discussed some word choices, and identified ways to improve the tenor of specific passages.

As noted in Chapter Three, a key layer of portraiture analysis is the process of writing the portrait. Accordingly, this unveiling process provided feedback on the analysis I had conducted through writing the portrait. My participant observed that my narrative choice to highlight Santa María Metro suggested, wrongly, that the tension I highlighted was forefront on their mind. While they made clear that this was not so, they also affirmed my characterization of Paul and his influence at Northside, a characterization I examined through my description of Metro. Accordingly, while it may be the case that my participant was not consciously thinking about Santa María Metro with any frequency, they were conscious of and impacted by the leadership practices of Paul and his cultural habits, which aligned strongly with the distinct culture of Metro. As such, their reflection seems to confirm that their day-to-day experiences at Northside were indirectly impacted by Metro vis-à-vis the influence of Paul.

Similarly, this unveiling reflection seemed to affirm my portrait and analysis of the changes that have unfolded during this school year. Specifically, my portrayal of the SSA meeting reflects administrators' prioritization of power-over rather than power-with faculty and

students. This is consistent with changes in SSA group membership, which were guided last year by Dr. B, whose approach to discipline was distinct from the retributive, power-over practices that have been adopted this year, under the leadership of Paul and Ms. Bernard. Further, the participant's recollection of changes in SSA dynamics, "I remember...", reinforces the value of teacher experience. In this example, we see that even one year at Northside generated significant changes in both the SSA organizational priorities regarding power and teacher perceptions of that power. Given that the teachers in this study were critically oriented, they may have been particularly attentive to such power changes, both in practice and in discourse, like this chapter.

This unveiling conversation also revealed new data about how the SMN effected educators in this study, through their direction to school leaders to change teacher coaching practices. Rather than supporting the department chair-led teacher coaching model, which had been implemented at the beginning of the year, after gathering data on campus in October, the SMN directed Mary and Paul to take over teacher coaching and implement a structured curriculum to "teach them how to teach." It is not clear that top-down mandate included any additional financial or material resources to support this action. Nonetheless, it required significant scheduling changes for administrators and faculty, which have not yet resulted in the instructional coaching demanded by the SMN, due, potentially, to time constraints on Mary and Paul's schedules. This impacts the teachers in my study in two ways. For Julia, this means she is required to do less instructional coaching than she had previously been assigned, a choice that frees up her schedule in a limited way but also functions to disempower her, by not drawing on her intellectual capital as a highly trained critical educator. Accordingly, Julia may be less able to support her colleagues in developing critical pedagogical skills. Likewise, for Liz, this means that she is regularly reserving time on her schedule to meet with her administrators and have them observe her instruction, but her administrators are not reliably keeping those meetings. This reinforces the power-over dynamics between administrators and teachers, forcing teachers, especially novice teachers, to adjust their schedules to the whims of administrators' schedules. When administrators cannot consistently show up for meetings or provided promised guidance, it may impact the trust and feelings of support teachers have toward administrators as well as create added time pressure on teachers. Lack of supervisory support and trust as well as time pressure, in turn, have been shown to increase teacher stress and intention to leave the profession (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016). Accordingly, this unveiling interview shows how the SMN's power-over Northside administrator practice created a cascade effect, likely to increase novice teacher stress, decrease veteran teacher empowerment, mitigate the transmission of critical pedagogical knowledge, and so far, seems to have failed to achieve its purpose to deliver structured instructional coaching to SMN teachers. These outcomes may have been exacerbated by resource scarcity, like a lack of time, energy, or funding to hire specialized coaching staff.

The fourth and final way in which this unveiling interview contributed to the co-creation of this chapter is through the affirmation of critical theory and further reflection on the methodological choices this framework precipitated. Reading this chapter led my participant to question the framing of this study. When, at the end of our conversation, I shared that my research interests related to critical pedagogy, not just social justice educators, they were immediately receptive to this framing. Had they been told this directly, they admitted that "I would have had less imposter syndrome." This suggests that social justice pedagogy is perceived differently than critical pedagogy, and further, that critical pedagogy may actually be a more inclusive concept for some teachers. Nonetheless, they admit that my reasoning for this

methodological choice makes sense within the context of the SMN, because the SMN might not receive well inquiry about critical educators.

Chapter 6: Discussion & Conclusion

Introduction

In this study, I set out to examine the professional experiences of teachers in the Santa María Network engaged in experiential, community-based pedagogy, who exemplify a commitment to social justice through their practice. As I explained in Chapter One, such practice resembles critical pedagogy and aligns with best practice in quality civic education. Put simply, critical educators are quality civic educators. Therefore, by examining the experiences of critical educators, this study aimed to illuminate ways we can enhance civic learning for K-12 students by enhancing support for and removing the barriers to their distinct pedagogical practice.

This is particularly important for Students of Color, who have faced historical exclusion from formal and informal modes of civic learning (Campbell, 2012; Lo, 2019). Exacerbating this issue, in recent decades, exclusionary and individualistic forms of civic learning have typified K-12 curriculum and citizenship discourses, even while more inclusive forms of critical citizenship discourse have proliferated in the academy (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006). Researchers know that quality civic education should be "infused with a spirit of criticality" (Stitzlein, 2021, p. 33), but few teachers and policymakers are taking action to make this happen. As I explained in Chapter One, Jane Lo (2019) challenges this status quo, arguing that America owes a "civic debt" to Students of Color, which should be paid through quality civic education. Through this study, I attempted to respond to this civic debt by studying the experiences of three secondary educators in the Santa María Network who, because of their distinct pedagogy and work context, are likely defy contemporary trends and provide a quality civic education to Students of Color.

I chose participants from the SMN for three reasons. First, as a former experiential, community-based educator in this network, I was able to draw on my personal experiences to inform my research. Leveraging this insider knowledge is consistent with portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Second, despite national trends in civic learning, students from Catholic schools have consistently shown greater civic competencies than their public-school counterparts, a phenomenon known as the civic advantage (Campbell, 2012). While little is known about its cause, scholars have theorized that the ethos of Catholic schools contributes to its civic advantage (Campbell, 2012). Third, the SMN is a Catholic network of urban secondary schools, which predominantly serve Students of Color (Anonymized, 2022a). Accordingly, the SMN context aligns with my study aims and methodology.

Through this study, I also sought to answer two key research questions. First, *why do teachers in the SMN engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy?* As previously noted, this question drew attention especially to the internal factors, like teacher disposition and formative experiences, which shaped teacher practice. This aligns with research on the experiences of critical educators, which suggests that a distinct internal disposition is the most consistent characteristic shaping critical educator experience (see Chapter One for details). Yet, these educators are also shaped by external factors in the wider ecosystem in which they work, factors which can create pressures on teachers to un/consciously contribute to social reproduction (Bowles & Gintis, 2016). This was a key feature of my theoretical framework, which blended

critical theory and social reproduction theory. Accordingly, I also collected and analyzed data related to the sub-question question: *What institutional and/or community influences (e.g., church, state, corporate partners, families, and/or community partners) impact the work of experiential, community-based educators?* By understanding deeply the internal and external factors impacting my participants' practice, I was well-positioned to respond to my second key research question: *How do these educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness about and through their work?* As noted in Chapter Two, this question draws directly on the second feature of my theoretical framing, critical theory, particularly Freirean (1970/1993) notions of critical consciousness and civic courage (1998). Today, such civic courage may be more necessary than ever, as America continues to wrestle with the contingency of its democratic institutions.

In the sections below, I first summarize key findings, which respond to each of these research questions. I then discuss the implication of these findings for extant literature, theory, and methodology. In the final section, I identify areas where future research is needed.

Key Findings

This study revealed that both internal and external factors contributed to the choice teacher-participants made to engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy. Professional ecology, consisting of local school and corporate cultures, were particularly influential on these teachers. As I detail below, that ecology functioned in distinct ways at each study site to both aid and obstruct the critical teaching practices of teacher-participants. Despite the obstacles they faced, these teachers all expressed dimensions of critical and/or civic consciousness through their pedagogical discourse, relationship-building, and professional practices. However, each teacher also expressed struggles with Freirean duality (Freire, 1970/2005) as they recognized and responded, to varying degrees, to the hegemonic forces at play in their professional contexts. I detail these findings, in order, in the sections below.

Why Participants Engaged in Experiential, Community-Based Pedagogy

The data generated from this study suggests that the three teacher-participants—Mariana October, Julia Friedman, and Liz Sullivan—engaged in experiential, community-based pedagogy for primarily two reasons. First, their interior life was guided by a distinct moral vision, which motivated their professional choices. Second, they had professional training that informed their approach to teaching and, to varying degrees, reinforced their moral vision.

Moral Vision

Consistent with the literature on the experiences of critical educators, detailed in Chapter One, teachers in this study were animated by their moral vision. That interior moral vision included a robust notion of and commitment to social justice. Through their work as teachers, each participant expressed the belief that they could and/or should make a difference in the lives of their students, helping to transform systemic oppression faced by their students through their teaching practice in and beyond the classroom.

Consistent with their respective professional training and life experiences, they expressed their interior moral vision in distinct ways, including through the lens of criticality, liberation theology/ministry, and an ethic of solidarity or accompaniment. Julia Friedman, who had worked as an attorney before entering a critically-oriented master's program in education, drew on her critical pedagogical training to express her social justice ethos. This was especially evident in the discourse and artifacts she used in her teaching, like posters on her classroom walls, which

challenged capitalism and colonialism, and the language she used to describe and analyze historical and legal phenomena with her students, like "freedom", "hegemony", and "liberation." Liz Sullivan, who had been trained in ministry and Christian theology, drew on these theological foundations to inform her notions of social justice, which prioritized relationship and "cultivating this environment [where] questions are allowed.... questions to deepen your thinking (Interview 1, 25 July 2022, min. 3:27-3:49). This is similar to Mariana October's notion of social justice, which includes "valuing other people's ideas" (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 1:08:00-1:09:00) and walking "*with* our students and others" to solve problems facing the whole community. (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 30:00-30:25, *emphasis* original). This solidarist understanding of social justice was informed by Mariana's immersion in Magdalena spirituality, during her earliest years teaching at Magdalena Santa María, when she lived in community with Magdalena sisters and learned through their words and actions how to live out their particular vision for social justice.

Together, these teachers' interior moral visions animated their external pedagogical practice. And as I detail in the next section, the reason they used specific teaching strategies hinged largely on the kind of teacher preparation and professional development that they received outside of their school context.

Skills and Training

Each teacher in this study had graduate-level training and/or professional development in their respective areas of instruction. This training and development equipped them with specific instructional skills, from which they drew to shape their teaching practice. Accordingly, the data suggests that these teachers chose to engage in experiential and/or community-based pedagogy because they had filled their instructional toolbox, so to speak, with the teaching strategies and skills necessary to teach in this way within their discipline.

Further, the distinct training each teacher possessed equipped each teacher in distinct ways. Julia Friedman's training in law and education prepared her to teach across the humanities, and her legal training positioned her particularly well to instruct the law elective, which Julia felt was as far as she, or any teacher at Northside could push their curriculum to reflect social justice commitments (Interview, 14 September 2022). Further, the critical alignment of her teacher training program shaped her critical consciousness and equipped her with skills appropriate for conscientizing her students. This program included training in culturally responsive practices (Ladson-Billings, 1995), that drew on students' community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). Further, the strategic choice her professor made to place her as a student-teacher at Northside, because of the opportunity for mentorship from other critical educators working there, reinforced her training in critical pedagogical practices. Then, when she was hired at Northside, her induction into the profession continued to support this critical pedagogical development.

Liz Sullivan's approach to practice was shaped by her training in ministry and theology, which emphasized the value of strong relationships for Christian life. Liz was particularly interested in liberation theology, which I explained in Chapter 5 is an approach to theological inquiry that has been shaped by Freirean thought (Morales-Franceschini, 2018) and begins with human experience and leads toward more abstract insights. This approach to theology also informed her approach to teaching practice, in which she sought to cultivate "this environment [where] questions are allowed.... questions to deepen your thinking" (Interview 1, 25 July 2022, min. 3:27-3:49).

Mariana October's teacher practice was informed by both teacher training in mathematics education and extensive professional development, especially through the Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative. Mariana's initial teacher training, through a bachelor's in mathematics education, was reinforced after her first-year teaching as a Magdalena Volunteer, when she engaged in the Santa María Network's summer professional development program, "High Impact Instructional Strategies." This program equipped Mariana with "instructional tools to help keep students engaged that were also fun" (Interview, 13 July 2022, min. 8:05-10:25). After about a decade at Magdalena, Mariana began a master's program in education, which she pursued independently, as well as initiating participation in SVMI with her whole math department. Together, these experiences equipped her with new skills to teach mathematics more collaboratively, creatively, and equitably, using such strategies as Math Talks (Parrish, 2011) and equitable grading (Feldman, 2018). Such strategies encouraged her students to learn from their own and each other's insights and arrive at solutions in multiple ways.

While these differing professional development opportunities guided these teachers' choice to engage in experiential and/or community-engaged pedagogy, each teacher seemed differently equipped, by virtue of that training and PD, to engage in this practice. For example, Liz, who did not have significant training in pedagogy, demonstrated a limited repertoire of instructional strategies during the period of this study. Yet, the strategies she did demonstrate most strongly emphasized student-teacher relationship and student-centered inquiry. Conversely, Mariana, who had the most extensive training in pedagogy, directly expressed in the unveiling interview discomfort in talking about cultural identity and related power asymmetries. By contrast, Julia, who had trained in a critically-oriented teacher-training program was particularly comfortable and adept in discussing cultural nuance. This suggests that even highly experienced and trained educators may not be equipped by their teacher-preparation or other professional development to name or respond to culturally linked problems of practice. Further, as indicated in Mariana's unveiling interview and consistent with research on cultural labor distribution in urban Catholic secondary schools (Sellers & MacKenzie, 2022), when white teachers are not equipped with these skills, or choose not to engage in culturally-relevant pedagogy, Faculty of Color often take on additional cultural labor to address issues facing Students of Color. This organizational dynamic points to topics addressed in the next section: the role of context.

As I have explained above, each teacher in this study engages in experiential and/or community-based education because of their ethical commitment to social justice and the training and professional development that they received, which equipped them to support this ethical commitment through their pedagogy. In the following section, I explain how the context in which each teacher practiced, and the social reproductive forces at play in that context, had a strong impact on the ways that each teacher deployed those skills in service of their social justice vision.

Institutional and/or Community Influences on Participants. The data from this study shows that participants were strongly influenced by institutional and community factors. These factors included school colleagues, community partners, education policy, and dimensions of school and corporate culture. Below, I summarize ways in which these factors enabled and/or obstructed teacher-participants' practice.

School Colleagues. Both Santa María Northside and Magdalena Santa María were characterized by a high rate of faculty and/or administrative turnover. This impacted participants in distinct ways.

At Magdalena, administrative turnover was high, with a new principal every 3-4 years, but teacher turnover had been more modest. As Mariana explained in Chapter 4, "We have always had a really good mix of strong veteran teachers and... new but super devoted teachers. We always have that mix, and a big part of that is just...good leadership" (Interview, 15 September 2022, min. 57:42-58:01). That quality leadership was consistent, even though administrators turned over frequently, and some of that leadership came from teachers. Because of her longevity at Magdalena, Mariana able to build substantial social and intellectual capital, over time, leading her to be trusted by the interim principal, Sr. Martha, with leadership of the ILT. This social capital had developed while Mariana and Sr. Martha worked together for over a decade, as faculty at Magdalena, prior to Sr. Martha being asked to serve as interim principal. Similarly, Mariana's practice was supported by her faculty colleague Kate, who she had worked with for many years in the math department, when they went together to advocate for the critical interests of their students during the grant meeting. Because they knew each other's practice so well and shared a common vision for the math department, they were able to work in solidarity and thereby, approached funding needs from a more powerful position. While Mariana has benefited significantly from low teacher turnover during the time of this study, as she revealed in the unveiling interview, one must wonder if these benefits will persist in years to come, given the number of new hires that Mariana expects in her department next school year. Even though this turnover is not yet certain, the possibility is already constraining Mariana's planning regarding the grant application.

Santa María Northside has experienced higher levels of teacher turnover and administrative turnover in recent years than Magdalena Santa María. This created distinct challenges for Liz and Julia. As a new teacher, who had minimal training in pedagogy, Liz needed support building her teaching and classroom management skills. The high levels of teacher turnover meant that few faculty had the skills to provide this mentorship, and no faculty were tasked with this during her first-year teaching. Instead, her principal, Mary Francois, designated herself as Liz's mentor. While Liz described Mary's guidance very positively, and even said Mary was the reason she felt confident joining the faculty, the unveiling interview raised questions about administrators' availability, generally, to provide quality pedagogical mentorship because of their time limitations. Further, the feedback and assistance that Liz received in her second year from other administrators, Paul Lewis and Tina Bernard, directly obstructed Liz's attempts to build strong relationships with her students, an essential feature of critical pedagogy.

Further complicating both Liz and Julia's practice is high administrator turnover. As explained in the unveiling section of Chapter 5, Dr. B had a very different vision for the SSA group than her administrative replacement, Paul, exhibited during my observation. This may have explained why Liz's early account of SSA was so positive, because it focused on restorative justice, consistent with Dr. B's vision, while the SSA meeting I observed, facilitated by Paul and affirmed by Tina Bernard, emphasized retributive justice. This example illustrates a wider phenomenon at the school, whereby frequent changes in administration contribute to frequent changes in school policies and reduced administrative capacity, changes that have negative spillover effects for faculty. This is one reason why Mary may have described her faculty as "resilient." They have needed to weather years of organizational instability, and those few teachers that have remained have needed to take on greater responsibilities, like Julia chairing the humanities department and providing academic support after school or Liz working in multiple roles, as both a teacher and campus minister. Despite this instability, these findings

suggest that critically-minded educators can support each other, and in cases where one educator is more experienced than the other, a veteran critical educator, like Julia, may be particularly well equipped to help induct a novice educator, like Liz, into the profession and support her pursuit of critical pedagogical practices.

Together, the data from this study suggests that school colleagues directly impact critical educator practice for good or ill, contingent largely on whether they share values with the critical educators. While sharing values with colleagues (e.g., solidarity) sustained critical practitioners, divergent values with colleagues obstructed their practice. Accordingly, school leaders may be in a particularly strong position to sustain critical educator practice by fostering a school culture and hiring (and retaining) staff, faculty, and school leaders that share values consistent with the social justice aims of critical pedagogy.

Community Partners. The teachers in this study engaged a limited number of community partners. This was surprising for two reasons. First, one of the selection criteria for the study was that educators be "experiential and/or community-engaged." As such, I anticipated that school leaders would nominate participants who had strong ties to the community expressed curricularly through collaboration with community partners beyond school faculty and staff. I signaled this in my anticipatory framework (see Appendix G) through references to "authentic audiences," "wider community and families," and "authentic dialogue / exchange of ideas w/ others inside / outside classroom." Second, this anticipatory framework was grounded in literature on critical and quality civic pedagogy, which suggests that partnering with stakeholders in the wider community (e.g., families, community groups, etc.) can facilitate transformative action beyond the classroom, which is typical of critical pedagogy (see, for example, Black (2015) and Sellers & Knight Abowitz (Forthcoming)), and in my own experience as a critical educator in the SMN, numerous community partnerships were a core feature of my practice. Nonetheless, community partnership is not an essential feature of all critical pedagogies, and so, the limited partnerships do not foreclose the relevance of these relationships to my participants' experience.

Indeed, those few partners that were engaged were shown to have a positive impact on participant practice. Sr. Ruth had a positive impact on Liz's first-year teaching practice by both contributing to Liz's knowledge of the charisms of the school's sponsor organization, the Sisters of St. Jude, and serving as a guest lecturer in her class to introduce students to potential community service opportunities through various initiatives led by the Sisters. Hood Rules, a non-profit law education organization, and Mark Stein, a corporate law firm, were two long-term partners that enhanced Julia's ability to engage in experiential learning with her law elective students. They specifically enhanced instruction by providing legal experts to visit Julia's class and engage students in real-world conversations as well as host students during an educational field trip to the Mark Stein office. These contributions, however, were tempered by the differing positionalities between Julia's students and Mark Stein and Hood Rules staff. Cultural difference required that Julia take on additional cultural labor, outside of regular instruction or planning, to prepare these partners to work well with her students and conversely, for her students to fit well in the professional environment of the Mark Stein office. Further, Julia reported that Northside's administration did not necessarily welcome curricular partnerships, going so far as to assert that if she wanted a Holocaust speaker to come to her world history class, a choice that would have aligned with her curriculum and social justice aims, she was likely to face obstacles from her administrators. Julia's experience suggests that teachers in this study may have engaged in so few community partnerships because they faced obstacles to building and/or maintaining such partnerships, both through the cultural labor required to sustain them and through the school

administration's negative view toward community partners they perceived as unaligned with corporate professional pipelines. If community partnerships are beneficial to critical educator practice, as the data from this study suggests, then one way to support these practitioners would be to mitigate the obstacles they face to building and sustaining these partnerships.

Education Policy. Education policy operated at different levels and from different sources (Mitra, 2018) – state, church/SMN, and school—to impact the practice of participants in this study for better and worse.

At Northside, multiple school-level policy changes functioned to obstruct Liz and Julia's practice. This was evident, for example, through changes to the student bathroom policy, which undermined teacher authority, relative to administrators, while amplifying teacher power-over students. As I explained in Chapter 5, administrators' emphasis on hierarchical, power-over practices challenged Liz and Julia's ability to build strong and equitable relationships with students, a practice consistent with critical approaches to pedagogy. Further, the variability of school policy further obstructed Liz and Julia's practice, because it was both enervating, sapping their energy as they were forced to adjust to policies they didn't agree with or consent to, and isolating, insomuch as their ethical commitments (e.g., student autonomy to leave the class when needed, restorative justice) were not expressed by the policies dictated by their school leaders.

By contrast, data from both Magdalena and Northside suggested that teacher autonomy, enhanced by state-level education policy, contributed positively to their respective practice. This was true for Julia and Mariana, both of whom taught courses prescribed by the state. For Mariana, curricular freedom meant that Magdalena was a school where teachers like her were free to try new approaches to curriculum and instruction. Further, in her unveiling interview, she contrasted this freedom from her public school counterparts, who were beholden to more government control over their instructional practices. Accordingly, Mariana linked teacher autonomy with curricular innovation. Similarly, at Northside, Julia recognized that both teacher autonomy and state-level curricular focus on academic skills, rather than historical content, allowed her the freedom to make her course culturally relevant for her students. Liz, too, valued instructional autonomy. As she explained in our first conversation, "I love that about the school .... the autonomy that I get in my teaching and being able to incorporate things like liberation theology...in a Catholic school" (Screening Interview, 12 July 2022, Min. 13:25-15:31), and as I noted above, liberation theology is a form of theological inquiry that begins with human experience, rather than more traditional, top-down forms of theological inquiry often favored by U.S. Catholic leaders (Sellers, Forthcoming). Accordingly, curricular autonomy, supported partly by the state's general disinterest in religious instruction due to anti-establishment commitments, better-positioned Liz to make her pedagogy relevant to her students' lives. Together, this data confirms existing literature that suggests high levels of curricular freedom positively impact teacher's critical practice (see Dorman (2012)).

School Culture. Tara Yosso (2005) described culture as "behaviors and values that are learned, shared, and exhibited by a group of people" (p. 75). Each school in this study had a distinct culture. Evidence from this study suggests that two key features of those school cultures impacted my participants' practice: organizational trust and willingness to collaborate.

High levels of organizational trust empowered educators in this study, while lower levels of organizational trust were disempowering. At Santa María Northside, Julia recognized that as a veteran teacher, she was trusted by her administration to manage her classroom and facilitate instruction with very limited oversight from her administration. As such, she felt comfortable deciding, for example, whether to adopt prescribed school-level policy changes. However, she

had a low level of trust in her school administration's support for critical approaches to pedagogy or practice. This led her to disengage from many policy-related discussions, for example leaving the faculty meeting early, and constraining the curricular innovations she might want or imagine, like inviting a holocaust survivor to speak in her class. Further, in the faculty meeting which I attended, Mary's portrayal of parents as antagonists to teachers communicates a low level of trust between the school and families. In addition, when I met Liz over the summer, she seemed to have a higher level of confidence in her administration, voicing her belief that she could bring concerns to SSA or her mentor-principal, Mary, and be taken seriously. However, when I visited campus, Liz's actions at the SSA meeting did not reflect that same confidence. Rather, she sat silently most of the meeting, and the one time she did speak up in the interest of restorative justice, she was quickly silenced by her administrator's lack of understanding. This suggests that a culture of low-organizational trust may have had an enervating effect on teachers at Northside, particularly those teachers engaged in experiential, community-based pedagogy.

Conversely, data from this study suggests that Magdalena is a school with high levels of organizational trust. This was evident through the trust families placed in the school, for example, when they reached out for aid to support of a sick family member. It was further evident in the way Mariana described her relationship with both school leaders and the ILT. Sr. Martha, for example, trusted Mariana to serve as the first teacher at the school to lead the ILT without an administrator present, and the way Mariana described her ILT colleagues, it was clear that she trusted them to work as a team to engage in action research to improve teaching across the school. Similarly, Susie, in the development office, trusted Mariana and Kate's vision for the math department so much that she assumed the role of a co-conspirator in the grant application process, even though the school was clearly dependent on outside funding to sustain operations. This data suggests that high levels of organizational trust at Magdalena supported Mariana's practice.

The second feature of school culture that impacted participants in this study was willingness to collaborate. This was particularly relevant for the relationships between faculty. At Magdalena, consistent with the charism of the Magdalena Sisters, who value solidarity between teachers and the community they serve as well as quality teaching, the teachers demonstrated high levels of collaboration. At the department meeting, all math faculty practiced skills for equitable grading, working together to analyze individual practice and deliberate about how to approach similar grading practice in the future. At the grant meeting, Kate and Susie worked in concert with Mariana to advocate for grant funding that would best serve student interests. At their co-planning meeting, Mariana and Cristina worked together to align their freshmen curriculum seamlessly, ensuring a common, detracked learning experience for all 9th graders. Further, this supported Cristina's induction into the faculty and the teaching profession more generally, as she was only in her 2nd year teaching. Finally, the ILT collaborated daily, by meeting together to discuss data collection, analysis, and plan for future professional development. The administration supported this extensive collaborative work by creating teacher schedules that allowed for common planning periods and limiting the classes that Mariana taught. Altogether, Magdalena's culture of collaboration enhanced Mariana's teaching practice. Yet, data from the unveiling interview suggests that Mariana may face difficulties in the future, when a large number of new hires, unfamiliar with this collaborative culture, join her department.

Conversely, Santa María Northside exhibited low levels of collaboration, particularly between faculty. Julia described an ongoing struggle to get colleagues to join her in teaching

research skills to students. She acknowledged that being able to write a research paper was essential to her students' college-readiness and so, central to her school's mission. Yet, she was the only faculty member who required her students, in her law elective, to write a research paper. She scaffolded these skills vertically, integrating a variety of research skills at each grade level that she taught. Nonetheless, she admitted that working independently on this essential skill was not sufficient to meet the college-ready goals of the school, and more, it took time away from more critical pedagogical pursuits that she might otherwise engage. Liz described similar resistance to faculty collaboration, beginning during her orientation to the school, when her colleague refused her invitation to collaborate in junior year instructional alignment. Liz also described difficulty collaborating with Ms. Bernard, in administration, when she asked for limited classroom management assistance, but received a very different, and harmful, level of classroom intervention. The outlier to these two experiences was the relationship between Liz and Julia, who shared educational values for critical pedagogical practices. Julia provided empathetic encouragement to Liz during my campus observation, supporting her choice to teach authentically and build relationships with students, even against the advisement of their school administrator. These findings reinforce the data from Magdalena, and further suggest that a lack of collaboration between faculty obstructs the practice of teachers in this study.

Corporate Culture. The last organizational factor that impacted the practice of teachers in this study was corporate culture. This was a feature of the culture of both schools I visited and was related to the business model of Santa María schools more generally, which depend on the Corporate Work Study Program for school revenue. This had both positive and negative impacts on the practice of teachers in this study. For Mariana, corporate partners shaped the moral vision behind her practice. As I explained in Chapter 4, she imaged that her students would lead a regional corporate partner one day, an outcome that would be transformative for the community. Given the role that mathematics plays in gatekeeping or opening doors to such professional pathways, Mariana saw this future possibility as motivational for her work today.

Conversely, corporate life shaped the school culture of Santa María Northside. Ms. Bernard, a former CWSP leader who now was the Dean of School Culture, and Paul Lewis, a new assistant principal from Santa María Metro, anchored this dimension of school culture. Data from my interviews and school observations showed that these administrators encouraged conformity with the superficial trappings of corporate life—uniform, control, notions of academic rigor that are expressed in standardized metrics—and tried to reproduce this corporate culture through top-down mandates. This resulted in limiting Liz Sullivan's ability to grow as a teacher and engage authentically with students, and it shaped Julia Friedman's experiential learning curriculum. While Julia realized this emphasis on corporate culture opens space for her experiential class in law, it also means she has to play into this culture, within that class, to ensure ongoing institutional and partner support. Accordingly, the way corporate culture is reproduced at Northside fundamentally obstructs the practice of teachers in this study.

How educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness

As indicated in Chapter One, the development of critical consciousness inheres a kind of civic consciousness, an awareness of one's identity as a citizen, capable of contributing to "the historical process as responsible Subjects" (Freire, 1970/2005, p. 36). Teachers in this study demonstrated such consciousness through their ethical struggles, pedagogy, concern for student voice, and collaborative practice.

Participants in this study struggled ethically when they faced contradictions between their ethical commitments to social justice, noted above, and the practical and/or organizational constraints of their teaching context. This was particularly evident at Santa María Northside, where the corporate culture shaped school-level policies that obstructed Liz and Julia's critical pedagogical practice. For both teachers, building strong and trusting relationships with students was a key priority, yet when administrators pressured each of them, at different times, to exercise greater power-over students, these participants were resistant. Liz voiced her resistance to Julia about the change in bathroom policy, which would control students' movement around campus, and she lamented, in that same conversation, how Tina Bernard had taken over her junior class the week prior, creating a fissure between Liz and her students that she felt compelled to heal. Yet, as a novice faculty member, she demonstrated fewer resistant behaviors, a choice consistent with her more limited social capital and concomitant power asymmetries. By contrast, Julia affirmed Liz's voiced concerns for these policies and practices, but she went a step further in her own resistance by simply choosing not to implement the more controlling bathroom policy. Further, when Tina Bernard entered Julia's class one day to chastise a student, Julia was ready to defend a nearby student, Marcus, who had been using a phone for a class assignment, in direct contradiction of a school policy. Though Ms. Bernard ultimately didn't notice or penalize the phone use, Julia's willingness to defend Marcus emphasized her value for sharing power-with students and struggling with them to oppose what she perceived as inappropriate applications of power-over them.

Through their pedagogy, each teacher demonstrated varying degrees of critical consciousness. For Liz, this was particularly evident through her commitment to fostering a classroom culture where students felt comfortable raising questions. This aligns strongly with Freire's (1970/2005) notion of problem-posing education. Julia's pedagogy extended the notion of problem-posing education to include more critical language to facilitate students naming their lived experiences of oppression, for example "colorism" and "cultural hegemony." Further, she consistently invited students to draw connections between these lived experiences and historical events. This helped make her classes culturally relevant to students and may explain why students in her class were particularly engaged in each discussion. As Freire suggested, learners must first read their world, in order to read the word (Freire, 1970/2005). However, Julia was also conscious of the limits of critical pedagogy within the context of Northside, and she wrestled with the duality (Freire, 1970/2005) of embracing the appearance of corporate culture, through her law elective, while using this façade to both mask more critical inquiry into topics of her students' choosing and obtain organizational support to pursue experiential learning with her students. Though Julia knew there were ways she could be more critical in her pedagogy, she believed that if she were to pursue them, including more local community partnerships, she would be obstructed by a lack of organizational support.

By contrast, Mariana was strongly supported in many of her critical pedagogical practices by both her administration and faculty colleagues. They both supported her approach to engaged, problem-posing mathematics education. Her department colleagues cooperated with her daily in planning lessons and/or practicing more equitable approaches to grading. Further, through the ILT, Mariana was able to examine the wider practices of the faculty, and encourage all faculty, through action research, to pursue more quality pedagogy. Given her reaction to one observation of banking pedagogy, it seems clear that this ILT work places priority on more problem-posing and relationship-grounded pedagogy. For all these critical practices and interventions, Mariana was also conscious of the limits of her own pedagogy, which she admitted could be much more

project-based and respond more concretely to community needs outside the classroom. Yet, she also recognized that what she was doing already was valuable, because it provided students a "gateway" to "reaching [their] dream" of completing college and joining a profession. Further, she acknowledged that "being able to have students *find value* in different ideas," an essential civic skill and disposition, was a key contribution of her practice.

This aligned with Mariana's more fundamental value for student voice, a value shared by each participant in this study. This was particularly evident in the vignette described in Chapter 4, when Mariana was deeply moved by her colleague calling on a student, Josué, by the wrong name. Later, when she saw this student on his own, her first reaction was to communicate with him, eye-to-eye, that "It's okay to tell *any* adult your actual name" (Field Notes, 13 September 2022). This notion, that students can speak for themselves, and the implication that adults should listen and learn from them, aligns with both Freire's notion of learner-teachers and teacher-learners (Freire, 1970/2005) as well as the disposition of civic agency (Price-Mitchell, 2015). Accordingly, this value, and Mariana's expression of it, demonstrate both critical and civic consciousness.

The final expression of critical consciousness, evident from the findings in this study, is the collaborative practice of each participant. Such collaboration demonstrates a commitment to sharing power-with others, rather than power-over them. It humanizes their practice, and as such, aligns strongly with critical consciousness. Within Northside, which has a culture of non-collaboration, Liz and Julia resist this cultural norm by reaching out to their colleagues to invite collaboration. One of Liz's first actions as a new teacher at Northside was to invite her faculty-colleague to collaborate in planning the junior religion curriculum. While he rejected this invitation, Liz continued to invite colleague collaboration, for example, inviting Ms. Bernard to assist for a few minutes in her junior classroom, the week before my visit to campus. Though this invitation did not result in the outcome she sought, it still showed her willingness to work with others, find joint solutions, and respect potential of sharing power-with others, rather than over them. Similarly, Julia reported reaching out to colleagues repeatedly over the years to invite them to collaborate in scaffolding research-skills across the curriculum, though her colleagues were yet to accept this invitation. By contrast, Magdalena faculty and staff were very receptive to Mariana's invitations to collaborate. As a result, I was able to observe multiple examples of Mariana building power-with her colleagues to enhance pedagogy, grading equity, and fundraising. Further, I was able to see how Mariana facilitated collaborative practices in her curriculum, including in every class multiple opportunities for students to teach and learn from partners, groups, and student contributions to math talks. In Mariana's practice, math was a process of walking with others to find multiple pathways toward a common end.

By focusing on expressions of critical and civic consciousness, this study revealed how my participants' internal ethical commitments were expressed through external actions with students, faculty, administrators, and community partners. Further, it helped draw attention to places of harmony and tension between their internal disposition and the actions it motivates and their professional ecosystem. In so doing, these findings show that school leaders and colleagues may sustain the practice of critical educators by supporting policies and practices that encourage equitable and justice-oriented pedagogical practice, uplift student voice, and foster collaboration between colleagues.

Implications

The findings from this study both affirm and add to existing literature, theory, and methodology. In the sections below, I address these implications in order. First, I return to the literature on citizenship and teacher experiences in Catholic schools, to illustrate how this study adds to our current knowledge. Then, I describe how this study adds to contemporary discussions of critical and social reproduction theories. Third, I explore the implications of my findings for methodology, paying particular attention to issues of participant selection, study context, and unveiling. I conclude this section with a discussion of my study limitations.

Literature

This study was premised on the understanding that civic learning is essential for American democracy. That democracy serves a religiously pluralistic society, where the rights of citizens to be free from the state's establishment of religion has been balanced by their right to freely exercise their religious faith. This balance between the institutions of church and state has been scrutinized by the U.S. Supreme Court, during the time of this study, and within schools, the right of free exercise of religion has been elevated by the Roberts Court, in ways that call into question the very nature of public schooling (Carson v. Makin, 2022; Kennedy v. Bremerton School District, 2022). The provision of quality, inclusive, and equitable education for all students – that is, the democratic aim of schooling (Labaree, 1997)—is fundamentally challenged by these rulings, which effect both public and non-public schools (Yoon et al., 2022). And as the democratic aims of school are challenged, so too, is the civic debt we owe to Students of Color (Lo, 2019).

Also during the time of this study, the public discourse around civic education and democracy has changed tenor, moving away from decades of framing as political left vs. right, Civic Republicanism vs. Liberalism (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006), to a more fundamental choice today between authoritarianism and democracy (Biden, 2022; Weiner, 2022). Religious institutions have been implicated in this rise of authoritarianism, especially by fueling white Christian nationalism (Gorski & Perry, 2022), even as historic and contemporary movements for inclusive democracy, and the critical citizenship discourses which support them (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006), have been grounded in grassroots religious organizing (Barber, 2020; Garrow, 2015; Zinn, 1980). As I explained in Chapter One, Paulo Freire was intimately familiar with this same struggle between authoritarianism and democracy (Freire, 1996), and he understood that institutions of church and state influenced this public discourse and the outcomes it catalyzed, especially through education.

This study, through its contributions to the literature on citizenship, civic education, and the experience of critical educators in Catholic schools, is highly relevant for our times. While U.S. education policy continues to change under the Roberts Court, reconfiguring the relationship between church and state in schools, these policy changes have significant implications for educators in schools and their ability to contribute meaningfully to civic learning across the curriculum. Teachers like Liz, Julia, and Mariana, who engage in critical teaching practices in urban Catholic schools, stand at the forefront of these changes and as such, are ideally positioned to contribute to our knowledge of how school leaders, community partners, teacher-educators, and colleagues can actively support and/or avoid obstructing the work of such educators, within and beyond Catholic schools.

Citizenship

This study contributes to contemporary discourses on citizenship and K-12 schooling by first, affirming the relationship between quality civic education and critical pedagogy. Second, it affirms the importance of understanding the experiences of educators delivering quality civic education. Third, it incorporates religion into contemporary citizenship discourses in ways that are responsive to our times. Fourth, it affirms existing literature regarding the importance of professional development and teacher experience for critical practice and civic education.

In Chapter One, I argued that critical educators are also quality civic educators, and I summarized the alignment between these approaches to pedagogy (see Figure 2). The findings from this study affirm this claim. This was particularly evident through the strong ethical aims expressed by each participant, high levels of student engagement in their classrooms, and the cross curricular and multi-grade level nature of participants. Teachers in this study taught across humanities and STEM subjects and all secondary grade levels. As I explained earlier in this chapter, each teacher was motivated to engage in their distinct form of pedagogy because of strong ethical commitment that align with notions of social justice. Finally, within the classroom, both Julia and Mariana, veteran teachers, facilitated highly engaging pedagogy, while Liz, a novice teacher, voiced a sincere commitment to avoiding "banking education" (Freire, 1970/2005) and fostering a class where all students feel comfortable asking questions and engaging in dialogue. In addition, all three teachers conceptualized success as having their class be perceived by students as relevant to their everyday lives. The only factor that was inconsistent in their teaching, though it was present in their consciousness and implied through their practice, was an action orientation. For example, Mariana admitted that she would like to engage in more project-based learning, like creating water collection systems for the wider community effected by drought but was constrained by efforts to detrack the curriculum in an effective and equitable way. This detracking process was, itself, a way her whole department was trying to interrupt systemic oppression within their school. And so, even while her students were not engaged explicitly in action beyond the classroom, by virtue of participating in a detracking program they were engaged in a form of action. Further, and more explicitly, Mariana asserted that the way she approaches Math instruction intentionally fosters with students value for diverse forms of knowledge and recognition of multiple ways of problem solving. She recognized that such values are also part of social justice, and matter for her students' development and the way they contribute to community.

This study further contributes to existing literature on the experience of teachers delivering quality civic education. As I noted in Chapter One, existing literature, if it examines civic educator experience at all, looks at that experience in a piecemeal fashion (Behizadeh et al., 2019; Black, 2015; Misco et al., 2018; Rodriguez & Briscoe, 2019). By contrast, this study examined civic educator experience wholistically, considering how organizational factors; state and local policies; religious institutions; community partners; and teacher training, experience, and disposition interacted to influence participants' practice. As I detail further in the following section, this wholistic portrait illustrates avenues for numerous actors to positively influence civic learning by supporting and/or removing obstacles to civic educator practice.

In this study, I make critical citizenship discourses relevant to a wider discourse community by incorporating religious institutions into my discussion. Not only does this respect the theopolitical antecedents of critical pedagogy in Catholic social movements and moral reasoning (with all its civic implications) (Freire, 1998; Gigacz, 2012; Kirylo & Boyd, 2019), but it brings citizenship discourses (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006) up to date by acknowledging

the strong influence that religious institutions have long had on American politics (Barber, 2020; Gorski & Perry, 2022; Zinn, 1980). Given trends in education policy today which favor a rebalancing of church-state relations at the expense of educational equity (Yoon et al., 2022), it will be increasingly necessary that we can critically reflect on the relationship of these institutions to schooling and the civic learning that happens there.

The findings from this study affirm existing literature that suggests teacher preparation and formative experiences beyond traditional schooling shape critical educator practice and, through that practice, civic education (See, for example, Behizadeh et al., 2019; Black, 2015; Morrell, 2004). As I explained earlier in this chapter, the formal education that Liz, Julia, and Mariana received shaped both their approach to practice and the skills they were able to apply through that practice. Julia's training in a critically-oriented master's program in education and Mariana's professional development with SVMI, which advanced her skills in collaboration, equity-oriented and engaging instructional strategies, were particularly valuable for shaping both the skills and dispositions of these educators. Further, formative experiences outside of traditional schooling contributed to their moral imaginaries. Liz's ministry in Haiti, Julia's time working in the law and struggling as a student with banking pedagogies in Catholic schools, and Mariana's spiritual formation as a Magdalena Volunteer contributed to the way they viewed the world and their role as educators. Consistent with critical citizenship discourses (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006), each of these teachers expressed an inclusive approach to their practice.

Julia and Liz went so far as to assert that their training and experience led them to choose to teach in ways that deliberately diverged from the banking pedagogies that they had experienced in school, including Catholic schools. Julia and Liz's experience aligns with Rosalyn Black's (2015) analysis of the emotional lives of critical civic educators. Black found that when a participant in her study worked in a school with a culture unsupportive of critical practice, like Santa María Northside, this teacher found ways to support their distinctive pedagogical practice by anchoring their "maverick identity" (p. 377) in distinctive formative experiences outside of their professional practice. While Black (2015) found this strategy was effective at the time of her study, she also noted that the emotional investment required to maintain a maverick identity "exposes [them] to the risk of marginalisation within the pedagogical culture of the school that is [their] immediate professional environment" (p. 377). Accordingly, without the institutional support of their school and colleagues, Liz and Julia may struggle to sustain their critical practice in the longer term, an outcome which would undermine the democratic aims of schooling (Labaree, 1997), because "if the critical agenda of active citizenship is excluded from schooling, then a socially just and equitable society may well be unattainable" (Black, 2015, p. 385).

Teacher experiences within Catholic schools

The findings from this study are largely consistent with the literature reviewed in Chapter One. Participant experiences were shaped by school funding issues (Joseph et al., 2017; Miller et al., 2021; USCCB, 1986), neoliberal logics (Apple, 2006; Freire, 1998), and features of Catholic culture (Groome, 2021; Miller et al., 2021). However, Catholic social thought (Mich, 1998) did not consciously influence their reasoning, or resistance to neoliberalism, as much as I had anticipated.

During the past half century, one of the pervasive concerns of research on U.S. Catholic schooling has been constraints on school funding precipitated by changes in school enrollment and staffing by religious orders of women (Lannie, 1972; Miller et al., 2021; O'Toole, 2008).

This is one of the reasons that the Santa María Network has been extolled within Catholic circles, because it presents a new funding model that, at least until the pandemic (Anonymized, 2020; 2021), seemed to overcome the funding limitations of tuition-dependence faced by urban Catholic schools (Donovan & Thielman, 2017). Further, because of its service to racially and economically marginalized students and its success in opening pathways to college for them, the Santa María Network has been lauded as an exemplar of Catholic mission (Miller et al., 2021). Yet, Miller and colleagues (2021), in their review of more than a decade of literature on urban Catholic education, noted that Santa María

> schools have successfully supported low-income students of color when *the models have been implemented with fidelity.* Yet these studies also noted the significant social and financial resources required to operate these network models with fidelity, which is an organizational and operational deterrent for many urban Catholic schools seeking to intentionally serve these communities in more effective ways. (p. 19, emphasis added)

This summary glosses vaguely the intense practical and ethical struggle of urban Catholic education to pursue missional fidelity. By focusing on the experience of critical educators within two distinct Santa María schools, my study paints a more complex portrait of urban Catholic education, and in so doing, highlights the relationship between school funding, teacher identity, and critical pedagogical practice.

School funding, characterized by resource scarcity, was a pervasive influence on the critical educators in this study and the life of the schools where they worked. It shaped participants' use of time, long-term planning, and professional development. This aligns neatly with research on critical education, which I presented in Chapter One, because their approach to pedagogy is generally more labor-intensive and requires more resources than traditional banking instruction (Billig, 2011; Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Perumal, 2016; Sepulveda, 2011; Zembylas, 2021). Despite the consistency in this research, few studies have explicitly examined the particular ways that resource scarcity affects critical educators in urban Catholic schools, focusing instead on organization-level studies (Miller et al., 2021). Those studies showed that "urban Catholic school educators, like their urban public school peers, spent most of their organizational time finding ways to continuously improve their academic operations" (Miller et al., 2021, p. 13).

My study adds to this picture by illustrating the varying ways teachers coped with scarcity at their respective schools. At Northside, Julia and Liz found *non-faculty* collaborators (i.e., the Director of Campus Ministry, Sister Ruth, Hood Rules, and Mark Stein), who could leverage knowledge and/or material resources to enhance their pedagogical practice. This suggests that community partnerships and collaborators beyond faculty may help critical educators overcome obstacles to critical practice created by funding scarcity in urban Catholic schools, particularly those schools that struggle to live into their social justice missions. By contrast, at Magdalena, Mariana worked in solidarity *with her faculty* and development office colleagues to pursue a grant that would enhance their practice without compromising the trajectory of their curricular reforms and critical orientation as a faculty. This suggests that faculty solidarity may act as a protective factor for critical urban educators seeking material support for their work, particularly within organizations where teachers are empowered and trusted by administrators, as was the case at Magdalena. This is particularly relevant for Catholic urban education, as U.S. Catholic schools are unionized at a much lower rate than their public counterparts and therefore have less access to legally protected forms of solidaristic expression (Sellers, 2021a).

Further, together these findings reinforce the importance of existing research which links Catholic school mission with the experience and practice of educators in urban Catholic schools (Aldana, 2015; Miller et al., 2021; Rodriguez & Briscoe, 2019). As Miller and colleagues (2021) explain, "inequitable and exclusionary pedagogical practices became harder to subvert," as critical educators are inclined to do, "when certain organizational demands took precedence over enacting mission-aligned practice" (p. 15). At Northside, those organizational demands included an emphasis on corporate culture, over and above social justice aims the school, which I explained in Chapter Five led Julia to engage in curricular masking. Julia's choice coheres with research by Bree Picower (2011), which shows that within neoliberal environments, critical educators "camouflaged their critical pedagogy by integrating it with the mandated curriculum" (p.1105). Yet this finding, and the specific missional tension it represents between corporate and social justice aims, is not well-represented in literature on urban Catholic schools[32], including research on the Santa María Network (Aldana, 2015; Donovan & Thielman, 2017). Indeed, Donovan and Theilman (2017) present corporate partnership as empowering the work of urban Catholic schools, and thereby, they imply that it is missionally unproblematic. Yet, in the wider body of literature, including ethical reflections by church leaders, corporate capitalism, and neoliberal ideology which supports it, are identified as inconsistent with critical practice (Duarte, 2019; Freire, 1998; Kareepadath, 2018; Stahl, 2020) and Catholic social teaching (Borghesi, 2021; Burke, 2012; Kammer, n.d.; Rodriguez & Briscoe, 2019). The glairing nature of this oversight suggests that scholarship about urban Catholic education, rather than simply failing to see this tension between corporate and social justice aims, has refused to acknowledge it. If so, this is both an intellectual and ethical failing, which has serious consequences for the critical educators who must negotiate this tension.

Theory

As noted in Chapter 2, I used critical theory and social reproduction theory together to frame this study. The findings align with this theoretical framing, showing that power, consistent with critical theory, is a key theme across participant experiences. Further, the way in which power was wielded with or over participants largely explained the degree to which critical educators in this study experienced freedom to pursue critical pedagogical practices in their classrooms and with their colleagues. The more teachers were empowered to lead curricular changes, as they did at Magdalena Santa María, the more they took charge to transform the curricular practices and sustain cultural and curricular changes which interrupt social reproduction. The less teachers were empowered, as was the case at Santa María Northside, the less able they were to resist banking practices (Freire, 1970/2005) that reproduced hegemonic norms at and beyond their school.

Social Reproduction Theory

These findings strongly support social reproduction theory, which I have explained, shows how culture is reproduced (Bourdieu, 2016) and assimilation into white culture is rewarded (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Indeed, the Santa María model of schooling seems to epitomize at the local level the social reproductive forces of schooling which Bowles and Gintis (2016) observed at a system level.

[32] Rodriquez and Briscoe (2019) and Burke (2012) are some of the few studies that name this tension explicitly.

> The system as it stands today provides eloquent testimony to the ability of the well-to-do to perpetuate in the name of equality of opportunity an arrangement which consistently yields to themselves disproportional advantages, while thwarting the aspirations and needs of the working people of the United States. (p. 56)

Not only is the American education system non-egalitarian, but they argued that "the history of the progressive-education movement attests to the intransigence of the educational system to 'enlightened change' within the context of corporate capitalism" (Bowles & Gintis, 2016, p. 63). Rather than challenging the logics of corporate capitalism, the Santa María Network has fully embraced corporate capitalism as the answer to resource scarcity in urban schooling, and it has sold that answer exclusively to low-income families, who without the Network's corporate work study program, would not otherwise be able to afford a private Catholic, college-prep education for their children. Likewise, the Network has sold this same model to corporate partners, who benefit from the cheap labor of minoritized youth and the promise of diversifying their corporate pipelines. Santa María Schools depend on corporate capitalists controlling the means of production, and sharing that means, however marginally, with students from historically marginalized communities, and they market themselves as a means for families to interrupt this historic oppression by their children becoming the corporate capitalists that have oppressed them. Not only does this reflect the dehumanizing trap of Freirean (1970/1995) duality, whereby the oppressed want to become their oppressor, but because it occurs within a Catholic institution, it enshrines that trap with the veneer of sanctity.

This is a model of education that has been honored by the President of the United States (Anonymized, n.d.). As such, it not only represents an extreme iteration of social reproduction, but it stands to reason that policymakers, venture philanthropists, and other powerbrokers looking to privatize education, including other forms of religious education, may find this model worth replicating. As such, the experience of educators working in these schools should be of particular interest, because they may serve as a foretaste of what more educators will experience in years to come. More immediately, they provide a keen example of the obstacles faced by critical educators when corporate partnership is fully embraced by urban secondary schools. Of the two schools in my study, Santa María Northside epitomizes this corporate embrace, and the experience of Julia and Liz suggest that when unchecked, corporate interests limit the ability of novice and veteran educators to engage in critical pedagogy, and thereby, limits their capacity to provide quality civic education to their students. Conversely, at Magdalena Santa María, the solidaristic commitments of the school's religious sponsor seemed to mitigate, though not eliminate the negative effects of corporate interests on the life of school and the teachers who worked there.

Accordingly, this study adds to our knowledge of social reproduction theory in two ways. First, it provides a nuanced depiction of how religious and corporate institutions can interact within schools to shape (and reproduce) culture. Second, it shows how that culture influences the practices of teachers who, because of their critical dispositions, are more likely than traditional educators to struggle against oppressive dimensions of social reproduction. In so doing, it serves to trouble the corporate influence on school culture, curriculum, and teacher practice by which white capitalistic hegemony is reproduced.

Critical Theory

Drawing on critical theory, I was able to identify power asymmetries faced by teachers in my study and analyze more closely the ways that those asymmetries functioned to oppress and

liberate dimensions of their practice (Giroux, 2001). As I explained in Chapter Two, oppression and/or liberation operate interiorly—in terms of how a person perceives themself as dignified and deserving of rights —and exteriorly—in terms of the practical expression of their criticality within the wider world beyond themselves (Hollenbach, 2003; Horkheimer, 1972[1992]; Lincoln et al., 2018). Further, because of the way cultural hegemony operates to normalize oppression, "critical consciousness" (Freire, 1970/2005) is required to become aware of these power dynamics and respond ethically to the systems which shape them.

Consistent with this theorizing, my findings revealed that my teacher-participants were more consciously and competently able to name power differentials impacting their practice, points for resisting these impacts, and incorporate critical consciousness-raising into their pedagogy when they had been exposed to critical consciousness-raising teacher preparation. This affirms existing research, which suggests teacher preparation programs which emphasize equity-oriented teaching contribute to graduates' in-service critical pedagogy (Dorman, 2012; Picower, 2011). My findings further showed that participants' experiences beyond schooling also contributed to their commitment to critical pedagogy. This is consistent with existing research, like Behizadeh and colleagues (2019) and Dorman (2012), which show that an educator's critical disposition is what motivates teachers to teach critically, rather than formal training or knowledge of critical theory. This is not to say that such training and knowledge are not helpful toward this end. On the contrary, to the degree that such intellectual capital (Bourdieu, 2016) results in the development and/or maintenance of a teacher's interior disposition (i.e., critical consciousness (Freire, 1970/2005)), it may be highly motivating. Further, such training, besides developing a teacher's critical consciousness, may also equip them with technical language and teaching strategies to aid in their expression of their interior disposition. This was especially clear from Julia, who was the only participant in my study to have participated in an explicitly critical teacher-preparation program, which included training in critical theory and praxis.

Given the methodological utility of critical theory, both for framing this study of urban teacher experience and analyzing the data it generated, and given, too, the ethical alignment of critical theory with Catholic social thought, which I detailed in Chapters One and Two, it's reasonable to think that critical theory would be a common heuristic through which education researchers study Catholic schooling. Yet, my review of literature suggests that this is not so. Even in studies of urban Catholic schooling, critical theory is rarely used. Kevin Burke (2012) hinted at this trend when writing about the ascendency of neoliberal paradigms in Catholic schooling discourse, and Juan Cristobal Garcia-Huidobro, SJ (2017), named it explicitly in his review of twenty-five years of Catholic K-12 curriculum studies, writing "In a time of claims for cultural, social, and racial inclusion, this silence in the Catholic curricular conversations indicates insufficient critical reflection in the field" (p. 87). Four years later, in the most recent literature review of urban Catholic education research, critical theory was mentioned only once, in the reference section (Miller et al., 2021). For an institution that has premised its contemporary moral theorizing on being responsive to "the signs of the times" (Mich, 1998; Paul VI, 1965b), the Catholic Church, and the schools it sponsors, should be troubled by the fact that Catholic education research has not been widely examined through a critical theoretical lens, because it is such a lens that helps us construct more inclusive public discourses (Knight Abowitz & Harnish, 2006), civic and otherwise. Accordingly, as the schooling landscape changes, and more public dollars are allowed to be spent funding private religious schools (Carson v. Makin, 2022), critical scholars may find Catholic K-12 education a novel area for inquiry. Likewise, Catholic higher educational institutions may do well to engage in such

scholarship, in order to better prepare teachers and school leaders with the pedagogical skills and ethical disposition appropriate for critical pedagogy, so that future Catholic educators may be better prepared to resist the social reproductive forces of corporate culture and neoliberal ideologies, and live out, instead, the critical social justice mission at the heart of Catholic schools.

Methodology

Consistent with the methodological framework I laid out in Chapter Three, I employed qualitative portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) to answer my research questions. This methodology allowed me to examine teacher experience wholistically, looking at internal teacher perceptions as well as external ecological factors, rather than the piecemeal way that previous research on civic educator experience has done. Further, portraiture's use of author experience helped to focus my data collection and build more authentic relationships with my participants, which thereby allowed me to create a more robust picture of their experiences and the reasoning behind them. The way portraiture invites strong attention to context proved especially helpful in making sense of participants' choices. I did, however, face some difficulties implementing this methodology, particularly during participant selection and unveiling.

Data from my study revealed that, despite the normalizing influence of the Santa María Network and business model, each school developed a highly localized culture. More than simply differing by geography or demographics, each school context varied in culture and guiding ethos. The religious sponsor of each school seemed to have a strong impact on that guiding ethos, while school leaders seemed to contribute to cultural habits through school-level policies and practices. These distinct school cultures strongly impacted the participants' relationship to administration and colleagues, and they were especially visible through field observations. As such, the blending of remote interviews with field observations enhanced the depth and quality of narratives I was able to construct.

The process I used to select participants for this study balanced the need to obtain permission from school leaders to visit campus, with the desire to find critical practitioners. This led to a leader-nomination process, whereby I contacted school leaders at three SMN campuses with whom I had some direct professional connection. All three leaders acknowledged my invitation, but only two responded with teacher nominations. Once I received those nominations and reached out to teachers, some took months to schedule the screening interview. The teachers that participated in this study were only limitedly engaged in experiential and/or community-based pedagogy, while their practice more clearly fit the social justice criteria for participation. This led me to focus my analysis on areas of participant practice that were largely outside of the classroom, something that surprised my teacher participants in the unveiling interviews and diverged from parts my anticipatory framework that emphasized action-orientation. This leads me to wonder if my participant selection process would have benefitted from broader outreach, including to school leaders I didn't have direct relationships with, to obtain a wider sample from which to select teacher-participants. I discuss this further in the Limitations section below.

The unveiling process presented ethical issues regarding anonymity that extended beyond what I had anticipated based on current portraiture literature. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) suggested, and rightly so, that a participant may not be ready to receive their portrait. Further, they suggested that such a situation may be emotionally fraught. They did not, however, suggest how to respond to such a situation. My unveiling experience suggests that this silence in the literature deserves more attention, as it creates ethical quandaries that must be negotiated

between the portraitist and the participant. A further ethical quandary was anticipated by Pei Pei Liu (2020), when they emphasized the need for unveiling interviews to be incorporated into the body of the report, rather than relegated, for example, to an appendix. Liu (2020) suggested that this forwards the voice of participants and power-sharing between the researcher and participant(s). As such, it is consistent with my critical framing. While I sought to honor this in the way I presented the unveiling sections, I also faced complications when participants expressed different wishes about their unveiling process. Further work is needed to address this gap in the literature.

Implications for Practice

The findings from this study suggest ways that school leaders and staff, policymakers, community partners, and teacher educators can contribute meaningfully to cultivate and sustain the practice of critical educators. I summarize these in Table 1 below.

School leaders can support critical educators by reorienting power relationships in schools. Power-over policies obstructed the work of Northside teachers, Liz and Julia, and fostered disengagement and increased stress. Conversely, when administrators trusted Mariana to take on responsibility for school improvement, she felt empowered to catalyze transformation in the math department to make it more equitable and lead the ILT in the development of faculty that are student-centered, relationship-oriented, and engaged in more critical practice. Further, when colleagues in other parts of the school, like development, trust in the vision of critical educators, it can empower them to pursue funding opportunities in ways which center student needs and opportunities for community partnership.

Policymakers, through their influence over curriculum standards and accountability mechanisms, play a crucial role in shaping the priorities of schools and the critical educators in them. Because Julia knew her students would be tested on historical reasoning skills rather than strictly content, she had more freedom to create culturally relevant curriculum, thereby fostering greater classroom engagement and critical reasoning and literacy skills. Further, because her graduate program trained her in critical pedagogy and theory, she was able to use this curricular autonomy more effectively to create and implement culturally relevant curriculum. This suggests that pre-service teacher preparation programs—by incorporating, for example, training in critical modes of instruction, curriculum development, and reflexive praxis into their curriculum—can contribute significantly to the conscientization and professional capacity of critical educators.

For purposes of this discussion, I understand community partners in this study included Mark Stein, Hood Rules, and grant providers. Both Mark Stein and Hood Rules were consistent partners, having worked with teachers at Northside for years. While their cultural differences created obstacles for Julia, they were willing to learn from her how best to work with the students she taught. This amplified their impact with students. The grant funder Mariana interacted with, while transparent about the outcome of related grant-funded projects, maintained multiple onerous requirements for recipients, requirements which were likely to prove prohibitive.

Religious institutions that foster a sense of solidarity among teachers in Catholic schools, like the Magdalenas did, may contribute to the moral vision of critical educators and their willingness to persist in their roles. Further, it may contribute to teachers' willingness to collaborate or engage in other purposeful practices. Likewise, religious institutions can contribute to the work of critical educators by serving as bridgebuilders between teachers and community organizations/ministries served by the same institution. This is what Sr. Ruth did by

Table 1

Ways Practitioners Can Support Critical Educators

Practitioner	Action
School Administrators	Foster school culture of sharing power-with teachers Support scheduling changes that maximize critical educator's potential for collaboration with colleagues and community partners Limit requests on critical educators' time Provide structured and reliable mentorship for novice teachers Create opportunities for critical educators to collaborate (e.g., as mentor-mentee, co-teachers, etc.)
School Staff	Trust the vision and aims of critical educators Work as co-conspirators with critical educators
Policymakers	Support curricular policies, like skills-based rather than content-based assessments, that maximize teachers' curricular autonomy Support higher education institutions in their preparation of critical educators
Community Partners	Be willing to learn from the teachers and students you partner with, including re. culturally relevant information Prioritize the interests of teachers and students that you partner with Be transparent about information impacting grant recipients Engage consistently, building ongoing working relationships Grant-making should be conducted without onerous constraints on teacher time or pedagogical practice
Religious Institutions	Foster solidaristic school cultures Build bridges between critical educators and relevant ministries
Teacher Educators	Incorporate into teacher preparation thorough training in critical pedagogical practice, critical theory, and cultural studies Place student-teachers with critical cooperating teachers Within Catholic higher education, incorporate into teacher preparation training in Catholic social teaching as a constitutive part of critical theory

introducing Liz's students to the local ministries in which the Sisters of St. Jude were involved and where students could likewise serve.

Julia's experience studying teacher education in a program committed to critical pedagogy illustrates how pre-service teacher preparation directly impacts in-service teachers' choice to engage in critical pedagogy. Julia's choice was further supported by her professor, who placed Julia in a school where they knew she would be mentored by a veteran critical educator. Data from this study suggests that Catholic higher education may be particularly well positioned to prepare critical educators by drawing not only on best practice in curriculum and instruction but also by immersing teacher candidates in Catholic social teaching, as a core part of critical theorizing. This may also support teachers' understanding of school mission, and their willingness to invest in that mission. Mariana's experience especially supports this claim, because, while she did not study in a Catholic higher education institution, her teacher induction included years of work as a Magdalena volunteer, where she was taught through praxis how Magdalenas live out their spiritual commitment to solidarity and quality education. As the longest-serving teacher in this study, and the only one to have participated in such a program, Mariana seems to have internalized these values in ways that directly shape her practice and persistence as a mathematics educator and instructional leader in urban Catholic education.

Limitations

This study was limited by factors within and beyond my control. These included time constraints, positionality, participant selection, and the use of academic language. While the choices I made as a researcher made sense within my given context, as I explain more below, they still may have impacted the data I collected and the meaning that was made from it. As such, they deserve consideration both regarding the merits of this study as well as ways to approach future research.

Time constraints limited this study at nearly every step of the research process. Participant selection, as I noted above, took months to complete, and generated only a small number of potential participants. While those teachers loosely fit my selection criteria, as I explain further below, because of time-pressure I felt compelled to include those teachers who expressed interest in the study. Once I began interviewing teachers, because of my own experience of time scarcity while working in the Network and also because of the aligned research that suggests critical educators are particularly time-scarce, I was always cognizant of the time commitments I asked of teachers. This often led me to limit my follow-up questions and speed up the end of interviews, a choice which may have respected my participants' time but constrained my inquiry into the truths of their experiences. As I note further below, this limited by ability to examine certain racial components of participants' experience. Similarly, the amount of time that I spent on each campus was limited to one week. At Northside, that one week was split between two teachers, and one of those teachers, Liz, was absent on the first day of the week. As such, my observation of her practice was even further constrained by both time and the spillover effects of her returning to teach after an extended weekend trip with students. Accordingly, the scheduling of that campus visit may have negatively impacted my ability to observe Liz's normal practice. This may explain why the participant admitted in their unveiling interview in Chapter 5, "I don't want to say it's like totally authentic to *my* experience, but I think it's definitely authentic to *your* experience of us" (Unveiling Interview, 11 January 2023, min. 3:50-4:00, emphasis original).

During those field observations, my positionality as an outsider to the school necessarily impacted the way that my participants and their colleagues interacted with me. While this may have been mitigated some by my prior interviews with participants and my status as a former Santa María teacher, I was still an outsider to the school. Further, my status as a white woman and a researcher from a university placed me in a privileged status relative to the Students of Color who interacted with my teacher-participants. As such, they may have modified their behavior because of my presence. Conversely, my reading of particular data is limited by my cultural identity, as an outsider to the school and an outsider to the cultural communities served by the school. Accordingly, this underscores the importance of the unveiling process for ensuring the trustworthiness of my findings.

The positionality of my teacher-participants was also a limitation. Our common identity as single, white, childless women with graduate degrees may have facilitated our communication. Though, their status as outsiders to the cultural communities they served necessarily shaped their professional experiences. In addition, Liz and Mariana did not grow up in the cities or states where they worked, and so, certain local cultural knowledge may not have been accessible to them. The prolonged service of Mariana and Julia, as well as Liz's prior work in Haiti, may have helped them overcome these limitations to some degree, but it is not reasonable to expect that they fully understand the experience of students or colleagues who share a distinct cultural identity and local upbringings. As a local from College Plains, Julia had experiential insights that may have enhanced her criticality, though she still was limited by being from a racial group distinct from her students. Liz's engagement with colleagues who had previously attended Santa María Northside and who were from the cultural communities served by the school was also a way she gained perspective beyond her positionality as a white outsider to the Communities of Color served by the school.

These positional mismatches, between white teacher-participants and their Students of Color, point to wider phenomena in U.S. urban Catholic education that limited this study and that deserve more critical reflection: white saviorism (Willuweit, 2020) and "White fragility" (DiAngelo, 2018). Felix Willuweit describes "White Savior Syndrome" as

> the phenomenon in which a white person "guides people of colour from the margins to the mainstream with his or her own initiative and benevolence" which tends to render the people of colour "incapable of helping themselves" and disposes them of historical agency (Cammarota, 2011: 243-244).

White saviorism has long been a temptation in Catholic education in the Americas. A key argument for European settlement of this continent, especially by Spanish and French colonizers, was the conversion of the Native peoples to Catholicism, and one key instrument for spreading that faith was through educational institutions, like Indian Boarding Schools. In a recent letter against racism, the U.S. Catholic bishops wrote of these schools, "the goal was to 'kill the Indian, and save the man'" (USCCB, 2018, p. 12, citing Captain Richard H. Pratt, 1892). While a similar disposition has been reproduced through various institutional practices to the present day, hence the USCCB's choice to write against racism in the Catholic Church and wider society, such racism is anathema to the ethical teachings of the Church, which understands all people as equal in dignity and worthy of respect and rights (Mich, 1998). Thus, paradoxically, urban Catholic schools, which are missioned to teach in word and deed this moral commitment to equal dignity, often struggle to overcome the White Savior mentality given their specific context, which, like I saw at Magdalena and Northside, often includes white teachers, school leaders, and donors providing for the learning needs of predominantly Students of Color.

One way in which White Saviorism operates is to make People of Color into objects, which white subjects (i.e., Saviors) must act upon. This framing inheres both a power differential and an intrinsic problematization of the very identity of the communities supposedly served by those white subjects (Willuweit, 2020). This dynamic is amplified within religious schooling for at least two reasons. First, there already is an inherent power differential between teachers and students given their respective age and roles. Second, religious schooling inheres a moral component, which associates moral goodness with fidelity to certain spiritual and cultural practices. Within schools operated by white people of faith, working in predominantly Communities of Color, such morally good practices tend to be ascribed to the people operating the schools, who may perceive themselves (consciously or not) as "White Saviors" helping to rescue the Students of Color in their care from the evils (material, moral, or otherwise) of their home communities. This is particularly true of Christian schools, where religious conversation is normal and spiritual salvation is intrinsic to faith practice. Such objectifying habits reproduce historic power asymmetries between racially distinct groups and as such, isolate white communities from the realities of racial oppression. This, in turn, contribute to 'White Fragility," which Robin DiAngelo (2023) describes as

> a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.

That is to say, White Fragility contributes to social reproduction of white privilege.

Within this study, these two related phenomena surfaced in various ways. For example, as I noted in Chapter Four, during our unveiling interview (12 January 2023), Mariana explained that reading the introduction to that chapter gave her "flashbacks to all those other ways in which our school are portrayed, to sort of like, make people feel sorry for our students and get money" (min. 8:50-9:01). This statement smells of white savior dynamics operating in the Magdalena fundraising process and suggests that more complex racial dynamics may be at play in the school. Indeed, many such moments surfaced during the course of data collection, more than I was able to portray in the findings chapters. But, largely because of the methods I used, I was limited in my ability to dig more explicitly into the presence and implications of both white saviorism and White Fragility. Not having preexisting relationships with my study participants, and more, needing to build authentic and trusting relationships with them in order to gather trustworthy data, meant that, especially early in this study, when topics were raised during our discussions which hinted at more racially difficult topics, I was sometimes hesitant to ask explicit follow-up questions if I suspected that asking them might make my participant(s) uncomfortable or digress too much from my interview protocol, which did not explicitly address racial dynamics. In the moment, this felt like a practical choice, particularly given the current political dynamics around race and critical race theory, which I describe more below. However, in retrospect, failing to ask these follow-up questions, preserving the air of racial comfort, likely reflected my own White Fragility as much or more than it did my study participants'. And certainly, it reflected white privilege, the privilege to avoid racially difficult situations, a privilege not available to Students of Color served by my study participants. Further, even when I did gather meaningful data about these racial dynamics, I was hesitant to write about them explicitly, especially in the findings chapters, because of how they might be received by study participants. As I noted in Chapter Three, the primary audience of qualitative portraiture studies

is the study participants, and a key step in producing trustworthy portraits is unveiling them to the participants themselves. Writing especially about Liz, knowing she was a novice teacher, with all the professional uncertainly that entails, and recognizing that she was not highly trained in critical approaches to teaching practice or discourse, which might have accustomed her to talking about race and power, I was especially concerned that my writing fulfil the first tenet of portraiture and affirm the good in her practice (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020) in ways she was likely to recognize. Indeed, I wanted to affirm all of my participants in various ways, but in seeking to meet this goal, and using methods that un/consciously promoted racial comfort of white women, my participants and me, I limited our collective ability to critically analyze the ways whiteness operates in the professional lives of my participants and the Santa María Network in which they work.

As I have already noted in this chapter, my participant selection process resulted in choosing teacher participants that were not strongly aligned with my second selection criteria – experiential and/or community-based educators. This may have limited how this study speaks to the experience of critical educators who consistently engage in action beyond the classroom, action directed at social transformation. This was the kind of pedagogy I engaged in as a practitioner, and so, this particular limitation has consistently troubled me on a personal level. Nonetheless, in trying to be consistent with portraiture's emphasis on the good (Bruhn & Jimenez, 2020), I found that educators in this study did exhibit critical pedagogical dispositions and were engaged in distinct forms of pedagogy from many of their faculty colleagues. This suggests that within their school context, they were, perhaps, the most critical educators on site, though they might not have fit the model I initially imagined. Further, it raises the important point that critical pedagogy is not a binary. Rather, it reflects a way of life, and like any life path, teachers who practice critical pedagogy may be more and less action-oriented depending on their context and experience over time.

Methodologically, beyond the time-pressure I noted above, I'm curious about whether other factors may have limited the identification of potential participants. As I explained in Chapters 1 and 3, the language in my selection criteria obfuscated my true interest in studying critical educators. This was a deliberate choice which I made because of contemporary political polarization around critical race theory and schooling (See, for example, Sawchuck (2021)) as well as concerns about school leader familiarity with critical pedagogy. I didn't want school leaders to refuse to nominate teachers for this study because they were afraid of politicization or simply didn't understand the academic language I was using. Further, given the predominance of white women in this study, coupled with the fact that leader-nominators were white men, I also wonder if a racial bias may have limited the participant nomination process.

My use of non-academic language impacted not only participant selection but also all interviews and conversations during field observations. I chose to skirt around concepts like "critical pedagogy," "citizenship," or "civic education" because of our current politics and my assumption that these words would trigger certain fears or assumptions that could bias my data and, possibly, obstruct my study. At no point in my study, until the end of the unveiling interview, did I feel comfortable speaking plainly with study participants about what I wanted to understand. This made it difficult to gather data that directly responded to my research questions. I didn't ask about these concepts explicitly unless there was an organic way to bring them up. So, the data I generated about the core subjects of my study were largely inferential. Participants may have been more conscious about such things than they showed during my observations or interviews.

While I certainly thought more deeply about the nature of criticality and critical pedagogy because of the teachers who did participate and the inferential data they generated, this discursive limitation points to a much larger issue impacting educators and education research today. Fearmongering on the political right about Critical Race Theory and related signifiers (Knight Abowitz & Sellers, Forthcoming) has created a chilly, if not hostile, professional environment for critical educators and critical scholars. While this political upheaval underscores the urgent need for more critical scholarship and teacher preparation, it also makes it that much more difficult to generate quality scholarship that directly addresses critical pedagogical concerns. Even while this research experience has left me more confident than ever in the need for critical educators and critical teacher and school leader preparation, I am left worrying about the future of critical scholarship. If we are to generate trustworthy scholarship, that engages critical educators directly during these turbulent times, we will need to muster our courage and keep our wits.

Future Research

Throughout this study, I have sought to respond to contemporary questions around civic learning and critical educator experience, questions which have implications for stakeholders in and beyond the urban Catholic schools where I located my study. By centering the experiences of critical educators in urban Catholic schools, I have tried to engage these questions in ways that simultaneous respond to gaps in the literature about what accounts for the civic advantage of Catholic schools (Campbell, 2012) while also addressing the civic debt (Lo, 2019) owed to Communities of Color. As a former critical educator in an urban Catholic school, this choice seemed natural to me. Church, state, and critical discourses flow organically together. Yet, over the course of this study, I have found that extant scholarship has largely bifurcated these discourses.[33]

Critical studies and critical theorizing tend to emphasize the secular and public dimensions of schooling, while Catholic education researchers tend to avoid critical analysis (Burke, 2012; Garcia-Huidobro, 2017). While some prominent critical pedagogues have drawn on various liberation theologies to enhance their critical pedagogical theorizing (Duncan-Andrade, 2009; McLaren, 2021; Sepulveda, 2011), they have done so without acknowledging the theopolitical antecedents of critical pedagogy itself. This oversight is glaring. Nonetheless, this siloing of scholarly discourses is consistent with a wider pattern within the academy, and I suggest contributes to the reproduction of hegemonic discourses within K-12 education broadly.

Kathleen Knight Abowitz and Jason Harnish (2006) alluded to this concern when they observed that critical citizenships discourses, which strive for the inclusion of a wider citizenry in civic learning, have largely been relegated to the academy.

> The relative silence of critical language, values, and practices in curricular and taught texts of citizenship in schools speaks volumes about the power of dominant discourses of citizenship to shape how present and future generations do, and do not, think about democratic citizenship. (p. 666)

Fifteen years later, when the National Academy of Education made its warning call that democracy is in crisis and K-12 civic learning is needed to respond (Lee, White, & Dong, 2021), they were still trepidatious about the relationship between critical pedagogies and quality civic

[33] As I noted in Chapter One, scholarship written in English has been particularly susceptible to this bifurcation, more so than scholarship in Spanish or Portuguese, for example.

education. At best, by their assessment, we might strive to infuse K-12 civic reasoning and discourse with "a spirit of criticality" (Stitzlein, 2021, p. 33), whatever that means. While the academy wrestles with how to infuse this spirit of criticality into quality civic learning, policymakers and political entrepreneurs are mobilizing to silence critical civic learning in K-12 schools. The week of this writing, in January 2023, Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, made national news for declaring AP African American Studies violates Florida state law (Izaguirre, 2023). This is just the latest in a litany of such polarizing and discriminatory educational policies that have proliferated across the U.S. in recent years (UCLA Law, 2023).

Most fundamentally, what this study has confirmed is that these siloes between critical pedagogy, civic learning, and Catholic education are artificial. As long as critical scholars continue to operate within these constructs, rather than reaching across them to learn and act together, we will continue to limit our ability to understand, train, and support critical educators, across schooling contexts, in their essential civic role. Further, we will leave space open for hegemonic discourses that reproduce exclusive notions of citizenship. Because I care about social justice, I want my future scholarship to resist these reproductive forces. This study has illuminated specific ways in which I (or others) might do so by exploring new questions related to gender, portraiture methodology, critical educator empowerment, the civic advantage of Catholic schools, and critical Catholic education studies.

Gender

Catholic education in the United States has long been concerned with the contributions of single, childless women. Public schools have also benefited from women's labor, as they have long occupied most teaching positions in the U.S. schools (Tyack, 1974). The system of Catholic schooling, as we know it today, was built on the labor of Catholic sisters, who taught for low or no wages for generations, in order to make Catholic schools an affordable schooling option for the largely European-immigrant Catholic church of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Coburn & Smith, 1999; O'Toole, 2008). When this population of low-cost labor decreased after Vatican II, Catholic education researchers began to lament the future of Catholic education (Lannie, 1972) due the increased costs of labor and persistent financial scarcity. This financial scarcity narrative continues to drive conversations around Catholic schooling and was a pervasive concern of teachers in my study.

Despite these trends in teacher labor across education sectors, there is little research on the experience of single, childless women working as critical educators, let alone such white women (Ainsa (2011), a study on the psychology of six critical educators, is one of the few such examples.). Yet, all participants in my study identified as such. As I noted in the limitations section of this chapter, this may simply be a result of selection bias by white male school leaders, who research suggests are likelier to overlook the labor to Faculty of Color (Dixon et al., 2019). Yet, the parallels between historic patterns of employment in Catholic schools and the identity of these study participants, begs further inquiry. Is there something about the identity of single, childless, (white) women that lends itself to critical praxis? Do such women have more time or resources to expend on this countercultural pedagogy? Or, as Freire (1998) suggested all critical educators must, do they simply have more civic courage than their peers, or more freedom to act on the courage they have? Given that women represent a large and growing majority of K-12 educators (Wong, 2019) and anti-critical pedagogy policies continue to proliferate across the U.S. (UCLA Law, 2023), this line of inquiry is both timely and has implications for all K-12 stakeholders in both public and non-public schools. More research is needed to understand the

relationships between marital and parental status, gender, and criticality of educators in, and beyond, Catholic schools. By understanding such relationships, stakeholders may be better equipped to support critical pedagogical practices across a wider range of educators.

Methodology

As previously noted, the unveiling process surfaced two ethical issues in portraiture methodology which are not well-addressed in the literature. The first concerns the tension created when the portraitist's effort to amplify participant voice (Liu, 2020) is met with resistance by the participant. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) are clear that participants are not always ready to receive their portraits. They are not clear, though, about how to honor the wishes of such a participant, nor what one should do when differing participants express contradictory wishes about the use of their portrait within the same study. This is a gap in the literature that needs redress because it reflects an ethical concern that is likely to surface in future qualitative studies, particularly if portraitists take seriously the recent methodological recommendations from Pei Pei Liu (2020) to amplify participant voice through more visible reporting on the unveiling process. By refining our understanding of and ethical responses to this methodological issue, future qualitative portraitists may produce more trustworthy scholarship.

Related to this issue is the matter of consent of non-participants who show up in a portrait. As I explained in Chapter 4, one of the vignettes that I included in this study initially described a teacher in Magdalena Santa María in a way that would be identifiable to colleagues. During the unveiling interview, Mariana pointed this out and suggested that it could cause harm in her professional practice. Accordingly, we discussed and agreed upon a path to revise this vignette to better protect the anonymity of this teacher, who had not consented directly to be represented in this study. In so doing, some details were necessarily removed or modified such that the narrative was still true but the complexity of the portrayal and concomitant analysis had to be reduced. This raises several ethical concerns that deserve more attention in the literature. How should the portraitist, for example, balance responsibility to do no harm to their participant with responsibility to the wider community to ensure truthful representations of reality? What are the limits of principal consent in a field study? I had consent from school leaders and the teachers in this study, and faculty and students were aware of the purpose of my visit to campus. Did administrators' consent imply permission to write about any adults on campus if they clearly impacted the practice of my participant? If so, what is best practice for representing honestly and anonymously such non-participant members of a community reflected in a study? Given the importance of participant-scholar relationships in the generation of trustworthy narrative data (Kim, 2016; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), further reflection is needed to understand this anonymization concern and ensure that future portraiture research anticipates and addresses similar methodological issues in ethically sound and trustworthy ways.

Critical Educator Empowerment

By ecologically exploring the experience of critical educators, this study pointed toward several areas for critical educator empowerment. These include school funding policy, staff turnover, density of critical educators, and mentorship.

As noted above, participants in this study were mindful that economic scarcity impacted their practice. School finances at each campus were strongly affected by state-level school funding policies, and administrative decisions, which shaped teacher experience, were affected by these differences far more than I was able to represent within the context of these portraits.

Such school funding policies are evolving quickly, particularly in relationship to religious non-public schools (see for example Carson v. Makin (2022) and Yoon et al., (2022)). This suggests the need for further research into both (1) the local organizational effects of state funding mechanisms on private school culture and critical educator experience of those working therein, as well as (2) local organizational effects of such policies on public schools and their critical educators, as resources are shifted from public to private schools through various state-backed programs (e.g., vouchers, tax deductible gifts, scholarship programs, etc.). Given that the Roberts Court is increasingly friendly to school privatization efforts and free exercise arguments, this is a particularly urgent research need with far-reaching implications.

As I noted above, both schools in this study experienced high levels of turnover. The results of this turnover, however, were quite distinct. Mariana seemed to have been empowered by low teacher turnover, relative to high administrative turnover. Conversely, Liz and Julia seem to have been disempowered by high levels of both teacher and administrator turnover. More research is needed to understand the relationship between critical educator experience of dis/empowerment and rates of faculty and administrator turnover.

Such research may intersect with existing scholarship on quality service learning, which suggests that there is a critical mass of educators necessary to be involved in service learning for any K-12 school to sustain a robust service-learning program. Shelley H. Billig (2011) has suggested that around twenty percent of staff need to be involved in such a program to sustain it. Accordingly, the data from this study raises questions about whether critical educators likewise need certain levels of colleague collaboration to sustain their pedagogy. Colleague solidarity was a positive factor in all three participants' experience, but only Mariana worked in a school where that solidarity was extended across her whole department and actively supported by her school administration. The effects of critical educator solidarity and density on teacher experience deserve greater attention in the literature.

Related to this, more research is needed to understand the effects of mentorship on critical educator induction and longevity in the profession. As I explained in Chapter Five, Julia came to Santa María Northside because her critically-aligned professor knew she would be mentored there by his friend, who was a veteran critical educator. This relationship, which began as a cooperating-/student-teacher partnership, grew into a years-long colleague relationship, during which time Julia grew from a novice teacher into a veteran critical educator. This raises the possibility that there is a relationship between cooperating teacher identity, teacher induction, and critical educator longevity within the profession.

Civic Advantage of Catholic schools

As noted in Chapter One, this study was premised on a concept that has been little studied and less understood: the civic advantage of Catholic schools. This topic is difficult to study at a system-wide level because of a wider data issue in Catholic education. As of April 2022, there was no comprehensive list of Catholic schools in the United States (Dallavis, 2022). Accordingly, it is difficult to design a study that systematically studies any trends, let alone complex trends like civic competency, in Catholic education nationally. Nonetheless, research is needed to understand whether this civic advantage benefits all students in Catholic schools equally, and relevant to my study, where this advantage is shown to exist, what school-level characteristics may contribute to it.

More broadly, my study suggests that religious identity plays in role in culture setting at urban Catholic schools. The Magdalena sisters, who largely came from the cultural community

of the students they served and who valued in their spirituality quality teaching and solidarity between teachers and students, seem to have invested their Santa María school with similar values. By contrast, Sisters of St. Jude came predominantly from white cultural communities distinct from the Haitian and Dominican students served by their Santa María school. Further, their spirituality emphasized domains of service, rather than quality teacher practice, a characteristic which may contribute to the power-over/ top-down ethos that I observed operating in the school. Given that a substantial portion of Catholic schools are sponsored by religious orders, which have widely varying charisms and organizational structures (Ahern, 2005), and given, too, that research from public schools suggest that organizations which partner closely with schools can significantly impact the civic aims and operation of schools (see, for example, Eyal and Yarm (2018)), more research is needed into the role these religious orders play in culture-setting at Catholic schools, and how that culture can contribute to or detract from receptivity to and support for critical pedagogy.

Critical Catholic Education Studies

More broadly, this study, and the gaps that it has highlighted in the literature, suggest a more fundamental need in the scholarly community: critical Catholic education studies. No such field currently exists in education research. I am aware of no center at an academic institution that focuses on such research. Yet, Catholic leaders regularly seek to influence U.S. education policy, often to the detriment of public school funding (Sellers, 2021b). Catholic social thought directly contributed to the development of Freirean (1970/1995) pedagogy and philosophy, which in turn provided the foundation for critical pedagogy, yet the English translation of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* secularized Freire's ideas (Saavedra, 2021). And the English-speaking academy has not remedied this inaccuracy nor plumbed the theoretical riches that might be found by extending Freire's work to the global social movements of workers and students that inspired him (Gigacz, 2012).

These gaps do not point to one question or research project but rather to the creation of a new, interdisciplinary field of scholars and practitioners dedicated to critical inquiry about Catholic schooling. Such a field could open dialogue at a time when critical scholars, especially of education policy and leadership, sorely need new ways to interpret and talk back to changes in education law (Carson v. Makin, 2022; Kennedy v. Bremerton School District, 2022) that privilege free exercise of religion and call into question the distinction between public and private schools. It would help prepare school leaders and educators in Catholic schools to support and participate in critical pedagogy more effectively. And it could help clarify and communicate to future teachers and school leaders the roots of critical pedagogy and praxis in Catholic social thought. In so doing, this field could help illuminate the ways in which critical pedagogy and civic learning are related and can be supported within and beyond Catholic educational contexts. As this study showed, critical educators exist in urban Catholic schools today, and they need teacher preparation, solidarity, and effective leadership to sustain their practice. A field of critical Catholic education studies could respond to this need, and in so doing contribute to the civic debt (Lo, 2019) owed to Communities of Color across the United States.

Final Thoughts

I began this project because I was disquieted by my own experience working as a novice critical educator in the Santa María Network. As I developed critical consciousness and built power with my students to take civic action and address specific social injustices, I faced

growing resistance from my school's administration and deep isolation as a colleague. This ran counter to my expectations for my school, or any Catholic school, premised on a missional commitment to social justice, as the Santa María Network is. I continued working in that Network school for years, and my practice in critical pedagogy evolved along with my school's support for it. But I never felt that the work my students and I did together was fully welcomed or supported by the powerbrokers in the school. Civically empowered Students of Color, who used their knowledge as a tool to make change in and beyond the school made white administrators uncomfortable. Though, the few religious sisters who were the spiritual sponsors of the school and eventually learned of my work were always encouraging to me. It was this paradox between school mission and normative practice that prompted me to enter a doctoral program, and as I laid the foundation for this study, it was this paradox that I continued to puzzle over.

Through this qualitative portraiture study, I have wholistically examined the professional experiences of three educators in the Santa María Network—Mariana October, Liz Sullivan, and Julia Friedman—who engage in experiential and/or community-based pedagogy and through their practice exemplify a commitment to social justice. I have framed this study using critical theory and social reproduction theory, in order to attend to the power asymmetries faced by these teachers engaged in critical pedagogical practices within a school network that seeks to reproduce among Students of Color hegemonic, white corporate cultural norms. Through interviews, field observations, and triangulating public data, I have tried to answer the research questions: (1) *Why do teachers in the SMN engage in experiential, community-based pedagogy? (2) How do these educators exhibit civic and/or critical consciousness about and through their work? (3) What institutional and/or community influences (e.g., church, state, corporate partners, families, and/or community partners) impact the work of experiential, community-based educators?* What I found affirms much existing research. These teachers are motivated by distinct dispositions, characterized by strong social justice aims, and they each had professional training that informed their critical approach to teaching and, to varying degrees, reinforced their social justice aims. The organizations in which these teachers worked strongly shaped their professional practice, for better and worse. Where corporate culture was embraced, Liz and Julia struggled. Where the spiritual value of solidarity was embraced, Mariana, and the critical dimensions of her practice, thrived.

Qualitative portraiture allowed me to build relationships with each of these teachers and study their practice within the context of specific schools, in distinct regions of the country. Though these teachers operated within the same Catholic schooling network, with similar business models built on extensive corporate partnerships, I was surprised by the variance in school cultures. Those cultures fundamentally shaped the practices of my participants, empowering one and isolating two. This was more curious to me because, as I explained in Chapter 1, David Campbell (2012) has suggested that Catholic K-12 schools have a common "ethos" that explains their civic advantage. My study troubles this simplistic narrative. While the two schools in this study may have nominally been united in their commitment to provide a Catholic, college-prep education for low-income, urban students, in practice, they were worlds apart. This difference aligns with Sara Ahmed's (2012) work, which shows how higher education institutions often make equity commitments on paper but fail to live them out in practice. Accordingly, where the critical commitments of my study participants were aligned with the social justice commitments, or "ethos," of the school, as was the case at Magdalena Santa María, I am left believing it is possible that students may receive a distinctive civic

education in such a setting, as they watch an entire organization work together, with staff and students and families, to pursue common educational aims. Certainly, my data shows that Mariana was strongly supported and empowered to engage in critical practices in this setting. Conversely, though, where the critical commitments of my study participants were at odds with the corporate culture of the school, as was the case at Santa María Northside, I am deeply skeptical about students obtaining a meaningful civic education in such a setting. If they do, it is because of the countercultural practice of educators like Liz and Julia, who resist the banking pedagogies and dominating policies encouraged by their school leaders.

As a critical scholar of Catholic education, I am troubled and fascinated by these findings. I explained in Chapter 1 how critical pedagogy, through the contributions of Paulo Freire, finds its antecedents in Catholic social teaching and Catholic social movements of workers and students. To be a critical educator is to align one's work with similar (i.e., Catholic social teaching) ethical commitments and practices. Thus, it is only reasonable that critical educators should find organizational support and empowerment within K-12 Catholic schools because their ethos *should* be the same. Yet, this study shows that Catholic schools, even within the same Network with a common business model, have highly differentiated cultures, and those cultures may not reflect Catholic social teaching values, like solidarity, but corporate values for hierarchy and social reproduction. These differences mattered for the critical educators in my study. Corporate values and related policies and practices obstructed the work of Julia and Liz, while Catholic values, particularly that of solidarity with her students and colleagues, empowered Mariana to pursue critical practices more deeply and broadly in her school. This suggests that urban Catholic schools may be distinctly well-positioned to support critical educator practice, if only they can live into their social justice missions. Further, my findings suggest that the curricular autonomy that Catholic school teachers possess, by virtue of state policies that exempt private schools from many accountability mechanisms more typical of public schools, may further sustain critical educators working in this context. Despite such freedoms from state accountability regimes, this study suggests that the financial precarity of urban Catholic schools makes them vulnerable to cultural influences from financial stakeholders.

Such financial precarity is not new in the literature. As I have explained, this trend has worried U.S. Catholic school leaders and researchers for at least half a century. What is new, however, and what my study clearly shows is that corporate financial interests, if allowed to shape the culture of urban Catholic schools, like Santa María Northside, can directly obstruct the work of critical educators, like Liz Sullivan and Julia Friedman, devoted to the social justice mission of Catholic education. Those teachers who are most likely to contribute to their students' civic learning, who are best positioned to pay the civic debt (Lo, 2019) owed to Communities of Color, and who I suggest most embody the ethical aims of Catholic (*and democratic*) education are the same teachers most likely to be obstructed when schools, like those in the Santa María Network, embrace corporate culture. In an age of neoliberal reforms in education, characterized by new public and private investments in religious schooling, Catholic schools can choose to embrace their social justice missions, like did Magdalena Santa María, and sustain the devoted work of critical educators like Mariana October, who has labored for over a decade to facilitate exceptional instruction with her students. This is the path I hope U.S. Catholic education follows and all U.S. education might learn from. It is a path lit by a robust moral and pedagogical tradition within the Church (Groome, 2021; O'Toole, 2008; Paul VI, 1965b; USCCB, 1986) and academy (Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Freire, 1970/2005; Labaree, 1997; McLaren, 2021; Sepulveda, 2011), but there is much to tempt educational institutions from this path. As Freire

(1998) observed more than two decades ago, to stay on this path and pursue critical pedagogy requires civic courage. This study illustrated how Mariana, Liz, and Julia exercised such courage, even in the face of systemic obstacles. May other leaders in and beyond Catholic K-12 education go and do likewise.

References

(2022). Retrieved February 14, 2022, from All About Arsenic: allaboutarsenic.org/

Ahern, K. (2005). *Structures of grace: Church organizations and the global common good.* Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

Ahmed, S. (2012). *On being included: Racism and diversity in institutional life.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Ainsa, P. (2011). Critical pedagogy towards a sociomoral classroom. *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 38*(2), 84-92.

Aldana, U. (2015). “Does Jesus want us to be poor?” Student perspectives of the religious program at a Cristo Rey Network school. *The Journal of Catholic Education, 19*(1), 201-222.

Anonymized. (2018, November). 9A Revelation benchmarks Nov 2018.

Anonymized (2020). *About*.

Anonymized. (2021). *Hire a team of students*. Retrieved June 11, 2021

Anonymized. (2022a). *About*. Retrieved April 9, 2022

Anonymized. (2022b, December). *At a glance*. Retrieved April 9, 2022

Anonymized. (2022c). *Innovative model*. Retrieved April 9, 2022

Anonymized. (n.d.). *Mission and gistory*. Retrieved September 19, 2021

Anonymized. (n.d.). *About*. Retrieved October 30, 2021

Anonymized. (n.d.). *At a glance*. Retrieved September 15, 2021

Anonymized. (n.d.). *Mission and history*. Retrieved September 19, 2021

Anyon, J. (2011). *Marx and education.* New York: Routledge.

Apple, M. (2006). *Educating the "right" way: Markets, standards, God, and inequality.* London: Routledge.

Aquinas, T. (2021). *Summa Theologiae.* Retrieved March 22, 2022, from New Advent: https://www.newadvent.org/summa/

Bailey, M. J., & Cooper, B. S. (2009). The introduction of religious charter schools: A cultural movement in the private school sector. *Journal of Research on Christian Education, 18*, 272-289.

Barber, C., Clark, C. H., & Tourney-Purta, J. (2021). Learning environments and school/classroom climate as supports for civic reasoning, discourse, and engagement. In C. Lee, G. White, & D. Dong (Eds.), *Civic Reasoning and Discourse* (pp. 237-318). Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Education.

Barber, W. J. (2020). *We are called to be a movement.* Workman Publishing.

Beadie, N., & Burkholder, Z. (2021). From the diffusion of knowledge to the cultivation of agency: A short history of civic education policy and practice in the United States. In C. D. Lee, G. White, & D. Dong (Eds.), *Educating for Civic Reasoning and Discourse* (pp. 110-155). Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Education.

Behizadeh, N., Gordon, C., Thomas, C., Marks, B., Oliver, L., & Goodwin, H. (2019). Social justice beliefs and curricular freedom: Factors supporting critical composition pedagogy in a U.S. middle school. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 85*, 58-68.

Berner, A. R. (2017). *No one way to school pluralism and American public education.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bettini, E., & Park, Y. (2017). Novice teachers' experiences in high-poverty schools: An integrative literature review. *Urban Education, 56*(1).

Biden, J. R. (2022, September 1). *Remarks by President Biden on the continued battle for the soul of the nation.* Retrieved January 19, 2023, from The White House: https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/09/01/remarks-by-president-bidenon-the-continued-battle-for-the-soul-of-the-nation/

Billig, S. (2011). Making the most of your time: Implementing the K-12 service-learning. *Prevention Researcher, 18*(1), 8-13.

Black, R. (2015). Between policy and a hard pedagogical place: The emotional geographies of teaching for citizenship in low socio-economic schools. *Pedagogy, Culture, & Society, 23*(3), 369-388.

Blackwell, W. H., & Robinson, J. M. (2017). School choice vouchers and special education in Indiana Catholic diocesan schools. *Journal of Catholic Education, 21*(1), 171-191.

BLS. (2022, May 23). *TED: The economics daily image*. Retrieved from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2022/61-8-percent-of-recent-high-school-graduates-enrolled-in-college-in-october-2021.htm

Bohman, J. (2005, March 8). *Critical theory.* Retrieved March 26, 2022, from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/critical-theory/

Borghesi, M. (2021). *Catholic discordance: Neoconservatism vs. the field hospital church of Pope Francis.* (B. Hudock, Trans.) Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2016). The forms of capital. In E. Sandovnik, & R. Coughlan (Eds.), *Sociology of Education: A Critical Reader* (pp. 83-95). New York: Routledge.

Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (2016). Broken promises: School reform in retrospect. In A. R. Sadovnick, & R. W. Coughlan (Eds.), *Sociology of Education: A Critical Reader* (Third Edition ed., pp. 53-69). New York: Routledge.

Bruhn, S., & Jimenez, R. L. (2020, March 1). Portraiture as a method of inquiry in educational research. *Harvard Educational Review, 90*(1), 49-53.

Bryk, A., & Schneider, S. (2002). *Trust in schools: A core resource for improvemt.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Burke, K. (2012). Strange bedfellows: The new neoliberalism of catholic schooling in the United States. *Journal of Pedagogy, 3*(2), 177-197.

Cammarota, J. (2011). Blindsided by the Avatar: White saviors and allies out of Hollywood and in education. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies, 33*(3), 242-259.

Campbell, D. E. (2012). Civic education in traditional public, charter, and private schools: Moving from comparison to explanation. In D. E. Campbell, M. Levinson, & F. M. Hess (Eds.), *Making Civics Count* (pp. 229-246). Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Campbell, D. E. (2019). What social scientists have learned about civic education: A review of the literature. *Peabody Journal of Education, 94*(1), 32-47.

Carson v. Makin, 20-1088 (Supreme Court of the United States June 21, 2022).

Catholic Church. (n.d.). *Catechism of the Catholic Church.* Retrieved March 22, 2022, from Vatican: https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM

Chouinard, J. A. (2013). The case for participatory evaluation in an era of accountability. *American Journal of Evaluation, 34*(2), 237-253.
Coburn, C. K., & Smith, M. (1999). *Spirited lives: How nuns shaped Catholic culutre and American life, 1836-1920.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. (2009). *Inquiry assStance: Practitioner research for the next generation.* New York: Teachers College Press.
Cognia, Inc. (2022). *Accreditation registry*. Retrieved from Cognia: https://home.cognia.org/registry
Cone, J. (2011). *The cross and the lynching tree.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
Coughlin, J. J. (1993, May 15). Religion, education and the First Amendment. *America Magazine*, pp. 12-15.
Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review, 43*(6), 1241-1299.
Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (Fifth Edition ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.
Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.
Cunningham, M. (2015). The Establishment Clause, cchool Choice, and the future of Catholic education. *Journal of Catholic Education, 18*(2), 185-203.
Currance, C. (1984, November 14). A 'Catholic schools effect' is reaffirmed by its champions, Coleman and Greeley. *Education Week, 2*(1). Retrieved August 1, 2020, from https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/1984/11/14/05240020.h04.html#:~:text=The%20report%2C%20based%20on%20an,than%20those%20in%20public%20schools.
Dallavis, J. (2022, April). Personal conversation at AERA. (K. Sellers, Interviewer) San Diego, CA.
Dana, N., & Yendol-Hoppey, D. (2009). *The reflective educator's guide to classroom research: Learning to teach and teaching to learn through practitioner inquiry* (4th Edition ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
Davis, J. H. (1997). Implementation: Declaring boundaries. In S. Lawrence-Lightfoot, & J. H. Davis, *The Art and Science of Portraiture* (pp. 160-174). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
De La Salle North Catholic High School. (n.d.). *School overview and history.* Retrieved October 30, 2021, from De La Salle North Catholic High School: https://www.delasallenorth.org/apps/pages/about-us/overview/
DeCesare, A. (2021, September 24). What about "current" citizens? Challenging the future- and school-orientation of democratic education. *[Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Ohio Valley Philosophy of Education Society]*. Nashville, IN: OVPES.
DeCesare, T. (Forthcoming). The ruture is now: Rethinking the role for children in democracy. *Philosophy of Education*.
Delpit, L. D. (2006). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom.* New York: New Press.
DePaul Cristo Rey. (2020). *2019-2020 Annual report.* Retrieved October 31, 2021, from DePaul Cristo Rey: https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1604501970/depaul/sofogxulfvew00ix1bz4/WebAR20Singlepages.pdf

DePaul Cristo Rey. (2021). *2020-2021 Annual report.* Retrieved October 31, 2021, from DePaul Cristo Rey High School: https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1634843253/depaul/agfontwkby7tgjojhf25/AnnualReportBroch21-web.pdf

DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White Fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism.* Beacon Press.

DiAngelo, R. (2023). *Publications: White Fragility.* Retrieved March 15, 2023, from Robin DiAngelo, PhD: https://www.robindiangelo.com/publications/#whitefragility

Dirks, S. (2014, July 15). *Morals clauses prove controversial for Catholic school teachers.* Retrieved October 31, 2021, from https://www.npr.org/2014/07/15/331751394/morals-clauses-prove-controversial-for-catholic-school-teachers

Dixon, R., Griffin, A., & Teoh, M. (2019). *If you listen, we will stay: Why teachers of color leave and how to disrupt teacher turnover.* Washington DC: The Education Trust & Teach Plus.

Doig, B., & Groves, S. (2011). Japanese lesson study: Teacher professional development through communities of inquiry. *Mathematics Teacher Education and Development, 13*(1), 77-93.

Donovan, W., & Thielman, J. (2017). *Cristo Rey schools: A model of 21st-century Catholic education.* Pioneer Institute Public Policy Research.

Dorman, E. H. (2012). Cultivating critical, sociopolitical awareness in urban secondary schools: Tensions and possibilities,. *Perspectives on Urban Education, 9*(2), 1-28.

Duarte, B. J. (2019). The subjectivity of false hope and the possibility for critical hope among novice teachers. *Policy Futures in Education, 17*(9), 924-944.

Duncan-Andrade, J. M. (2009). Note to educators: Hope required when growing roses in concrete. *Harvard Educational Review, 79*(2), 181-194.

Dweck, C. S. (2008). *Mindset: The new psychology of success.* New York: Ballentine Books.

Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue, 18-1195 (Supreme Court of the United States June 30, 2020).

Estes, C. A. (2004). Promoting student-centered learning in experiential education. *Journal of Experiential Education, 27*(2), 141-160.

Eyal, O., & Yarm, M. (. (2018). Schools in cross-sector alliances: What do schools seek in Pprtnerships? *Educational Administration Quarterly, 54*(4), 648-688.

Feldman, J. (2018). *Grading for equity: What it is, why it matters, and how it can transform schools and classrooms* (1st ed.). Corwin.

Fine, M., & Weis, L. (2010). Writing the "wrongs" of fieldwork: Confronting our own research/writing dilemmas in urban ethnographies. In W. Luttrell (Ed.), *Qualitative educational research: Readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice* (pp. 448-466). New York: Routledge.

Follett, M. P. (1924). *Creative experience.* New York: Longmans, Green and Co.

Follett, M. P. (1995). The basis of authority. In *Mary Parker Follett: Prophet of Management* (pp. 141-154). Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Freire, P. (1970/1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (New Revised 20th-Anniversary Edition ed.). (M. B. Ramos, Trans.) New York: Continuum.

Freire, P. (1970/2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th Anniversary Edition ed.). (M. B. Ramos, Trans.) New York: Continuum.

Freire, P. (1996). *Letters to Cristina: Reflections on my life and work.* (D. Macedo, Q. Macedo, & A. Oliveira, Trans.) New York: Routledge.

Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage.* (P. Clarke, Trans.) New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Gainous, J., & Martens, A. M. (2012). The effectiveness of civic education: Are “good” teachers actually good for “all” students? *American Politics Research, 40*(2), 232-266.

Garcia-Huidobro, J. C. (2017). What are Catholic schools teaching to make a difference? A literature review of curriculum studies in Catholic schools in the U.S. and the U.K. since 1993. *The Journal of Catholic Education, 20*(2), 64-93.

Garrow, D. J. (2015). *Bearing the cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leaderhsip Conference.* Open Road Media.

Gigacz, S. (2012, August 26). *Paolo Freire, the YCW and Cardijn.* Retrieved from Cardijn Research: The life and work of Joseph Cardijn, founder of the YCW-JOC: https://www.cardijnresearch.org/2012/08/paolo-freire-ycw-and-cardijn.html

Gilbert, A. (2013). *Courageous pedagogy: enacting critical science education.* Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc.

Giroux, H. (2003). Public pedagogy and the politics of resistance: Notes on a critical theory of educational struggle. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 35*(1), 5-16.

Giroux, H. (2021). Critical pedagogy. In U. Bauer, U. Bittlingmayer, & A. Scherr (Eds.), *Handbuch Bildungs- und Erziehungssoziologie* (pp. 1-16). Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Giroux, H. A. (1983). Theories of reproduction and resistance in the new sociology of education: A critical analysis. *Harvard Educational Review, 53*(3), 257-293.

Giroux, H. A. (2001). *Theory and resistance in education: Towards a pedagogy for the opposition* (Revised and Expanded ed.). Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Giroux, H. A. (2010). Rethinking education as the practice of freedom: Paulo Freire and the promise of critical pedagogy. *Policy Futures in Education, 8*(6), 715-722.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research.* New York: Routledge.

Glesne, C. (2016). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Gorski, P. S., & Perry, S. L. (2022). *The flag and the cross: White Christian nationalism and the threat to American democracy.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Gramsci, A. (1995). *Further selections from the prison notebooks.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Greeley, A. M. (1982). *Catholic schools and minority students.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

Groome, T. H. (2021, March 16). What makes education Catholic. Brighton, MA.

Gutiérrez, G. (1971/1988). *Theology of liberation: History, politics, and salvation* (Revised ed.). (S. Inda, & J. Eagleson, Trans.) Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic education.* Princeton University Press.

Handley, K. D. (2005). *Retention of novice teachers: A study of factors that affect their decisions to stay [dissertation].* College of William & Mary - School of Education.

Hayes, A. (2021, May 21). *Venture philanthropy.* Retrieved from Investopedia: https://www.investopedia.com/terms/v/venture-philanthropy.asp

Hayward, E. (2016, March 07). *The next generation.* Retrieved April 07, 2022, from Boston College News: https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/bcnews/nation-world-society/education/catholic-schools-and-hispanic-families.html

Helmick, R. G., & Petersen, R. L. (Eds.). (2001). *Forgiveness and reconciliation: Religion, public policy, and conflict transformation.* Radnor, PA: Templeton Foundation Press.

Herron, A. (2020, June 24). *Policy may bar transgender students from Catholic schools in central and southern Indiana.* Retrieved from Indy Star: https://www.indystar.com/story/news/education/2020/06/24/indianapolis-archdiocese-new-policy-may-bar-transgender-students-attending-catholic-schools/3252282001/

Hess, D., Getachew, D., Kahne, J., & Davenport, D. (2022, March 24). Finding common ground for civic education in turbulent times. (P. Levine, Interviewer) The Center for Educational Equity: Teachers College Columbia University.

Hoffer, T., Greeley, A. M., & Coleman, J. S. (1985). Achievement growth in public and Catholic schools. *Sociology of Education, 58*(April), 74-97.

Hollenbach, D. (2003). *The global face of public faith: Politics, human rights, and Christian ethics* . Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

hooks, b. (2004). *The will to change: Men, masculinity, and love.* New York: Washington Square Press.

Horkheimer, M. (1972[1992]). *Critical theory: Selected essays.* (M. J. O'Connel, Trans.) New York: Seabury Press.

Horton, M., & Freire, P. (1990). *We make the road by walking: Conversations on education and social change.* (B. Bell, J. Gaventa, & J. Peters, Eds.) Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Izaguirre, A. (2023, January 19). *Florida blocks high school African American studies class.* Retrieved January 21, 2023, from AP News: https://apnews.com/article/ron-desantis-florida-race-and-ethnicity-education-353417231de0a790c8e290479a5e52b8

Jones, S., & Enriquez, G. (2009). Engaging the intellectual and the moral in critical literacy education: The four-year journeys of two teachers from teacher education to classroom practice. *Reading Research Quarterly, 44*(2), 145-168.

Joseph, T., Vélez, W., & Antrop-González, R. (2017). The dxperiences of low-income Latina/o families in an urban voucher, parochial school. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 16*(2), 143-155.

Kammer, F. (n.d.). *"Catholic social doctrine is not a surrogate for capitalism.".* Retrieved February 2, 2023, from Jesuit Social Research Institute: https://jsri.loyno.edu/catholicism-and-capitalism#:~:text=Besides%2C%20Catholic%20social%20doctrine%20is,for%20grave%20social%20injustices%20(cf.

Kareepadath, V. P. (2018). Critical pedagogy in practice: A case study from Kerala, India. *Journal of Pedagogy, 9*(2), 33-54.

Kavenuke, P. S. (2021). Teacher educators' perceptions and challenges of using critical pedagogy: A case study of higher teacher education in Tanzania. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning, 18*(4), 1-17.

Kearney, G. R. (2008). *More than a dream: How one school's vision is changing the world.* Chicago: Loyola Press.

Kellerman, B., & Rhode, D. L. (Eds.). (2007). *Women & leadership: The state of play and strategies for change.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kennedy v. Bremerton School District, 21-418 (Supreme Court of the United States June 27, 2022).

Kim, J.-H. (2016). *Understanding narrative inquiry: the crafting and analysis of stories as tesearch.* Los Angeles: SAGE.

Kincheloe, J. L. (2008). *Knowledge and critical pedagogy: An introduction.* Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer.

Kirylo, J. D., & Boyd, D. (2019). *Paulo Freire: His faith, spirituality, and theology.* Rotterdam: Sense.

Knight Abowitz, K., & Harnish, J. (2006). Contemporary discourses of citizenship. *Review of Educational Research, 76*(4), 653-690.

Knight Abowitz, K., & Sellers, K. (Forthcoming). Pragmatist thinking for a populist moment: Contingency and racial re-valuing in education governance. *Democracy and Education*, 00-00.

Kohli, R., & Solórzano, D. G. (2012). Teachers, please learn our names!: Racial microagressions and the K-12 classroom. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 15*(4), 441-462.

Kras, N. (n.d.). *Observations.* Retrieved August 30, 2022, from Ethnography Made Simple: https://cuny.manifoldapp.org/read/untitled-fefc096b-ef1c-4e20-9b1f-cce4e33d7bae/section/81a317ca-c9da-46e0-955b-22891d87850c

Kumashiro, K. K. (2012). *Bad teacher! How blaming teachers distorts the bigger picture.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Labaree, D. F. (1997). Public goods, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals. *American Educational Research Journal, 34*(1), 39-81.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465-491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in U.S. schools. *Educational Researcher, 35*(7), 3-12.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). It's not the culture of poverty, it's the poverty of culture: The problem with teacher education. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 37*(2), 104–109.

Lannie, V. P. (1972, April 6). *Toward a new history of catholic education. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educaiton Research Association.* Chicago, IL.

Lannie, V. P. (1973). The emergence of catholic education in America. *Notre Dame Journal of Education, 3*(4), 423-437, W 73.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (1983). *The good high school: Portraits of character and culture.* New York: Basic Books.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2005). Reflections on portraiture: A dialogue between art and science. (15, Ed.) *Qualitative Inquiry, 11*(1), 3.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S., & Davis, J. H. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Lee, C. D., Nasir, N. S., Smirnov, N., & Carrington, A. (2021). Civic reasoning and discourse: Perspectives from learning and human development research. In C. D. Lee, G. White, & D. Dong, *Educating for Civic Reasoning and Discourse* (pp. 53-108). Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Education.

Lee, C. D., White, G., & Dong, D. (Eds.). (2021). *Educating for civic reasoning and discourse.* Washington, DC, D.C., United States of America: National Academy of Education. Retrieved April 23, 2021, from https://naeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/NAEd-Educating-for-Civic-Reasoning-and-Discourse.pdf

Levinson, M. (2010). The civic empowerment gap: Defining the problem and locating solutions. In L. Sherrod, J. Torney-Purta, & C. Flanagan (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Civic Engagement in Youth* (1st Ed. ed., pp. 331-362). New York, NY: Wiley.

Library of Congress. (n.d.). *Voting rights for Native Americans.* Retrieved March 23, 2022, from Library of Congress: https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/elections/right-to-vote/voting-rights-for-native-americans/#:~:text=The%20Snyder%20Act%20of%201924,rights%20granted%20by%20this%20amendment.
Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2018). Paradigms and perspectives in contention. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Fifth ed., pp. 97-150). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
Liu, P. P. (2020). After words: Negotiating participant and portraitist response in the study “Aftermath”. *Harvard Educational Review, 90*(1), 102-126.
Lo, J. C. (2019). The role of civic debt in democratic education. *Multicultural Perspectives, 21*(2), 112–118.
Lovett, I. (2021, May 10). Catholic schools are losing students at record rates, and hundreds are closing pandemic-fueled economic woes exacerbate schools’ challenges; some raise money on GoFundMe. *Wall Street Journal*, p. [online version].
Marx, K. (1969). Value, price and profit. New York: International Co., Inc.
McCarthy, K. W. (2017). *Full circle: A portraiture study of three successful indigenous educators and community leaders who experience personal renewal in their practice of cultural restoration.* Educational Studies Dissertations.
McGhee, H. (2021). *The sum of us: What racism costs everyone and how we can prosper together.* New York: One World.
McLaren, P. (2007). *Life in schools: an introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Inc.
McLaren, P. (2010). Revolutionary critical pedagogy. *Inter Actions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies, 7*, 1-11.
McLaren, P. (2021). Resisting fascist mobilization: Some reflections on critical pedagogy, liberation theology and the need for revolutionary socialist change. *Educational Philosophy and Theory , 53*(7), 655-668.
Mehta, J. (2015, April 27). *The problem with grit.* Retrieved from EdWeek: https://www.edweek.org/education/opinion-the-problem-with-grit/2015/04
Melnick, S. A., & Meister, D. G. (2008). A comparison of beginning and experienced Teachers' concerns. *Educational Research Quarterly, 31*(3), 40-59.
Mich, M. L. (1998). *Catholic social teaching and movements.* Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications.
Miksic, M. (2014, June 19). *Is the “Catholic School Effect” real? New research challenges the Catholic primary school advantage.* Retrieved October 30, 2021, from John Hopkins School of Education: Institute for Education Policy: https://edpolicy.education.jhu.edu/is-the-catholic-school-effect-real-new-research-challenges-the-catholic-primary-school-advantage/
Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed. ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
Miller, A. F., Park, Y., Conway, P., Cownie, C. T., Reyes, J., Reynoso, M., & Smith, A. (2021, October). Examining the legacy of urban Catholic schooling in the U.S.: A systematic literature review. *The Urban Review*.

Misco, T., Kuwabara, T., Ogawa, M., & Lyons, A. (2018). Teaching controversial issues in Japan: An exploration of contextual gatekeeping. *The International Educaiton Journal: Comparative Perspectives, 17*(4), 68-82.
Mitchell, T. D. (2008). Traditional vs. critical service-learning: Engaging the literature to differentiate two models. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*(Spring), 50-65.
Mitra, D. L. (2018). *Educational change and the political process.* New York: Routledge.
Moka-Mubelo, W. (2017). Human rights and human dignity. In *Reconciling Law and Morality in Human Rights Discourse* (Vols. Philosophy and Politics - Critical Explorations, vol 3, pp. 89–125). Cham: Springer.
Morales-Franceschini, E. (2018, May 9). *Latin American liberation theology.* Retrieved December 24, 2022, from Global South Studies: A Collective Publication with The Global South: https://globalsouthstudies.as.virginia.edu/articles/pdf/446
Morrell, E. (2004). *Becoming critical researchers: Literacy and empowerment for urban youth.* New York, New York: Peter Lange Publishing.
Murnane, R. J., Reardon, S. F., Mbekeani, P. P., & Lamb, A. (2018, July 17). *Who goes to private schools.* Retrieved from Education Next: https://www.educationnext.org/who-goes-private-school-long-term-enrollment-trends-family-income/
National Labor Relations Board v. The Catholic Bishop of Chicago et al., 77-752 (Supreme Court March 21, 1979).
NCEA. (n.d.). *Parental school choice.* Retrieved October 30, 2021, from National Catholic Education Association: https://www.ncea.org/NCEA/Who_We_Are/About_Catholic_Schools/Public_Policy/School_Choice/NCEA/Who_We_Are/About_Catholic_Schools/Public_Policy/School_Choice.aspx?hkey=c02f393f-84ba-4f2f-8b5f-ad11475c216f
NCES. (2019). *Digest of education statistics.* U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d19/tables/dt19_205.10.asp?current=yes
NCSS. (n.d.). *National curriculum standards for social studies: Chapter 2—The themes of social studies.* Retrieved March 21, 2022, from National Council for the Social Studies: https://www.socialstudies.org/national-curriculum-standards-social-studies-chapter-2-themes-social-studies#10
OCSAA. (2022). *Schools*. Retrieved from Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association: https://www.ocsaa.org/schools
ODE. (2022, March 27). *EdChoice scholarship program*. Retrieved from Ohio Department of Education: https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Scholarships/EdChoice-Scholarship-Program
Oldenski, T. (1997). *Liberation theology and critical pedagogy in today's Catholic schools.* New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.
Orfield, G., & Lee, C. (2004). *Brown at 50: King's dream or Plessy's nightmare?* Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project.
O'Toole, J. M. (2008). *The faithful: A history of Catholics in America.* Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
Oyez. (n.d.a). *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue.* Retrieved October 30, 2021, from Oyez: https://www.oyez.org/cases/2019/18-1195

Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Education Researcher, 41*(3), 93-97.

Parrish, S. D. (2011). Number talks build numerical reasoning. *Teaching Children Mathematics, 18*(3), 198-206.

Paul VI. (1965). Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world: Gaudium et spes. In D. J. O'Brien, & T. A. Shannon (Eds.), *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage* (pp. 166-237). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

Perumal, J. (2016). Enacting critical pedagogy in an emerging South African democracy: Narratives of pleasure and pain. *Education and Urban Society, 48*(8), 743-766.

Picower, B. (2011). Resisting compliance: Learning to teach for social justice in a neoliberal context. *Teachers College Record, 113*, 1105-1134.

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. (2004). *Compendium of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church.* Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Pratt, C. H. (n.d.). *Address to a convention in 1892.* Retrieved May 31, 2018, from The Carlisle Indian Industrial School Digital Resource Center: http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/teach/kill-indian-and-save-man-capt-richard-h-pratt-educationnative-americans

Price-Mitchell, M. (2015). *Tomorrow's change makers: Reclaiming the power of citizenship for a new generation.* Bainbridge Island, Washington: Eagle Harbor Publishing.

Rainey, J. G. (2009). *Blaine Amendments*. Retrieved from The First Amendment Encyclopedia: https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/1036/blaine-amendments

Rausch, T. P. (2010). *Educating for faith and justice: Catholic higher education today.* Collegevill, MN: Liturgical Press.

Ravitch, D. (2010). *The death and life of the great American school system: How testing and choice are undermining education.* New York: Basic Books.

Reckhow, S. (2013). *Follow the money: How foundation dollars change public school politics.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Reichard, R. (2018, October 22). *A brief history of Latino voting rights since the 1960s.* Retrieved from Remezcla: https://remezcla.com/features/culture/latino-voting-rights-1960s/

Rodriguez, P. J., & Briscoe, F. (2019). “This is your worth”: Is the Catholic school advantage in urban catholic schools’ college culture disappearing in a neoliberal era? *Education and Urban Society, 51*(1), 3-32.

Saavedra, D. (2021). Lost in Translation: Reconsidering Our Understanding of Paulo Freire. Portland, OR: American Educational Studies Association.

Saavedra, D. (2022). Responding to technological disruptions during online video interviews conducted Via Zoom. *The Qualitative Report, 27*(6), 1479-1484.

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manuel for qualitative researchers* (Second ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Sanchez, B. (2018, September 21). *Catholic schools challenged by changing demographics.* Retrieved from America Magazine: https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2018/09/21/catholic-schools-challenged-changing-demographics

Santiago, M., de los Ríos, C. V., & Gutiérrez, K. D. (2021). Historicizing Latinx civic agency and contemporary lived civics. In C. D. Lee, G. White, & D. Dong (Eds.), *Educating for*

Civic Reasoning and Discourse (pp. 206-241). Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Education.
Sawchuck, S. (2021, May). What is critical race theory, and why is it under attack? *Education Week*.
Schor, I. (1996). *When students have power: negotiating authority in a critical pedagogy.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Schreiner, L. A. (2017, November-December). The privilege of grit. *About Campus*, pp. 11-20.
Sellers, K. M. (2022). Theopolitical antecedents of critical pedagogy: Reading Freire through a world of religious social movements [Conference Paper]. Pittsburgh: American Educational Studies Association.
Sellers, K. M. (2021a). Do unions matter? Factors impacting 2020 reopening plans of K-12 Catholic schools in Ohio. *American Educational Studies Association Annual Meeting*. Portland, OR.
Sellers, K. M. (2021b). “All kids matter”? Catholic institutional advocacy for federal COVID relief funding for non-public schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 29*, 131.
Sellers, K. M. (Forthcoming). Critical analysis of the USCCB's process for drafting the Framework for Secondary Religious Education. *Critical Research on Religion, 00*(00), 00.
Sellers, K. M., & Knight Abowitz, K. (Forthcoming). Populism, classrooms, and students: On becoming part of the 'we' of democracy. In H. Tam (Ed.), *Who's Afraid of Political Education.* Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press.
Sellers, K. M., & MacKenzie, A. H. (2022). Looking back to move forward: Exploring urban secondary education teacher perceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy. *Education and Urban Society, 0*(0), https://doi.org/10.1177/001312452211216.
Sepulveda, E. (2011). Toward a pedagogy of acompañamiento: Mexican migrant youth writing from the underside of modernity. *Harvard Educational Review, 81*(3), 550-572.
Sharkey, J., & Clavijo Olarte, A. (2012). Community-based pedagogies: Projects and possibilities in Colombia and the US. In A. Honigsfeld, & A. Cohen (Eds.), *Breaking the model of education for culturally and linguistically diverse students: Innovative and successful practices for 21st century schools* (pp. 129-138). Lantham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
Sharkey, J., Olarte, A. C., & Ramírez, L. M. (2016). Developing a deeper understanding of community-based pedagogies with teachers: Learning with and from teachers in Colombia. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 1-14.
Shine, R. (2022, November 10). *Denver Archdiocese’s gender policy bans transgender students from Catholic schools.* Retrieved from New Ways Ministry: https://www.newwaysministry.org/2022/11/10/denver-archdioceses-gender-policy-bans-transgender-students-from-catholic-schools/
Sikkink, D., & Schwartz, J. (2017, February 1). *The lasting impact of high school on giving and bolunteering in the U.S.* Retrieved March 2022, 2022, from Cardus: https://www.cardus.ca/research/education/reports/the-lasting-impact-of-high-school-on-giving-and-volunteering-in-the-u-s/
Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2016). Teacher stress and teacher self-efficacy as predictors of engagement, emotional exhaustion, and motivation to leave the teaching profession. *Creative Education, 7*(13), 1785-1799.

Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical rramework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*(1), 23-44.
Sondel, B. (2015). Raising citizens or raising test scores? Teach For America, “No Excuses” charters, and the development of the neoliberal citizen. *Theory & Research in Social Education, 43*(3), 289-313.
Stahl, G. D. (2020). Corporate practices and ethical tensions: Researching social justice values and neoliberal paradoxes in a ‘no excuses’ charter school. *British Education Research Journal, 46*(4), 878-893.
Stiegler, S. (2021). On doing go-along interviews: Toward sensuous analyses of everyday experiences. *Qualitative Inquiry, 27*(3-4), 364-373.
Stinson, D. W., Bidwell, C. R., Jett, C. C., Powell, G. C., & Thurman, M. M. (2007). Critical mathematics pedagogy: Transforming teachers’ practices. In D. Pugalee, A. Rogerson, & A. Schinck (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 9th International Conference: Mathematics Education in a Global Community* (pp. 619-624). Charlotte, NC: Mathematics Education into the 21st Century.
Stitzlein, S. M. (2012). *Teaching for dissent: Citizenship education and political activism.* Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
Stitzlein, S. M. (2021). Defining and implementing civic reasoning and discourse: Philosophical and moral foundations for research and practice. In C. D. Lee, G. White, & D. Dong (Eds.), *Educating for Civic Reasoning and Discourse* (pp. 23-52). Washington, DC, United States of America: National Academy of Education.
Taliaferro Baszile, D. (2015). Rhetorical revolution: Critical race counterstorytelling and the abolition of white democracy. *Qualitative Inquiry, 21*(3), 239-249.
Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review, 79*(3), 409-428.
Tyack, D. B. (1974). *The one best system: A history of American urban education.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Tyack, D., & Cuban, L. (1995). *Tinkering toward utopia: A century of public school reform.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
U.S. Congress. (n.d.). *Citizenship clause: Doctrine and practice.* Retrieved from Constitution Annotated: https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/amdt14_S1_1_1_2/#:~:text=All%20persons%20born%20or%20naturalized%20in%20the%20United%20States%20and,the%20State%20wherein%20they%20reside.
UCLA Law. (2023). *UCLA Law CRT Forward Tracking Project.* Retrieved January 21, 2023, from UCLA Law: https://law.ucla.edu/academics/centers/critical-race-studies/ucla-law-crt-forward-tracking-project
USCCB. (1986, November). *Economic justice for all: Pastoral letter on Catholic social teaching and the U.S. economy.* Washington, D.C. Retrieved from https://www.usccb.org/upload/economic_justice_for_all.pdf
USCCB. (1990, November). In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools. Washington, D.C.
USCCB. (2007). *Doctrinal elements of a curriculum framework for the development of catechetical materials for young people of high school age.* Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

USCCB. (2016). *Catholic School FACT Sheet.* Retrieved from U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishopes: https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catholic-education/upload/Catholic-Schools-FACT-Sheet-2016.pdf

USCCB. (2018). *Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love.* Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Walton, J. (2022, August 23). *Lafayette Diocese's policy will push out students and staff who stray from Catholic teachings on sexuality and gender.* Retrieved from Metro Weekly: https://www.metroweekly.com/2022/08/louisiana-catholic-schools-to-enforce-sexual-identity-policy/

Wasser, S. (2021). *Flatten the hierarchy to elevate the profession: The need for teacher leadership to reinstate educators as professionals [dissertation].* Jamaica New York: Saint John's University.

Weiner, E. J. (2022). Totalitarianism rising: The limits of democratic education. *Teachers College Record*.

West, C. (1988). *Prophetic fragments: Illuminations of the crisis in American religion and culture.* Trenton: Africa World Press, Inc.

Westheimer, J., & Kahne, J. (2002). *What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy.* New York: Surdna Foundation, Inc.

Willuweit, F. (2020, July 13). *De-constructing the 'White Saviour Syndrome': A manifestation of neo-imperialism.* Retrieved from E-International Relations: https://www.e-ir.info/2020/07/13/de-constructing-the-white-saviour-syndrome-a-manifestation-of-neo-imperialism/

Wolf, P. J. (2007). *Civics exam: Schools of choice boost civic values.* Cambridge, MA: Program on Education Policy and Governance, Harvard University.

Wong, A. (2019, February 20). The U.S. Teaching Population Is Getting Bigger, and More Female. *The Atlantic*.

Yoon, E.-S., Welner, K., DiMartino, C., Kotok, S., Baker, B., Green, P., . . . Sellers, K. M. (2022). Expanding Public Funds and Advocacy for Religious Schools via School Choice: Cultivating or Curtailing Equity? [Symposium]. San Diego, CA: Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

Yosso, T. J. (2005, March). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *race Ethnicity and Education, 8*(1), 69-91.

Zembylas, M. (2021). The affective dimension of everyday resistance: Implications for critical pedagogy in engaging with neoliberalism's educational impact. *Critical Studies in Education, 62*(2), 211-226.

Zinn, H. (1980). *A people's history of the United States.* New York: Harper & Row.

Appendix A:
Screening Interview Protocol
Time of Interview: 15 minutes, starting at ________
Date:
Media used: Zoom
School:
Interviewer:
Interviewee(s):
Position of Interviewee:
Description of Project: I have invited you here today because your colleague(s) [NAME] has nominated you to participate in a study of educators in the Santa María Network (SMN). You were nominated because your colleague(s) believes your teaching (1) is experiential and/or linked to the community beyond the classroom and (2) exemplifies a commitment to social justice.

This is part of a qualitative research project, which I am conducting under the advisement of Dr. Érica Fernandez, in the Education Leadership Department of Miami University.

Through this conversation I hope to accomplish Four things.

> **First**, I would like to introduce myself and my connection to the SMN.
> **Second**, I wish to share with you about the project and what I anticipate asking of participants.
> **Third**, I would like to respond to any questions or concerns you may have about this project.
> **Forth**, I would like to invite you to also nominate any colleagues who you think would be a good fit for this study.

Answering any questions is voluntary. There is no penalty in refusing to answer specific questions for any reason. With your permission, I would like to record this interview and use the close-caption function, in order to write a transcript.

Appendix B:
Interview One Protocol

Time of Interview: 60 minutes, starting at ________
Date:
Media used: Zoom

School:
Interviewer:
Interviewee(s):
Position of Interviewee:

Description of Project: We are here today because you have agreed to participate in a study of experiential, community-based educators in the SMN. This is part of a qualitative research project, which I am conducting under the advisement of Dr. Érica Fernández, in the Education Leadership Department of Miami University. *Today, I would like us to talk about your story and what has shaped the teacher you are.* Specifically, I wish to ask you the following: [READ QUESTIONS BELOW, IN ORDER]. Answering these questions is voluntary. There is no penalty in refusing to answer specific questions for any reason. With your permission, I would like to record this interview and use the close-caption function, in order to write a transcript.

Questions:

- Where are you from?
- What brought you to Santa María?
    - Are you Catholic? Religious?
    - Did you have to sign a contract with morality clause?
- What subjects do you teach? Have you taught any other subjects at Santa María?
- How long have you taught here?
- Can you tell me about your school? Your students? CWSP Partners? School leaders? Students' families?
- Before you came to Santa María, did you have any experience in Catholic schools? If so, what was that like?
- What keeps you at Santa María?
- Did you teach anywhere before coming to Santa María?
- Have you always been a teacher?
- What prepared you to become a teacher?
- Did any specific experiences shape the kind of teacher you are?
- Did you receive any specialized training in the subject area(s) that you teach?
- Have you ever participated in any SMN training? What was that like?
- Who has helped you become the teacher that you are?
- How would you describe the kind of teaching that you do?
- Do you think of yourself as a typical teacher at this school? In the SMN?
- Do you agree with your colleague(s) that your teaching demonstrates a commitment to social justice? Why/why not?
- What do you understand by the term "social justice"?

Appendix C:
Interview Two Protocol

Time of Interview: 60 minutes, starting at ________

Date:

Media used: Zoom

School:

Interviewer:

Interviewee(s):

Position of Interviewee:

Description of Project: We are here today because you have agreed to participate in a study of experiential, community-based educators in the SMN. This is part of a qualitative research project, which I am conducting under the advisement of Dr. Érica Fernández, in the Education Leadership Department of Miami University. *Today, I would like us to talk about specific experiences that exemplify and shaped your teaching.* Specifically, I wish to ask you the following: [READ QUESTIONS BELOW, IN ORDER]. Answering these questions is voluntary. There is no penalty in refusing to answer specific questions for any reason. With your permission, I would like to record this interview and use the close-caption function, in order to write a transcript.

Questions***:

- When did you know you wanted to be a teacher?
- Was there ever a time that you questioned your decision to become a teacher?
- Have you ever partnered with organizations in your community and/or families to enhance your teaching?
    - If so, how did that come about? What was that like?
- Can you describe a time, while you've been at [SCHOOL], when you felt like you had really succeeded at being the educator you wish to be?
    - Who/what helped you succeed?
    - Where there any obstacles that threatened that success?
- Was there ever a time you felt deeply supported in being the teacher you want to be? Explain.
- Was there ever a time, while you've been at [SCHOOL], when you butted heads with administrators or colleagues?
    - If so, how was that resolved?
- Was there ever a time, while you've been at [SCHOOL], when you struggled to be the educator you wish to be?
    - Where there any obstacles that contributed to this struggle?
    - Who/what helped you overcome this struggle?
- Can you share a story about a time that your teaching really connected your students' lives inside and outside the classroom?
- Was there ever a time that you planned and/or implemented a lesson simply because you thought it was the right thing to do? Explain
- Have you ever collaborated on lesson/unit planning with a colleague on staff?
    - Why or why not? If so, what was that like?
- How have institutions and/or community members (i.e., church, state, corporate partners, families, and/or community partners) impacted your teaching?

***** The guiding questions I've listed above may differ significantly from what I ultimately use in this interview. This protocol will need to be tailored to each participant, based on their responses in the prior interview. Any stories/events/people which were identified in the prior interview as contributing to their choice to teach as they do may be especially appropriate to bring up here.**

Appendix D:

Interview Three Protocol

Time of Interview: 60 minutes, starting at ________

Date: Interviewer:

Media used: Zoom / In-Person Conversation Interviewee(s):

School: Position of Interviewee:

Description of Project: We are here today because you have agreed to participate in a study of experiential, community-based educators in the SMN. This is part of a qualitative research project, which I am conducting under the advisement of Dr. Érica Fernández, in the Education Leadership Department of Miami University. *Today, I would like us to talk about your teaching philosophy.* Specifically, I wish to ask you the following: [READ QUESTIONS BELOW, IN ORDER]. Answering these questions is voluntary. There is no penalty in refusing to answer specific questions for any reason. With your permission, I would like to record this interview and use the close-caption function, in order to write a transcript.

Questions***:

- Is teaching a profession or a vocation? Explain.
- How would you describe your philosophy of education?
  - Do you feel you live that out successfully here at [School Name]? Why/not?
- The last time we spoke, you shared that [DESCRIBE EVENT FROM LAST INTERVIEW] was a time you felt you were successful as a teacher. Why does that moment exemplify success to you?
- Do you feel you have the support you need (from your admin., SMN, CWSP, community partners, student-families, etc.) to be the teacher you wish to be?
- Does faith impact your approach to education? Why/not?
- Have you ever had a crisis of conscience as a teacher in the SMN? Explain.
- Have you ever felt pressured (directly or indirectly) to teach in a way that was inconsistent with your values? Explain.
- How would you describe the mission of [School Name]? SMN?
- Do you think your philosophy of education fits well at [School Name]? Why or why not?
  - Does it fit well within the SMN? Why or why not?
- Do you think the way you teach fits well at [School Name]? Why or why not?
  - Does it fit well within the SMN? Why or why not?
- What responsibility should teachers have to their students? Community? Society? Explain.
  - Should SMN teachers have any responsibility to CWSP partners? Board members? National office of SMN? Explain?
- What responsibility should students have to Teachers/School? Community? Society? Explain.
  - Should SMN students have any responsibility to CWSP partners? Board members? National office of SMN? Explain?
- Who has power at [School Name], and who doesn't have power? Explain.
  - Is that how it should be? Explain.

***** The guiding questions I've listed above may differ significantly from what I ultimately use in this interview. This protocol will need to be tailored to each participant, based on their responses in the prior interviews and any additional data I've collected about the school/community context. Any stories/events/people which were shared in prior interviews and exhibit particular critical and/or civic consciousness may be especially appropriate to bring up here.**

Appendix E:
Field Observation Graphic Organizer
[In Header] Title of Project and Range of Project Observations Dates

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Date of observation:
Name of observe:
Beginning time of observation:
End time of observation:</td></tr>
<tr><td>DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
Who, what, when, where, why, how</td><td>REFLECTIONS
Own positionality, meanings</td><td>EMERGING QUESTIONS/ ANALYSES
Potential lines of inquiry, theories, common narratives</td><td>FUTURE ACTION
Including further contacts, Include timescales</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Appendix F:
Unveiling Interview Protocol

Time of Interview: 60 minutes, starting at ________
Date:
Media used: Zoom
School:
Interviewer:
Interviewee(s):
Position of Interviewee:
Description of Project: Over the past several months, you have generously shared your stories about being a teacher in the SMN. From what you shared, and what information I have been able to learn from other sources, I have compiled a narrative portrait of your practice, which we are here today to discuss. As you know, this is part of a qualitative research project, which I am conducting under the advisement of Dr. Érica Fernández, in the Education Leadership Department of Miami University. *Today, I would like to learn about your reactions to this portrait.* Specifically, I wish to ask you the following: [READ QUESTIONS BELOW, IN ORDER]. Answering these questions is voluntary. There is no penalty in refusing to answer specific questions for any reason. With your permission, I would like to record this interview and use the close-caption function, in order to write a transcript. I will use your feedback to finalize this portrait and include your reaction to this portrait in its own section of the final draft of the research report.

Questions:

- What did you feel/think as you read this portrait?
- Did this portrait seem true to your experience? Why or why not?
- Did anything surprise you in this portrait?
- Was anything missing from this portrait that you expected to find or think should be present?
- Would any changes enhance the accuracy of this work?

Appendix G:
Provisional Codes - Critical and/or Civic Consciousness within SMN Context

Consciousness of Participants	Description of Teacher Practice
Socio-Historical Consciousness: Schools and the people in them are shaped by their historical, social, and political context.	Begin classroom instruction by drawing on student experiences in the world; incorporate topics that relate to students' lives into curricula and encourage students to include their lived experiences in the work produced in class; may express sensitivity to institutional actors/practices specific to the SMN including CWSP, Network, SMN standardized assessments, Catholic hierarchy/leaders; may express sensitivity to institutional interests in conflict including but not limited to Catholic social teaching and dependence on corporate partners
Reasoning / Asset-based: Students already possess knowledge about themselves, the world, and their relation to the world.	Allow for the exploration, exchange, and critique of contrasting/conflicting worldviews and perspectives, and evaluation of supporting evidence for these perspectives; leverage students' curiosity as entry into inquiry process; welcome contributions of wider community and families to enhance experiential learning
Open Classroom Dialogue / Student Engagement: Knowledge and truth are negotiated.	Provide opportunities for authentic dialogue / exchange of ideas w/ others inside / outside classroom, through classwork.
Connections Between Life Inside and Outside Classroom: Power and privilege, which affect whose perspectives are included in official knowledge, are not equally shared.	Use real-world issues / struggles of marginalized peoples as curriculum; provide opportunities for students to analyze sociopolitical systems / power relations and to openly use class- work to explore how certain markers of identity are privileged.
Aimed at Transforming Oppression: Certain voices and knowledge are represented in society and curriculum while other voices are silenced.	Raise students' consciousness and awareness of oppression and social injustice and help articulate through classwork how systems, others, and themselves participate in oppression and liberation; may explicitly link analysis to Catholic social teaching principles of preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, or related Church teachings, like original sin; analyze whose voices are presented in texts (written or of the world).
Action-orientation Students are current citizens, contributing to knowledge production and taking action.	Encourage students to take action through production of multimodal texts in diverse mediums; provide students opportunities to share texts w/ authentic audiences to attempt to make changes and address social injustices; ask students to reflect on intended and actual impacts of actions; formulate new plans for action; may align action to Catholic mission including but not limited to corporal works of mercy, theological virtue of charity, conscience, neighborliness, or Catholic social teaching
Aimed at Common Good: Education should enhance the public's ability to participate in democracy and serve the good in common, not just the interests of elites.	Helps students articulate, through classwork, how institutions, others, and themselves contribute to civic life, answering the civic question, "What should we do?"; models civic skills like group deliberation, active listening, and inquiry; may align activities with Catholic mission including but not limited to neighborliness; rights and responsibilities; human dignity; or family, community, and society

Sources: Adapted from Behizadeh, *et al.* (2019) with insights from Bowels & Gintis (2016); DeCesare (2021); Freire (1970/1993; 1998); Mich (1998); Sharkey, et al. (2016); and Stitzlein (2021)

Appendix H:

May 17, 2022

To: Kathleen Sellers and Dr. Érica Fernández, Educational Leadership
Re: *Qualitative portraits of critical civic educators in urban Catholic schools*

Project reference number is: 04257e
(please refer to this ID number in all correspondence to compliance administration)

The project noted above and as described in your application for registering Human Subjects (HS) research has been screened to determine if it is regulated research or meets the criteria of one of the categories of research that can be exempt from approval of an Institutional Review Board (per 45 CFR 46). The determination for your research is indicated below.
The research described in the application is regulated human subjects research, however, the description meets the criteria of at least one exempt category included in 45 CFR 46 and associated guidance.

The Applicable Exempt Category(ies) is/are: 2

As part of the exemption process, your procedures were reviewed for and found to be in adherence to the principles for the ethical conduct of research as described in the Belmont Report and Declaration of Helsinki.

Research may proceed upon receipt of this certification and compliance with any conditions described in the accompanying email message. When research is deemed exempt from IRB review, it is the responsibility of the researcher listed above to ensure that all future persons not listed on the filed application who i) will aid in collecting data or, ii) will have access to data with subject identifying information, meet the training requirements (CITI Online Training).

If you are considering any changes in this research that may alter the level of risk or wish to include a vulnerable population (e.g. subjects <18 years of age) that was not previously specified in the application, you must consult the Research Ethics and Integrity Office before implementing these changes.

Exemption certification is not transferrable; this certificate only applies to the researcher(s) specified above. All research exempted from IRB review is subject to post-certification monitoring and audit by the Research Ethics and Integrity Office.

When referencing ethics oversight, you may indicate that the research plan was reviewed and approved by the Miami Research Ethics and Integrity Office. IRB approval should not be indicated.

Best of luck with your research,
Jennifer Sutton
--
Jennifer Sutton, MPA, CIP
Associate Director of Research Ethics & Integrity Program
Research and Innovation Office
Miami University
102 Roudebush Hall
Oxford, OH 45056
Phone: 513-529-0454
https://compliancemiamioh.com